



TRUE TO OUR TRADITIONS

CELEBRATING 2012–2022
OF REVESBY WORKERS' CLUB

NATALIE ARCHER

20



2012-15

A club with big ambitions

AS REVESBY HEADED INTO ITS QUINQUAGENARIAN DECADE, SO IT ENTERED INTO A HOPEFUL AND PROSPEROUS TIME, PUTTING THE ABRASIVE, DISCONCERTING DAYS OF THE HEADLINING ANTI-GAMBLING CAMPAIGNS, BEHIND THEM. BY 2015 A FOUR-YEAR NATIONAL CENSUS BY CLUBS AUSTRALIA AND CLUBS NSW WOULD REVEAL THE ROLE OF CLUBS AS AN IMPORTANT DRIVER OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND EMPLOYMENT AND A STRONG SUPPORTER OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND THE COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTING AN ESTIMATED \$3.7 BILLION (0.7% OF GDP) TO THE NSW ECONOMY.

By virtue of its size and vision, Revesby was among those that were able to survive and grow, providing greater levels of community support, employment and facilities. Others were not so fortuitous, with 5% of smaller clubs during that period ceasing operations and half of that number again choosing to amalgamate highlighting the challenges for smaller industry players.

Meanwhile the largest and brightest licensed clubs in New South Wales maintained their trajectory from the fast lane. Getting there through an insatiable, continuous quest to develop new income streams and to move away from its reliance on poker machines – always keeping the benefits of its patrons and club members at the heart of new ventures.

Since the big 50-year celebrations in 2012, Revesby Workers' Club moved onwards and upwards at a remarkable pace, fortifying and revamping its infrastructure and remodelling the precinct around it.

Few clubs have entertained so large an ambition – in this case one that impacted so compellingly on the Revesby shopping and retail domain. It was a perpetual forward motion that did not come at the cost of its past. The history that characterised the club through the decades would continue to be cherished and remain in focus.

New policies and ideas were well on their way from conception to construction. It was entering a new era that would redefine the Workers' Club, reinforcing its iconic status in its south-western Sydney surroundings.

This era of the Workers' Club would be defined by bringing a new dimension to Revesby thanks to a Board headed by President, Daryl Melham and CEO Ed Camilleri.

Turning Fifty

In 2012, we turned 50 years young, which we marked with great fanfare and several celebration events. The milestone was also commemorated with the launch of the 'True To Our Traditions' history book, beautifully illustrated with photographs that tell of the Club's turbulent, triumphant and often touching past.

Past Presidents For Present Patrons

What could possibly be considered a befitting tribute to the alumni of club Presidents who have taken Revesby from an idea hatched at the Revesby

Pacific Hotel to its Golden anniversary over 55,000 strong membership. Over that half a century, the club was ably led a by select few committed to honouring the past while executing pioneering new plans, enjoying the milestones, courting controversy and coping criticism.

In the end the answer was straight forward enough. The most apt way to honour pasts club presidents would be with something that would benefit current and future members.

Enter The Presidents Lounge. At last, a stylish bar specialising in champagnes, exotic cocktails and boutique beers. Beautifully appointed with high backed chairs, an open fire place and private booths for group celebrations, the Infinity Bar is a sophisticated destination where members and guests could enjoy a drink, sample from a tasty tapas menu, experience some of the best live music Sydney had to offer or indulge in an elegant High Tea.



Above: Dean Semlitzky, Vanessa Semlitzky, Sue Semlitzky and then Director Terry Semlitzky
 Top right: Past President Pat Rogan OAM.
 Right: 2012 Board of Directors with 'True to our Traditions' author Gary Lester;



The Presidents Lounge, Bar and Gaming area, dedicated to Revesby Workers' Club past Presidents was officially opened in front of 300 people on 12 June 2013 by past President, Pat Rogan.

At the time of launch, the past Presidents included in order of election: Jack Dickens; Jim Donovan; Brien Higgs; Bill Gannon; Bill Bullard; Norma Smith and Pat Rogan. Paying homage to the characters that served the club and its members, a glass panelling display installed at the lounge entrance featuring their occupations and time in office. The christening of this great addition to the precinct was elevated further by the presence of numerous relatives and friends of the past Presidents.



The Presidents Lounge, dedicated to the Club's past Presidents.

FAREWELL TO A FRIEND

By 2014, club life at Revesby had settled into a pleasing rhythm. A healthy Workers' Club's balance sheet and a slew of comforts for its members were a sign of the time and the spoils of hard toil over the previous 50 years.

It was with great fondness and bittersweet reminiscence then that Revesby paused to farewell Gough Whitlam upon his death on 21 October 2014. Club president Daryl Melham – and the club itself – lost a great friend in the 21st prime minister of Australia, one of the great reformist political leaders in the country's political history. Whitlam was aged 98. He enjoyed a close association with the Revesby Workers' Club and was always demonstrably impressed with the club and its values.

His time in the political arena was sometimes contentious yet highly acclaimed; he was prime minister from December 1972 until November 1975. Whitlam was elected leader of the Australian Labor Party at a time when the conservative federal government was labouring under the weight of a dysfunctional party out of tune, and out of step with the electorate. The dynamic, erudite Whitlam came with hope on the back of the now famously recognisable theme, "It's Time." And it was.

A frequent visitor to the Workers' Club over the years, Whitlam officially opened the large club on 18 August 1973. He was involved with the opening of three other extensions to the club, among them



Above: Hon. Gough Whitlam with Ray McCormack, Mayor of Bankstown, and Revesby Workers' Club Board 1981.

Left: Hon. Gough Whitlam with President Daryl Melham AM, 8 July 2004.

the re-named auditorium, the Whitlam Room, in 2000. He became a member of the club on 17 July 1996. Melham had formed a close friendship with Whitlam, both in their own ways, staunch and influential Labor men.

Revesby Village Centre

It was made clear by the Board at the extraordinary meeting of members in November 2008 which endorsed the major retail concept that they were not about to "sell the farm".

By the time of the grand opening of Revesby Village Centre, the project hailed one of the greatest days in the club's history, but it came about by enormous time and effort courtesy of the Board, Management and the Club's advisors.

Rewind to the days of its inception, the initial project included, in the first instance, a serious re-vamping of the club, the addition of the retail complex and an eight-storey hotel that was to

be constructed above the club as part of the development.

One of the first hurdles? Delivering a convincing argument that a project that had been costed at \$100 million – funded by the club – was a good idea.

CEO, Ed Camilleri explained: "We wanted to ensure we owned the land. A lot of clubs and other developers (in the past) have gone into a joint venture, where the club puts up the land and the developer comes in, and it usually happens that the club comes out second best. The Board did not want to go down that path. They wanted us to fund the whole lot, so we owned the farm."

Right: Excavation of the original Brett Street car park to construct the Revesby Village Centre precinct.



The club had been thorough and fully upfront with its members. If they had rejected the proposal, it was back to the drawing board again, or even to no drawing board. Explanations from experts were essential and, in that regard, helped to fill the room – representatives from the National Australia Bank and auditors Ernst and Young, who were there to offer their advice and to talk on the viability of the project.

Club president Daryl Melham explained at the November 2008 EGM the reasoning behind the project and the value of such a concept, as big as it was, and, from that, the members supported the project unanimously.

Wasn't it Shakespeare who once said, 'the course of true redevelopment never runs smoothly'?

Nerve and conviction were certainly tested when the club received requested re-worked costings, only to discover that the bill had blown out to \$180 million. According to Melham, this "constituted \$140 million to \$160 million of debt, money we didn't have. We said, 'no' and asked for

a different model. We had given an undertaking to our members that our club would not be placed in jeopardy if we went ahead with this development. We had to be careful about cost."

Acting as a devil's advocate throughout the process, Melham was unflinching in his role as gatekeeper of the purse. He was passionate and emotional, and with a supportive Board behind him, maintained a vigilant overview to ensure the best results for Revesby – from rejecting attempts to move the award-winning gym and the auditorium, as well as other areas in the club, to demanding reduced costings. In essence, he and the Board were not prepared to place the club at risk. "We were told we could pull out at any stage," Melham recalled. "When we pulled out after being presented with the higher costs, they went into meltdown mode. We wanted to know – what were the real costs."

Next up, the Board was presented with a fresh model, wound back to \$100 million – without any major changes to the club as it stood except to build the President's Lounge. The final cost was an



acceptable figure, once the almost-mandatory extra costs were included – sending it to \$125 million. The debt figure was around \$60 million.

With the master plan completed, Revesby headed off to the council to seek a development application. The plan had been drawn up after exhaustive discussions with Revesby residents. According to Camilleri, “We spoke to our residents over a number of weekends. We had noise consultants, architects and engineers, and at this point remember, we had designed the plan with a hotel sitting on top of the club. This was a major development and it passed through council without a single cry in opposition. So, I think we consulted really well and didn’t take it for granted. We took it to residents, to members for face value and we really spent a lot of time having workshops. To get a project of this size up and running was a major coup for us.”

It was June 2013 when the exciting breaking ground day arrived, and construction of the complex commenced. It was to be one of the

largest developments of its kind undertaken by a club anywhere in Australia. The flagship in the development was the 4,500 square metre Coles supermarket and Liquorland, built and designed to enhance its attached association with the Workers’ Club itself. The objective was a tasteful and thoughtful façade with no hints of pretentiousness or out of place ostentatiousness in its suburban surroundings.

The various milestone openings of finished facilities and levels of business were staggered. Coles was opened officially by premier Mike Baird on 25 February 2015 to much fanfare from the locals who lined up in their hundreds to be the first to shop in this latest addition to the Coles supermarket chain. A select number of specialty shops concurrently opened their doors including the Workers’ Club-owned café, twotwo//onetwo, and later, among other additions, Liquorland, Select Mutual Banking, Pearl Nails, Smartphones Hospital, Hair Crew Studio, Sushiru, Bibiana’s Home Décor & Giftware and the Chook Shack.

Top: Continued construction of Revesby Village Centre precinct.

Above left: Board of Directors at the opening of Coles Supermarket within Revesby Village Centre.



President Daryl Melham AM officially opens AMF Bowling.

More major facilities followed, including AMF Bowling (which became Zone Bowling) and Carnival Kingdom Playground and Café (which became Flip Out) on level two in April 2015, a level principally dedicated to family entertainment. Three months later the Medical Centre, a large state-of-the-art medical facility, opened officially on 20 July 2015.

But it was on the day of Saturday, 9 May 2015, at the official centre opening, officiated by the Mayor of the City of Bankstown, Councillor Linda Downey, when Melham declared its historical significance. “It ranks alongside the opening of the club in 1962 and the opening of the big club by the prime minister, Gough Whitlam in 1973.”



PAT ROGAN OAM

A Fair and Just Man — and a Good Bloke

Pat Rogan was special. His death on 10 February 2015 as a result of mesothelioma brought to an end a prominent career in politics and in the Australian licensed club movement. He was posthumously awarded an order of Australia Medal (OAM) in the 2016 Australia Day honours list for his service to local community and the success of clubs in New South Wales. It was not an honour beyond expectations – Rogan had been a committed servant of the people in many facets of life, whether in the political sphere or in his many roles within the club industry.

Rogan fought against injustices and was driven to improve areas throughout the local community. He was dedicated to many issues and was much loved at the Revesby Workers’ Club and wherever his role in community life took him, he was known for his quiet, gentlemanly manner.

He was the Labor Party member in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly for East Hills from 1973 to 1999 after gaining preselection following Joe Kelly’s retirement. It speaks to his tremendous popularity and connection with the local community, that he was never seriously challenged at any subsequent election. During his time, he was Shadow Minister for Minerals and Energy, Acting Speaker, Deputy Chairman of the Parliamentary Accounts

Committee and Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment.

Rogan was responsible for several substantial achievements, among them in his role in having the Chelmsford Royal Commission establishing and initiating the Salt Pan Creek walkway with Mayor Gordon Parker. He secured funding for the widening and improvements to Davies Road, the duplication of the railway to East Hills, raising the quality of the Georges River and construction of Padstow TAFE.

Having retired from politics in 1999, Rogan was elected chairman of ClubsNSW and was immediately effectual, overseeing the introduction of an industry code of practice and best practice guidelines to improve accountability and better inform club directors of their legal responsibilities, government legislation and duty of care.

Rogan was also a Board member of the New South Wales Institute of Sport, of which ClubsNSW had been a principal partner since 1995, with an annual contribution of over \$1 million for emerging athletes. He was president of Clubs Australia from 2000 to 2004.

Rogan led ClubNSW’s fight against the State Labor government over club gaming tax in 2003 that would force clubs to pay \$1.8 billion in taxes over the next seven years. That he had once been a member of

Renaming Of Salt Pan Creek Walkway

The Salt Pan Walkway winds its way through semi-urban wetlands and mangrove forests. It features three endangered ecological communities within the area of the creek and is home to a number of bird species. It was only fitting then that The City of Canterbury Bankstown took the decision to rename the Salt Pan Creek Walkway, the Pat Rogan Walkway, in honour of Mr Patrick Rogan, a former State Member for East Hills. Mr Rogan was a significant member of the community and played a vital role in public matters and success of many clubs and community organisations in NSW.

Anyone that knew Pat recognised him as a

great contributor to the local community both during his time as the state member for East Hills – a strong advocate for local infrastructure – as well as a supporter and patron of many local clubs and groups. He was a passionate supporter of the environment, making the renaming of the walkway a wonderful testament.

And so, it happened. On 11am, Tuesday 17 July 2018 at Cutting Reserve, Davies Road, Padstow, this long time Board member of the Revesby Workers' Club, Club President, ClubsNSW Chairman, and posthumous recipient of an OAM, was honoured with a touching local tribute.

that very same government was no solace for premier Bob Carr and treasurer Michael Egan, such was Rogan's belief that Carr and Egan had got it wrong. Rogan was the public face of the fight, taking a leading role in the media debate and addressing public meetings around the state.

"In retrospect," he once observed, "They (Carr and Egan) probably thought they were in a good position having me as chairman. Because I had been part of the government, they might have expected me to roll over." He didn't! He remained chairman until 2004.

Rogan had joined Revesby Workers' Club in 1972 and was a director from 1995 to 2010; he was club president from 2008 until he retired in 2010. Acknowledgments of Rogan's value to the Workers' Club were many. Club CEO Ed Camilleri explained, "Pat was instrumental in setting the long-term strategic plan for the club, guaranteeing the club's success. He was well respected by the Board, management and our club members ..."

ClubsNSW chairman, Peter Newell said of him: "He had a clear sense of what was right and what was wrong, and he was doggedly determined. He was tireless and loyal and pursued justice for clubs at some personal cost given he was taking on his former



parliamentary colleagues. He was a genuine person and a person of the people ... and a very good bloke."

In an Inaugural Speech, Alan Ashton, who succeeded Rogan as the member for East Hills, stated his appreciation for the work that Rogan had completed in the community. According to Ashton, "Pat's dedication and commitment to our local community exemplifies the spirit of public service that should be the most important aspect of any citizen's desire to seek election to Parliament."

Clearly, Pat Rogan had left a mark ... indelible and in the spirit of fairness and love for thy neighbour.

to Lawson further underlined the seriousness and dedication Revesby Workers' Club had for its past – and that it should be openly acknowledged at a time when they were building and celebrating their presence as a major player in the modern licensed club world.

There was more than Lawson's sculpture to adore in their concession to history. The timber sculpture – depicting workers, as one would expect of a worker's club – had once adorned the foyer above the steps in 1973, and subsequently relocated outside the boardroom, before being unveiled again in the eastern foyer.

The History Corridor itself was designed to bring to life the story of the club from its very beginning in September 1962 when the only “drinking hole” for locals was the Revesby Pacific Hotel, a stone's throw down the road from where the club stands, where women, some of them with their young children, were left to fend for themselves in their cars or on the sidewalk while their men were inside drinking with their mates”.

Further enhancing the brand spanning new corridor was the list of the 240 foundation members (since moved to Café 240) who helped to make it all possible to upgrade the “walk of fame” to “hall of fame” featuring five outstanding local artists – Bryan Brown, Col Joye, Kevin Jacobsen, and two members of Human Nature, Andrew Tierney and Michael Tierney. Tiles representing each artist were moved from the floor of the western foyer to the history-wall as part of the special recognition.

Notable, too, were the five animal carvings used as a relief among the historical moments on the history-wall. The carvings were prominent above the bars in the 1973 club – further recognition that, perhaps, little had changed in the ethos of a club built on solid workingman's foundations.

When the club first opened as East Hills Workers' Club Limited, women were accorded full membership from the very first day, a rare occurrence among clubs at the time when they were acknowledged mostly as a men's domain. It's a proud fact for the blue-collar workers, and a modicum of the less prominent white collars, that they gave such recognition to women.





In the annex next to the boardroom, a special honour board was installed to recognise the club's presidents, vice presidents, directors, secretary managers/CEOs, patrons and life members. It was for those who both built the foundations and those who "carried the ball" to the current period – so fitting that the names of these most important people should rest beside the current Board and management who met in the boardroom building the modern club.

Henry Lawson poems located in the Henry Lawson Library.

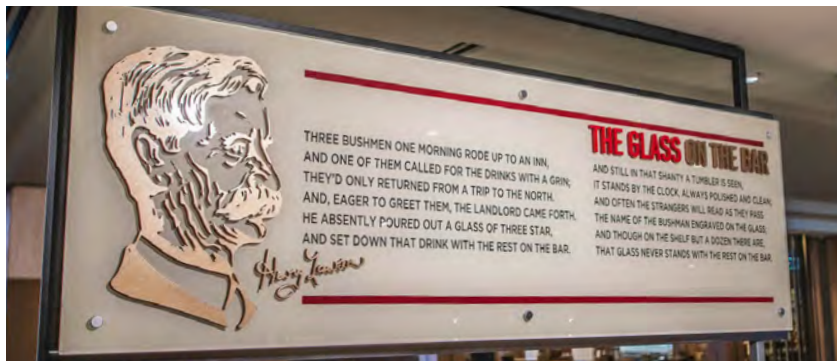
The Tale Of Vladimír Tichý

Anyone visiting Revesby Workers via the Brett Street entrance would have noticed the large remarkable ceramic adorning the south wall. An artwork of keen dimensions enjoying its own kind of renaissance some forty odd years after its first placement the club, created by a Czech-born ceramic sculptor, who had arrived in Australia as a political refugee in 1968 with his wife Jirina and daughter Marcella.

But who is the artist? For a start, Tichý is a Czech with a classical and creative mind who completed the large, imposing mural, so incongruously positioned in a licensed club with a caring adoration to Australia's workingman's poet Henry Lawson. The mural records a segment of Lawson's poem Waratah and Wattle.

The ceramic was part of the 1973 club and positioned in the cocktail bar. When the bar was refurbished, and later demolished, the ceramic was preserved and relocated to where it was hung in the corridor.

Tichý was no average ceramic sculptor; he was without doubt world class. He had been professionally trained and was the head of the Design Institute in Prague. He continued to take his art to higher levels when he reached Australia. Initially, he was sent to the Bonegilla migrant camp in Victoria. He got his first job in a small ceramics studio in Melbourne before moving to



Sydney to work for ACI Glass designing patterns for glassware.

After setting up a new company with Parramatta ceramic sculptor Rudolph Dybka, Tichy moved into a larger studio that allowed him to show the full worth of his sculptures. For instance, he produced large murals for the Centre Point Tower Building, the Macleay College building, the Telstra building in Broadway and the Wrest Point Casino in Hobart. Tichy also completed work on the interior of St Paul's Catholic Church in Albion Park and finished an impressive mural for the Orange Ex-Services' Club.

Tichy worked with many of the leading architects of the day, including the renowned, award-winning Harry Seidler. Tichy's work is held in public collections in Russia, Italy and the Czech Republic.

A remarkable story of a world-class architect – so fitting that he should be represented at Revesby and so fitting that Revesby retained the imposing mural for later generations.

Uncovering The Conundrum of The Carvings

The origins of the fine carving objet d'art lay as hidden as the piece itself in the club for many years.

In 1972, the year in which Revesby Workers' directors agreed to purchase fine carvings of workers – and tucked in the boardroom until it was relocated to the history wall forty years later, drawing admiration and wonder.

Where had it come from? Who was the artist behind it?

The answers may have remained unknown had it not been for some fine sleuthing research from Revesby Workers' vice-president John Rodwell.

Determining the creator of the impressive wooden carvings in the eastern foyer of the club was never going to be easy.

They were depictions of the working man, installed with no acknowledgment of their designer.

The Spirit of the Worker celebrates workmanship and industry, from farmers on the land to tradesmen and professionals, all working together. The sculpture was commissioned by the Club Board in December 1972.

The sculpture was designed and executed by Hampton Studios Pty Ltd (Christchurch, NZ)

Design Concept
Brief created by:
Robert Hampton

Detailed design by:
Patrick Leeming

Sculpture carving by:
Graham Pizzev



Rodwell set off on the beaten track – Google, websites, back-of-house stories and more digging, until he found a link to the Hampton family in New Zealand – and to some of the finest bas relief sculptors in Australasia. It became clear that, firstly, Robert (Bob) Hampton created the design concept brief, the detailed design was handled by Patrick Leeming and the sculptor carving by Graham Pizzey.

From this moment, the story took on new meaning as much for the Revesby Workers' as for the Hampton family.

Bob Hampton was father to seven children and founded an artisan business that employed around 300 craftsmen and designers in Australia and New Zealand. Hampton Studios and Hampton Interiors Pty. Ltd. had offices in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Christchurch, and the art studio and joinery factories were in Christchurch.

According to his son Bede, the company was known for its unique creative interiors with feature

art and craft work, the keynote attraction. Bede described his father as having an uncanny ability to walk into a space and immediately visualise what was needed to make the venue work. He recalled, "Then, he was successful in relaying the 'dream' to the team of designers who drew up the concept and managed the artisans in creating the interior fit-out."

Wall linings, ceilings, lighting, bar fronts and back bars, screens, fountains, sculptures and booth seats were all made in Christchurch before being air freighted to the respective sites.

Hampton Studios also specialised in refurbishment for the hospitality industry in New Zealand and Australia. Hampton set up a single point design and supply craft workshop where many of New Zealand and Australian artists and craftsmen created sculptural artwork, such as *The Spirit of the Worker* at the Workers' Club, celebrating workmanship and industry, from farmers



OAM FOR IAN STROMBORG

Revesby Workers' Club Director Ian Stromborg has made the Australia Day honours list, receiving an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for service to local government, and the Bankstown community.

Ian Stromborg became a Club member in 1968 and was elected as Director of Revesby Workers' Club in September 2006. Ian was a welcome addition to a strong and stable Board of Directors. He was first elected as councillor to Bankstown City Council in 1987 and has continued to represent the residents of West Ward.

Director Ian Stromborg is a lifelong resident of Bankstown. He is married to Lesley, and they have two daughters who attended local public schools and graduated from the University of Western Sydney.

"I've watched Bankstown grow, mostly for the better, and how I got involved with local government was a resident's issue, which was the potential rezoning of the Riverlands golf course. A council election came up in 1987 and I've been there ever since." Director Stromborg told the *Daily Telegraph*.

He has been a driving force behind many council initiatives including the construction of the 12 storey

Civic Office Tower, the completion of Paul Keating Park, upgrades to the Memorial Oval cricket ground and completion of the Stephen and Mark Waugh Pavilion, updating the Bankstown Old Town Plaza, implementation of the three bin waste collection system in 1999, construction of bike paths along Henry Lawson Drive, upgrades to Newland Reserve construction of a new Works Depot at Bransgrove Road, Panania and a supporter of local residents with major local issues such as concerns with Bankstown Airport and the proposed rezoning of Riverlands Golf Course.

Ian also led Bankstown's significant involvement with the Sydney 2000 Olympics including the Velodrome Cycling events. Bankstown was also host to the USA Olympic Officials in the leadup and during the games.

"As a lifelong resident of Bankstown, it has been an absolute privilege for me to officially serve our community for nearly 30 years," he told the Torch.

Director Ian Stromborg has a great sense of community spirit. He is committed to working with the community and has a very approachable and easy

on the land to tradesmen and professionals, all working together.

Hampton moved from Christchurch and lived in Sydney while Tony Hampton kept the business in the family and took the helm in New Zealand, managing production. The company executed some 400-plus interior fit-outs throughout the club and hotel industry.

Bede recalled another “great carving” at the Roosters (Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club), depicting Sir Francis Drake playing the first round of bowls and another at Fairfield RSL.

Bob Hampton died in September 1988 in Sydney, aged 73.

Club and Community Reflection: Ian Stromborg

In 2015 then Director, Ian Stromborg received an Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in the Australia Day honours list. Stromborg received his OAM for

service to local government and the Bankstown community. He was first elected as councillor to Bankstown City Council in 1987 and remained until the council was dissolved in 2016 as part of the state government council’s amalgamation program.

He served as mayor five times, was elected a director of the Workers’ Club in September 2006 and was made a life member in October 2016.

In a snapshot of Bankstown, and Revesby Workers’ proud role as a major leisure and entertainment focus within the area, Ian Stromborg, OAM, looked at the evolution from both sides of the fence – as a director of Workers’, as a former councillor on Bankstown City Council and, as of October 2016, as a life member of the club. *

This is how he saw it in the early months of 2016:

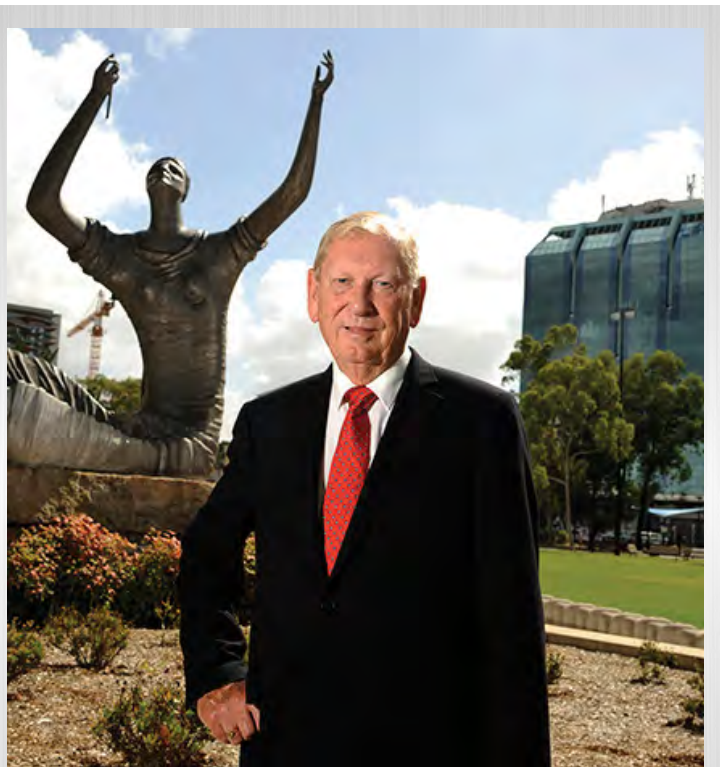
“It’s incredible to see the transformation of our club through our \$41 million redevelopment. When I walk through the club and see a diverse range of community members enjoying our new facilities, it strikes me that we truly have become a ‘community hub’.

“To have such a successful and iconic club is only fitting within our area as our City of Bankstown is also thriving. I am in the very fortunate position of being a club director and also representing our community as a councillor on Bankstown City Council. In both roles, I can see our community evolving and our way of living being shaped in a very positive way.”

Here is a quick snapshot of the City of Bankstown in 2015:

- Nearly 200,000 residents
- 402,899 visitors to leisure and aquatic centres
- 50,000 meals on wheels delivered
- 25,000 visitors to the arts centre
- 723,368 library items borrowed.

These are but a brief profile of the thriving local area. Stromborg added, “I have lived, worked and raised my family in this area since I grew up in a humble home in Padstow. With a lifetime of experience, I can say it really is an exciting time to be a club member and a local resident.”



to talk to manner. He is more than happy to listen and speak to Revesby Workers’ Club members and guests concerns to improve the Bankstown community.

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2016-18

Catering for our community

THE YEARS 2016-2018 WERE PIVOTAL ON MANY FRONTS FOR REVESBY WORKERS. THE CLUB SAID GOODBYE, AND CELEBRATED AND HONOURED A HANDFUL OF MEMBERS AND LEADERS THAT WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN SHAPING THE CLUB'S SUCCESS OVER MANY YEARS. THIS WAS BALANCED, AS LIFE OFTEN IS, BY WELCOMING NEW PEOPLE WITH FRESH IDEAS AND CELEBRATING GREAT POTENTIAL. IT WAS A TIME TO COME GOOD ON THE PROMISES OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND MODERN FACILITIES FOR FAMILIES AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.

Medical Centre of The Universe

Question: What do you do with an ex-Centrelink building purchased as part of a property acquisition, attracting little to no interest?

Answer: After considerable thought and a fortuitous meeting, the creative minds of the club came up with the idea of developing an oncology centre for the Revesby community.

In 2014, as part of the club's strategic plans to buy property around the club, Revesby Workers' purchased a nearby former Centrelink building for \$3.2 million. While it was 1,000 square metres over two levels of promising rental space, the plans for what to do with it ran dry until inspiration came from our neighbours in the north.

Dr Robin Weekes, a long-time medical practitioner in the area, introduced the club to the chief executive officer of a private oncology service, Radiation Oncology Centres (ROC) which had five centres in Queensland and one in Gosford.

ROC joined Quadrant Private Equity and Icon Cancer Care to form Icon Consolidated

Holdings (ICH) group. It quickly became the number one stand-alone private day-oncology provider in Australia, as well as the number two radiation oncology service provider.

Icon was the perfect partner to enable the development of Revesby community as a medical “centre of the universe”, thanks to the vision of the board and management of Revesby Workers’ Club who saw the bigger picture a decade earlier.

According to Revesby’s long-standing CEO, Ed Camilleri, “Icon have done their research to show that in the Bankstown LGA (Local

Government Area), if a person has to have treatment for cancer through radiation, they can’t go to Bankstown hospital because it doesn’t provide oncology services. Patients have to be taken to either Liverpool hospital or St George hospital.”

Fast forward to completion and the facility providing a great service to Bankstown, firstly by providing an oncology service and secondly for patients needing further treatment at what would become known as the Brett Street Medical Precinct.

State-of-the-art
Icon Cancer Centre.





Top: Aunty Eight's Vietnamese restaurant.
 Above and right: Firestone Kitchen and Bar featuring outdoor terrace and Carlton United Tanks.



The Dining Precinct

It was food for thought during 2016 and 2017 as the club undertook a major development project to create a new dining precinct. The space that was home to Family Table Bistro and Cabaret Lounge was transformed. A new bistro was expanded out over the Health Mates Fitness Centre and the Noodle Bar and the Italian Restaurant was repositioned to form a ward of culinary delights.

The result was Firestone, an open plan relaxed family dining experience, with alfresco dining, outdoor fireplace, a 90 inch LED screen, Unpasteurised Tank Beer, Gelato and Dessert Bar and a Kids Room. The mantle, Firestone was chosen as a reflection of the unique spaces created within the restaurant, as well as the material finishes, such as the fireplace and the many stone finishes.

In contrast, Aunty Eight's gave patrons an authentic Vietnamese street food experience, featuring an open theatrical kitchen with a poultry and produce display. Named because 'aunty' is an affectionate term in the Vietnamese culture and because the number eight traditionally signifies good luck.



Italian cuisine was a no-brainer to round out the new dining precinct. Over the years, Bel Cibo had been raking in accolades with back-to-back culinary industry awards. As part of the enhancement, Bel Cibo was relaunched as

a new contemporary, sophisticated Italian dining experience featuring an iconic and boutique wine selection and cocktail bar.

The dining precinct was the final feather in the cap of the \$11 million infrastructure overhaul.

FAREWELL TO THE LAST ORIGINAL 14

Joan Higgs was one of the original 14 female Foundation Members, and the final surviving of the group until her sad passing on Sunday 3 April 2014 at the age of 89.

In May 2012, Joan, wife of former Secretary Manager of Revesby Workers' Club, officially opened the club's multi-story carpark, named in honour of her late husband, one of the longest serving CEOs, Brien Higgs.

Remembered by members and staff alike as one of the club's most avid supporters, Joan was widely respected. The club enjoyed a special bond with Joan, whose support of her husband and commitment to the club were prime factors in the club's successful growth under Higgs' stewardship.

During her early years, Joan was raised in

the prosperous, ever-growing (and eventual city) Orange, until her adolescence when she moved to Earlwood. She raised her own family, sons Paul and Mark and daughter Carol, in Panania and Chipping Norton, thus setting the groundwork for her and Brien's early association with the Workers' Club. Joan was one of 14 women among the 240 foundation members, all of whom gave their occupations as "domestic duties". She was the last surviving foundation female member.

From the time she stood side-by-side with Brien in those earliest years, her caring nature endeared her to the Workers' Club family.





Moira Gensch Paintings

In 2018, the world and the local community lost a beloved artist who would be forever linked to the club through her paintings.

Moira Gensch's artworks could be found hanging in the club's Brett Street foyer, adjacent to Vladimir Tichy's large ceramic hangs. All three were created as a tribute to Henry Lawson.

Moira was the Art Mistress for almost 10 years at Bankstown Girls' High School. Prior to that, she had taught at East Hill Boys' High School, was the Art Demonstrator at Sydney Teachers' College at the University of Sydney and trained at the famous East Sydney Tech Art School.

Upon discovering her talent, the club board commissioned Moira in early 1970s to produce the paintings to go on display in the Henry Lawson Room and Cocktail Lounge, which opened in 1973.

Both paintings were based on short stories by

Henry Lawson and depict scenes in two of his famous stories. *The Drover's Wife* is a dramatic short story written in 1892 based on the hardships of a woman left alone with her four children in an isolated hut in outback Australia. *The Loaded Dog*,



Above left:
'The Drover's Wife'
Right: 'The Loaded Dog'



written in 1901, is a farcical short story about three gold miners and their dog, which runs riot with a bomb cartridge in its mouth.

In an interview with Club President Daryl Melham not long before she died, aged 84, Moira recalled that each painting took a couple of days to complete and while drying on her veranda at her Padstow home, a possum climbed onto one and skidded over it. She revealed that she had to hastily clean it up and partly repaint it to turn it into the piece that stands pride of place in the club all these years later.

Whitlam Institute Program Funding

The Whitlam name will be forever treasured at Revesby Workers' Club for the warmth and support of the club by the 21st prime minister of Australia. And all the more by the Revesby board's significant investment in the Whitlam Institutes' Civic Education Program, to ensure it remains front and centre in the minds of the Revesby members and the community. Commencing in 2017, the club became a major sponsor, funding the program for \$60,000 per year for an initial period of five years.

Although the Whitlam Institute has a national policy focus, it was relocated within Western Sydney University with a strong link to the Greater Western Sydney region, identifying with the people who live there, just as Gough Whitlam did. He was the first Labor leader to represent an electorate based in the suburbs of Western Sydney. His awareness of the issues facing the people living there had a marked impact on the way he shaped his party's policy programs.

Successfully implemented in its first year, the Whitlam Institute Civics Education Program more than justified its place in the education of the youth and the \$60,000 annual funding provided by Revesby Workers' 2018 was the second year of a five-year program.

The institute's civics program for young people, was focused on "what they think is important and an appreciation that the health of our democracy relies on their participation in it".

It offered opportunities for young people to speak for themselves – in writing, speech or



The Hon.
Gough Whitlam

Whitlam Institute

WITHIN WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

performance – and, at a level suitable to their age, to learn about government and citizenship.

Elements of the program included:

The "What Matters" student writing competition for ages five to twelve in NSW. In 2016, 3,871 participated.

The schools' program focused on history and civics for all ages, with more than 1300 primary school children participating in 2016.

Collaborative programs with community groups and educational resources.

For Revesby Workers' Club it was about keeping the faith. Just as the Gough Whitlam had through his electorate, so too the Institute developed a strong link to the Greater Western Sydney region.

Revesby continued the funding of the Caroline Chisholm Public School, a special-needs school. In 2018 the support was enough to replace a torn and damaged shade cloth that had deteriorated badly over the years. The school catered for students with severe or moderate intellectual and multiple disabilities aged four to 18. The shade project was set to provide a sun-safe environment for the high support needs students who, due to behaviour, were unable to wear a hat.

Panania Sport and Recreation Centre 'The Fibro'

Club business was still afoot, and the board decided in December 2016 that Panania Sport and Recreation Centre, under lease from council, would no longer be supported by the club after its lease expired in September 2017. The club's trading losses were unacceptable and the Board decided it could not justify taking out another 30 year lease. At the time there were 140 male bowlers and less than 70 female bowlers, who could be accommodated at the club's Revesby Bowling Club site.

The last game of bowls was played at Panania on 28th June 2017.



Daryl Melham Awarded AM

Joining the growing list of club mainstays receiving Queens birthday honours was club president, Daryl Melham awarded an AM for service to the Parliament of Australia in 2017.

Revesby Workers' board members had been recognised over some years for their services and skills in community and club life. It reflected on the quality of personnel that had been guiding the club over the decades. Ian Stromborg and the late Pat Rogan had previously received Order of Australia Medals (OAM). Stromborg, in the 2015 Australia Day honours list, for service to local government and the Bankstown community and Rogan, in the 2016 Australia Day honours list, for his service to local community and the success of clubs in New South Wales.

Joining their ranks, Melham was recognised for significant service to the Parliament of Australia, and to the community of southwest Sydney through a range of organisations. His background was impressive. He was the Labor member for Banks from 1990 to 2013; Member, Opposition Shadow Ministry, 1996-2000 and 2001-2004; Shadow Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs, 1996-2000; Shadow Minister for Housing, Urban Development and Local Government, 2003-2004, among many other shadow ministerial portfolios.

Melham worked in law as a solicitor in the Office of the New South Wales Public Solicitor (later known as Legal Aid Commission), 1978-1987,

and was a Barrister (Public Defender), from 1987 to 1990.

In the realm of community where his passion and commitment to his local community became so apparent, he had been president of the Revesby Workers' Club from 2010; vice president, 1982-2010; life member, 1992; director since 1980. In 2018 he was chairman of MaroniteCare and representative of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 1996-2000.

Melham, strengthened by a highly committed and understanding board, had been the driving force behind the growth of Revesby Workers' Club, keenly aware of the significance of portraying the club's history to its members.

At the time, Mr Melham said his work with Revesby Workers' Club over 36 years had also been immensely rewarding. "When I worked there in the 1970s, we were selling 300, 18-gallon kegs of beer a week, and today we sell 100, 14-gallon kegs of beer a week," he said. "It shows the changing demographics of the club industry.

"We're proud of what we've achieved with the club, which has grown from 35,000 members eight years ago, to almost 70,000 members today. We've diversified, offering a range of facilities for the broader community."

Revesby Workers' Sports Club Opened

The long and highly anticipated renovation of the Revesby Workers' Sports Club was finished to the excitement of members. Its modern family friendly features included both indoor and outdoor dining



Revesby Workers' Sports Club entrance.



Revesby Workers' Sports Club bowling greens

space, a comfortable lounge, fully equipped bar and outdoor sporting facilities.

A real drawcard for the local community, there was something for everyone. There was a bistro for burger lovers (and fussy eaters), not to mention breakfast on the Veranda every Sunday.

Speaking of Sunday, Revesby came to declare every Sunday as family day. The facilities were ideal for parents to enjoy some time in the sunshine and the food while the kids were kept amused

with favourite local free entertainment such as: Balloon Benders, Face Painters, Clowns, Animal Farms, Wrangling Reptiles and more.

For a more adult vibe, every Saturday night some of Sydney's best acoustic bands took to the stage in the Lounge. Some of the most popular local acts the first year were Evoke, Georgia White, Retro Groove, Everyday People, and Azura. If that wasn't enough, the weekly calendar was full of regular raffles and trivia nights.

John Rodwell Life Membership

During a moving address at the 2017 AGM, Club President Daryl Melham spoke on behalf of the board of directors to nominate John Rodwell for life membership of Revesby Workers' Club.

Melham detailed Rodwell's commitment to the board of directors in his capacity as vice president, commenting, with conviction, that he was highly valued and appreciated. Rodwell was a very active liaison director to his sub clubs, particularly to the Revesby Workers' Little Athletics Inc, of which he was a life member.



Revesby Workers' Sports Club outdoor veranda.

Below: Ron Polley (right) and John Rodwell (left), President Revesby Workers' Little Athletics Centre 1990.

Former Labor State politician, Alan Ashton, a member for East Hills, also spoke in support of the nomination, noting that Rodwell was also an executive of the Light on the Hill Society. Rodwell's

professionalism and commitment to the Workers' Club had long been appreciated.

Elected a director in 2007 and vice president in September 2010, Rodwell was awarded life membership, when Melham, fittingly, presenting him with his badge. Rodwell made mention of his granddaughter, Maggie Grace Rodwell, who is fortunate enough to have her late great-grandfather Howard Bush also awarded life membership.



RON POLLEY

A Man of Few Words and Great Loyalty

In 2018, the club observed the passing of former director and club life member, Ron Polley on 14 January, aged 84. His history with the club went way back, joining on 21 March 1966 (badge number 432) and elected to the board in 1982, along with Norma Smith.

A toolmaker by trade, Polley was secretary, then president, and a life member of Revesby Workers' Football (Soccer) Club. At the time of his death, Club president at the time Daryl Melham described Polley as "hardworking, dedicated, never scared to get his hands dirty." These were acclamations supported by the club board and CEO, Ed Camilleri. Melham explained that Polley stood for election at a time in the club's history when there was some turmoil within the board of directors and was elected on 6 December 1982 with the top vote of 62.4%, after several resignations within the board.

Melham said Polley was able to maintain a calming influence on club governance and, in the eyes of the membership, had steered the club in the right direction.

Melham also remembered him as "a man of simple tastes, few words but very loyal and a highly regarded member of the club who made a significant contribution". Camilleri fondly recalled the time he himself was new CEO and of the support and guidance Polley gave him.

Polley served 11 years as a director and was awarded life membership of the club at the annual general meeting on 26 September 1993; he did not seek re-election at that AGM because of ill health.

Christine Benham Life Membership

Christine Benham was nominated for life membership of the Revesby Workers' Club by club vice president, John Rodwell, in 2018.

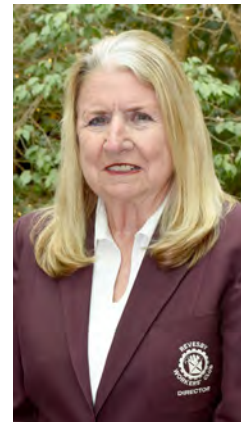
Benham had already been awarded a life membership of the Bankstown District Cricket Association and the Revesby Workers' Cricket Club and in 2009 was named Bankstown Citizen of the Year by Bankstown City Council.

According to the club nomination, Benham presided over ten years of massive club development at Revesby Workers'. She had been a major contributor to discussion, debate and decision-making at board meetings. Her extensive financial experience had been invaluable in assisting other board members and management.

She was elected to the board in 2008 and immediately became a member of the Bill Bullard Charity Committee, raising funds for local nominated charities.

Benham also provided extensive commitment in various roles and in 2018 was community representative on the Caroline Chisholm Public School's school council.

She was an active member of the charity committee and an advocate for its activities, as well as a driving force for the cricket club and its many activities.



Terry Semlitzky: A Life of Service

The third longest serving Revesby Workers' Club Director and Life Member, Terry Semlitzky bid his adieu to his duties when retired as a director after an impressive 25 years' service to the Club as a Director.

Upon his retirement, Club President Daryl Melham revealed that in his first election, Semlitzky received 90.09 per cent of the votes.

Recognition also came from outside the club. Semlitzky also received an honorary fellowship of

ClubsNSW for 25 years of service post-retirement.

He was good on figures, explaining that at the time of his retirement there had been 37 directors at Revesby Workers' Club since its inception, but there had been only six changes in the 25 years he had been involved – such had been the stability of recent boards.

Many noted for some time after his retirement that the board meetings were different without Semlitzky, but all agreed he had done his job and could put his feet up!



Semlitzky left the long-held post after making a touching tribute to his time at Revesby, "I've made one of the hardest decisions of my life this year, by not nominating for the Board of Directors of Revesby Workers' Club, it was not made lightly.

I have been a member of the club for 52 years, 25 years as a director and 50 years on various committees, Darts and Fishing clubs. I celebrated my 75th birthday this year, so thought it was time to hand the reins to someone else.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my years as a director and have witnessed many changes in that time, and know that I have left a legacy, along with my fellow Directors and Management, that I believe to be beneficial to the club and the members. There have been 37 Directors of Revesby Workers' Club since its inception, but there have only been 6 changes in the 25 years I have been involved, such is the stability of the current Board, and it should be allowed to continue as such.

I have been an active member of the club for those 52 years, firstly with the Darts, winning many team championships including winning the first Bankstown Open Singles in 1978, the club doubles with Bill Woods in 1985, State Fours, Sixes and various other competitions. I also became the first Life Member of the Darts Club, along with Stella Morgan. I have won the Fishing Club championships six times 1985, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1999, 2000, and caught the biggest fish of the year in 1986. I was also granted Life Member of The Fisho's. I won the C Grade Snooker Championships in 2000, B Grade in 2001, and with my son Dean won the Men's Doubles in 2006, a title of which I'm very proud.

I am honoured to be a Life Member of the Revesby Workers' Club, the Fishing Club and the Darts Club, along with my wife Sue and son Dean, not too many families would have three Life Members of the same club, although I'm sure the Heaslips from the Cricket Club will be up there.

Along with my wife Sue, I have been running a Trivia Night for the club's various charities for the last 27 years, and my daughter, Vanessa now assists. We get so much response

from our sub clubs for these fundraising, fun nights, they are to be congratulated, along with the prizes donated by the Club, we have been able to raise over \$55,000 for Bill Bullard Charity. With the club's support, I will continue to conduct these social, friendly, functions.

The Semlitzkys have been involved with the Revesby Workers' Club for many years, with my dad Col an early member, my mother Daphne, sisters Marelle and Lynne, my wife Sue and son and daughter, Dean and Vanessa, all members. Dean first represented RWC playing junior cricket at age five, and played for 16 years, he is on the Darts, Fishing committees, he is currently playing bowls, and has won various tournaments, and along with mum, Sue, won the mixed doubles 3 years in a row. Vanessa played Teeball for Workers, also Netball, and made the zone representative team. Sue is the current Treasurer of the Darts Club, a position she has held since 1994, and is a currently a selector for the Ladies Bowling Club. Along with Dean, I have been running a Friday Night Darts Comp, which was originally held at The Fibro, now at The Revesby Sports Club, and we have raised over \$5,000 from that social night for the Clubs Charity Committee.

I have been playing guitar and singing around the local Nursing Homes, since 2006, Yallambee, Betty Sussman, Rendu and have thoroughly enjoyed it, I recently went to our childcare centre, The Treehouse, and entertained the kids there, playing guitar and mouth organ, what a pleasure to be able to do so, the children were so responsive to the music. They went to Yallambee Village, to entertain the elderly residents, and I was invited along, to accompany them for a singalong. I am looking forward to continuing this association with the children and the staff.

I will miss not being a director, but will continue to serve members, sporting bodies and charities to the best of my ability. Thank you everyone for their kind support over the years, the Board, Management, Staff, and especially my wife, Sue and my family."



Kylie Wilkinson New Director

While Terry Semlitzky could never really be replaced, the personnel gap he left was filled when Kylie Wilkinson was officially elected as a new board director at Revesby at the annual general meeting on 28 October 2018. In what constituted a show of faith in the current board, Wilkinson stood without opposition – unusual at a time when Ed Camilleri felt there were “some good people out there”.

Camilleri wrote of the stability of both the management and the board, factors during his long term with the club that have kept the Workers’ family together, “achieving everything by being united”.

Wilkinson came with high credentials. She had worked for the Community and Public Sector Union and was a union delegate for most of her career. She also served as a Labor Party member for several years and sat on executive boards managing and implementing change programs.

Kylie had a reputation for being an active sportsperson, having represented Australia in touch football and netball.

A mother of six grown-up children, Kylie had been raised in Earlwood and moved to East Hills in 1988. Although she retired in 2016, she volunteered as a member of the Bankstown Canterbury Community Transport Board and was the chair of the board.

In 2015, Wilkinson visited the Solomon Islands with several NSW parliamentarians to work with the Australian High Commission, hosting seminars that focused on empowering women through sport and political campaigning, in an aim to encourage Solomon Island women to take on more leadership roles in their community.

It is clear that her appointment as a board member of Revesby Workers’, Wilkinson’s experience and representation within the community, volunteering and public sector made her an ideal addition to the collective.



Bill’s Place

A Memory Care Unit at Bankstown City Aged Care, affectionately named ‘Bill’s Place’, in 2018 was dedicated to past president, director and life member of the club, Bill Bullard, OAM for his significant contributions to the community.

Built as an extension of Yallambee Village at Revesby, the Memory Care Unit was a 48-bed modern home-like facility offering residents an innovative lifestyle program including music, art, and humour therapy, access to a sensory garden, and use of Paro — the resident robotic seal specially designed to support those with dementia.

Grants to local schools, which had been first suggested by the late Bill Bullard OAM when president in the 1980s and early ’90s, remained fundamental to Revesby’s club grants programs. In 2018, for instance, each of 27 local schools received a \$3000 grant, as well as an additional



The Memory Care unit at the Yallabee Village, Bankstown City Aged Care.

school, the Brooklyn Public School, on the Hawkesbury River close to the Mooney Mooney Club. By the time of its 19th year, the program delivered \$84,000 collectively to the schools annually; two were special education schools.

Bullard started the initiative in 1995 when schools were granted initially \$1000. The amount escalated to \$2000 and, currently, to \$3000.

Bill Bullard would be remembered for other reasons, always on compassionate grounds. Bill's Place was a purpose-built, large, new wing of the Bankstown Aged Care – much like a five-star facility.

As the building construction continued, Bankstown Aged Care wanted the facility named after a worthy person attached to the Revesby Workers' Club because the club provided a very substantial grant – \$500,000. Thus, Bill's Place came to be.

Wednesday, November 7, 2007 THE TORCH 21

Federal MP Daryl Melham and Cr Kevin Hill marked the start of work on the redevelopment of Yallabee Village (above) and (right) guests look over the plans.

Aged care revamp is now underway

AFTER more than 25 years as a low care hostel-type facility, Yallabee Village at Revesby has begun a \$35m redevelopment to offer facilities that are "more in tune with the 21st century".

The beginning of work was marked with the turning of the first sod by Federal MP for Banks Daryl Melham and chairman of Bankstown City Aged Care, Cr Kevin Hill.

Mr Hill said aged care has changed dramatically over the years and residents coming into care are more frail and require a different building fabric.

The baby boomers who are starting to come into care require more expansive facilities that are more IT advanced.

At the end of that development the village will have 100 ageing in place units all under one roof and with a footprint of two storeys. Each unit will have its own ensuite which will be disabled accessible, an area where residents and their visitors can make a cup of tea and visit in privacy, plasma flat screen TVs connected to certain Foxtel services and the latest telephone and IT technology.

Residents coming into the facility as low care will remain in the facility as their needs increase to high care.

Previously residents would go into a low care facility and as they became more frail they would have to find a different high care facility to move to. These future residents will not have that problem.

The first stage of this development involves building a 60 bed unit, to which 40 beds will be added at a later date. The first stage will cost over \$11m to build and equip.

Bankstown City Aged Care CEO Terry Madden said they have been extremely fortunate to have wonderful donors like the licensed clubs.

Clubs to have pledged money include Bankstown District Sports Club (\$430,000), Revesby Workers' Club (\$150,000) and City of Bankstown RSL Community Club (\$100,000) of which they have already paid \$25,000. Panania East Hills RSL have sponsored \$7000 towards one bed and Bankstown Trotting Recreational Club has sponsored two beds at \$20,000.

"At the completion of the 100 ageing in place beds (Stage One 60 beds, Stage Two 40 beds) we will move on to Stage Three which involves self care (retirement village living)," Mr Madden said.

"We will construct at least 30 units on the site and finally Stage Four will involve a complete refurbishment of all the gardens and general areas for the benefit of the residents.

"At the completion of the project residents living at Yallabee will be in the most modern, state-of-the-art aged care facility in Bankstown or any where in NSW."



The Bill Bullard Charity Foundation gala event held in the Whitlam Theatre.

Asbestos Diseases Research Institute

By 2018, Australia had one the world's highest incidence of malignant mesothelioma per capita, with more than 700 new cases diagnosed each year due to the widespread use of the known carcinogen, asbestos.

It was that year that Revesby Workers' Club began supporting the Asbestos Diseases Research Institute (ADRI), funding a scholarship program for \$45,000 per year for a minimum of three years from 2018. Students studying their PhDs at the University of Sydney researched projects in malignant pleural mesothelioma at the institute.

The research was fundamental to the institute in achieving its aim to improve the diagnosis and treatment of asbestos-related diseases and at the same time to contribute to more effective measures to prevent exposure to asbestos.

As a response to the incidence of malignant mesothelioma in Australia, the institute, located in the Bernie Banton Centre, was opened in January 2009 by the then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd. The institute was established by the Asbestos Diseases Research Foundation, a charitable, not-for-profit foundation, dedicated to assist and support the institute's research into asbestos-related diseases.



Bernie Banton became the public face of the campaign for the rights of those suffering asbestos-related diseases. He died in 2007 from the disease, but not before vigorous and courageous campaigning.

The fight hit home at Revesby Workers' after the club's very popular president and ClubsNSW chairman Pat Rogan contracted the disease and later died in February 2015 from the consequence of working in an asbestos environment.

Funding was badly needed. Revesby Workers' joined with the club's charity committee to host an inaugural event and to champion the research, which had touched so many families in the community. The funds were also to support Bankstown Hospital and Beautiful Minds, Bankstown, within the mental health sector.

To support the institute's research pioneers, who, along with the hospital professionals, continued to work on finding a cure for this condition Revesby Workers' continued to play its part and host another major fundraising venture.

The Charity combined with the Club to support



the Asbestos Disease Research Institute (ADRI) and Bankstown Hospital including Beautiful Minds. Research by ADRI is interesting to say the least and researchers had uncovered many new facts. The Charity also funded the purchase of two cardiograph machines for use in the Cardiology Ward of Bankstown Hospital at a cost of \$26,000.00.

Presentation of cheques during the charity gala event.

To raise funds the Charity worked with the Club to raffle a new car, and a \$1,500 travel voucher (donated by Helloworld Travel Revesby). On Friday 30 August 2019 the Charity hosted a finale evening within the Club for presentations to winners.

HOME GROWN CRICKET STAR

With sub clubs covering much of the club's propensity for sport and leisure pursuits, Ashleigh "Ash" Gardner emerged as one of the club's finest talents. She played all her junior cricket with Revesby Workers' Cricket Club and played cricket for Australia.

From a humble beginning, Ash developed her all-round game eventually debuting in the Australian women's Twenty20 team against New Zealand on 17 February 2017.

In June of the same year, she became the first Indigenous Australian woman to play in a cricket World Cup, when she represented Australia against Pakistan.

She made the Sydney Sixers squad for the 2018-19 Women's Big Bash League season. Onya Ash!



22



2019-21

Change is afoot

Time to reflect and plan for the future

BY THE DAWN OF 2019, THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY WAS BECOMING TOP OF MIND - FOR ECONOMIES, BUSINESSES, FOR PEOPLE AND FOR THE PLANET. LITTLE DID WE KNOW, AT THAT TIME, JUST HOW CONNECTED WE ALL WERE AND HOW CONDITIONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL COULD HAVE SUCH SWEEPING RAMIFICATIONS, RENDERING SO MANY VULNERABLE.

Which made it all the more fortunate that Revesby Workers' had always focused on the things that were controllable and on doing whatever possible to improve the lives of those in our immediate community.

Energy Efficiency Works

In the name of energy efficiency, in January 2019, Revesby set to modernising the building plant and equipment. According to Facilities Manager, Simon Melham, the club had a lot of old tired equipment, including a Trane air-conditioning unit from 1973 that needed replacing.

He explained, "Located in our cellar, we had inefficient refrigeration condenser units generating so much heat that on a warm summer's day temperatures in the cellar area would reach the mid-40s. We replaced these condenser units with a modern rack system that utilises condenser water from our new cooling towers. This reduced the heat load within the cellar area and reduced electricity costs significantly."

The location of the chillers is as behind the scenes of the club as you can get. It's a different world down there, and it is where the controls for maintaining a comfortable temperature level for club patrons are, where lighting is controlled and more. In short, it is

the hidden ground control for the equipment responsible for keeping the club running smoothly: little things that are truly big things.

Revesby had long held a policy to bring inhouse the workers who took care of the behind-the-scenes operations, unlike other similar organisations that were more likely to outsource it to contractors.

Melham, for example, started his career at Revesby Workers' as a carpenter in 2004. He recalled, "Back then it was a small team, like a handyman type of set-up, none of the people I was working with at the time had trade certificates. Over several years, they slowly moved on and I moved up through the ranks and eventually got to the role of Facilities Manager. In that time, I began to employ tradesmen with qualifications, so we've currently got a licensed plumber, two licensed electricians, a carpenter and a gardener/groundsman."

Another member of the team, Wayne Steele started as a gardener in February 1987, but developed into a caretaker/groundsman for the whole of the Revesby Workers' Club complex. His remit covered everything from the gardens back and front of the club to cleaning – sometimes three times a day – the Coles and the Workers' Club's multi-level car parks.

So, when the time came to take on the task of improving energy efficiency of the club, the job was entrusted with this small army of diligent workers. The result was an upgrade to the air conditioning plant and introduction of new Air Handling Units (AHUs) to the rooftop, thus improving the venue's energy efficiency and providing members and guests with comfortable spaces.

Central Collective: Built, Rebranded, Launched

Although in 2019 reducing debt was a primarily focus of the club, one large refurbishment very much remained on the books. It was one that had been in gestation for a long time. Renovation



of the aptly named Central Spine, began on 25 March 2019. It was bookmarked to play a significant role in modernising the aesthetic of the place.

The club was looking at a \$3 million make-over. High on the list of areas to upgrade was the Java café, which would be transformed and spread across to where the new restaurants were situated. Other changes included a new sporty zone, a business lounge and function rooms.

An essential link between both sides of the club, the Central Spine would seamlessly connect all core areas to round out the main floor renovations. It would be named initially the Central Collective, featuring a new café and bar, and the Henry Lawson Library and Event Rooms.

The design brief of Central Collective was to reflect the key styles and finishes embodying: industrial elegance, fine structure and detailing, lightness, simplicity, and warm earth tones combined with cool marine / green and metallic accents.

A few concessions were made during construction to minimise disruption to members and guests, including a Pop-Up Café in the Brett Street Foyer, and several regular club activities such bingo and poker were relocated to the Sports Bar. But, by 1 August 2019, the Central Collective, was officially opened to all members and guests.

Facilities Team 2021



The Henry Lawson Library

The results were nothing short of tantalising. Central Collective Eatery and Bar was a new style café and bar experience, but the name did not resonate with club members and so was rebranded to Café 240 and Bar 240.

Café 240 | Bar 240 – named in recognition of the 240 original members. Aptly known as the

‘Foundation Members,’ of which fourteen were women, all with equal rights. Their names were recorded in an affidavit submission, dated 1 May 1962 made by the original Secretary, Brien Higgs, to the Metropolitan Licensing Court in support of a conditional application for a certificate of registration for the club.





Created with casual brunches and light family dinners in mind, it was a relaxed dining destination. The menu style options were Grab and Go gourmet meals to fresh daily baked pastries to light salads and sides. A traditional woodfired oven for serving sweet and savoury pizza and calzones was a star inclusion.

The Henry Lawson Library was a specialty design working space for professionals or businesspeople seeking a workspace outside the office. Popular for impromptu and informal meetings with coffee and light meals close at hand. Offering all expected mod cons of the day such as Wi-Fi connectivity, device charging facilities, power outlets and communal reading lounges.

Two-Time Winner at The Ace Awards

For two years on the trot, Revesby took out the Venue Award for Excellence and Commitment to Entertainment at the Australian Club Entertainment (ACE) Awards in 2018 and 2019. The ACE Awards are the only awards dedicated solely to Australian Club variety entertainment and Revesby Workers' proudly took the gong thanks to its diverse range of entertainment for all ages,

encompassing everything from monthly seniors' concerts to school holidays workshops for kids.

One of the biggest showstoppers of 2019 was the Club Troppo Reunion. Almost 1,000 attendees came out to relive their youth in a re-enactment of the original 'Club Troppo' nightclub previously hosted in the Cabaret Lounge.

Vice President John Rodwell accepting the ACE Award in 2019 with Liesl Miller, Marketing and Entertainment.





CEO Farewelled

As the end of 2019 rolled around, the Workers' club announcement Ed Camilleri, the club's Chief Executive Officer, was moving on after 28 fruitful years as the management spearhead. Camilleri had been at the front office through almost three decades in which Revesby Workers' Club stood at the very pointy end of successful licensed clubs in Australia.

At the time of Camilleri's departure, Acting CEO, Craig Epton had this to say, "He was instrumental at establishing the Club as a leader within the industry and an important provider of community-based services for our local area. He had been a dedicated and well-respected leader for nearly three decades, residing on a few industry boards, the implementation of a



diversification strategy key to the groups long term future and strong membership growth to now over 71,000. Ed, thank you for providing me with the opportunity to be part of the Revesby Workers' team and good luck in your future endeavours."



J.P O'NEILL VALE

Originally published in the May 1973 Journal:

It is with regret that I report the sad passing of our Club Solicitor, Mr. J. P. (John) O'Neill of J. P. O'Neill & Son, Solicitors, South Terrace, Bankstown on 30th March, at the comparatively young age of 56 years.

The late John O'Neill, Badge No. 8 in the Club's Register, was in no small way responsible for the Club's existence, as without his guidance, wisdom and experience in the Licensing field all the efforts of the Foundation Directors and supporters of our Club would have been in vain, as our records will prove that the founders of this Club, to use a colloquialism, had run around in circles for approximately two years prior to accepting some worthy advice and putting ourselves in his capable hands.

Within a few short months he had re-drafted our Constitution, geared and organised us to the extent that our Articles had been registered and we were more or less on the way.

This would be a tale that could be told many times over in relation to the commencement of so many clubs within and beyond the Metropolitan area that I have lost count of such, so that as a result of the number of clubs he successfully steered through the Licensing Court countless thousands of club members are now enjoying the facilities and

amenities provided by the Club movement which would otherwise have been denied to them.

Over the years John had become more than our legal advisor, but a close personal friend, and it was indeed our privilege to have been able to rate him so highly that it was only "just", that it was his honour to be allocated Badge No. 8 following on after the original seven Foundation Directors.

Many is the occasion, even to calling him from his bed at night when his advice was sought on matters of a highly legal and technical nature, and at no time did he ever express or register any irritation – even on the morning when I dragged him from under the shower he was still his old genial self.

It was a sad day for Brien and I when we attended both the service at the Church and his funeral. We were there representing the Board and Club, not on the loss of our legal advisor but paying homage to a near and dear friend.

On behalf of the Club we expressed our heartfelt sympathies and offered our condolences to his son Terry and his partner, Darryl Nagel to be conveyed to Mrs. O'Neill and family.

Farewell, dear faithful friend.

Jim Donovan, President

Life Membership and A Life Spent in Service

Linda Downey, Mayor of Bankstown and long-esteemed educator had been an active member of the Revesby Workers' Club's scholarship committee for 20 years when she was awarded Life Membership of the club in October 2019.

Her association with Revesby Workers' was part of her lineage; the Downey family membership dates back to when her father, Bob Downey joined the club in 1966 and his wife Marguerite (Peggy), in 1970. In subsequent years, Linda and her daughter Gemma – who played netball for the club in her youth and worked part time at the club while she completed her university studies – would follow.

Linda, who joined the club in 1981, embarked on a career as a teacher, beginning at Sir Joseph Banks High School and from 2009 at East Hills Girls Technology High School.

While continuing her teaching career, Linda became restless, realising there was more to life and, in 2008, was elected to the Bankstown Council, representing the south ward, where she remained until 2015. In the 1990s, Linda had played a leading role in opposition to a second Sydney Airport at Holsworthy. Later, she led the local opposition to the major expansion of the Bankstown airport.

Mayor of Bankstown in 2014 (from September 2014 to September 2015), Linda officially opened the Revesby Village Centre on Saturday, 9 May 2015. With Canterbury and Bankstown Councils merging as one to Canterbury Bankstown Council, on 12 May 2016, Linda was elected to the new council in 2017, representing the Revesby ward. The combined Bankstown-Canterbury Council became the largest Council in NSW, by population, with more than 361,000 residents.

She served as an active member of the Revesby Workers' Club's scholarships committee for 20 years and contributed to the selection criteria for the awards as well as participating in the annual selection process. She strongly lobbied for further scholarships for trades training and for club staff.

Linda was an inaugural and continuing member of the committee of The Light on the Hill Society – the club-sponsored society which organises presentations by keynote speakers on economic, social and political topics, especially those relevant to south west Sydney.

As a teacher at East Hills Girls High School, Linda encouraged and successfully facilitated workplace training for students with the club. A pilot program to provide enhanced work placement opportunities for Year 11 and 12 students studying VETiS (Vocational Education and Training in Schools) was held. Girls undertook hospitality courses under Revesby Workers' Club staff supervision, including during a special three course meal for 25 guests in Bel Cibo in 2018. The pilot was so successful the program was taken state-wide.

Linda was awarded Life Membership of the Australian Labor Party in 2017. Married to former long-serving Member of Parliament for East Hills, and Club patron Alan Ashton, they had two daughters. The life membership was acknowledgement of her great service to the area and its people.

Terry Semlitzky: 2020 Volunteer of The Year

Previous Director, and all-round good guy, Terry Semlitzky was awarded the Canterbury-Bankstown 2020 Volunteer of The Year.

In conjunction with many years involved in sporting and community organisations, raising funds and volunteering his time to community causes, he was a director at Revesby Workers' Club for 25 Years and an active member for over 50 years.

Terry ran a trivia night for the Club's various charities for 27+ years and raised over \$55,000 for the Bill Bullard Foundation. His volunteering extended to copious aged care events, giving up his time to play the guitar and conducting sing-a-longs in local nursing homes. His selfless dedication to his community, union and sporting groups over many years was remarkable and made him a prime candidate for the accolade.





Scott Bennetts Takes The Reins

Following the departure of mainstay, Ed Camilleri, Scott Bennetts was heralded in as new CEO. No stranger to Revesby Workers,' Scott held the position of Chief Operating Officer from 2008-2012, before taking on the role as CEO at the Easts Group, encompassing Eastern Suburb Leagues Club and four additional Sydney licensed clubs.

During his tenure he was also appointed CEO of the Sydney Roosters from 2013-2015 and again in 2018. He was an executive manager in the Registered Club Industry since 1999, a member of the Australian Club Gaming Council with qualifications in Commerce and Business Management, and brought a particular flare for corporate business strategy, hospitality operations and community engagement initiatives to the Revesby community.

The Unprecedented COVID-19 Closure

The year 2020 was of course the year we were introduced to COVID-19. A global pandemic never before seen in our lifetime, the ultra-contagious virus swept the world, causing unwellness, lockdowns, uncertainty and radical changes to business.

The first confirmed case in Australia was identified on 25 January in Victoria. The World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January, and a Pandemic on 11 March.

The Australian Government announced guidelines to cancel all non-essential gatherings of more than 500 people from Monday, 16 March. By the closing of the week, this figure had been reduced to 100 people. On the evening of Sunday, 22 March, the Australian Government enforced its 'Stage One' restrictions. This meant that all 'pubs, clubs (excluding bottle shops), hotels (excluding accommodation), gyms and indoor sporting venues, cinemas, entertainment venues, casinos, and night clubs' would be forced to close their doors from midday on Monday, 23 March to combat the spread of COVID-19.

From an operational perspective, government



restrictions caused an unheard-of closure of the club from 23 March to 1 June 2020. Upon government sanctioned reopening on 15 May, club cafes and restaurants were allowed to seat only 10 patrons at any one time. For a venue that could comfortably accommodate over 800 collectively in its restaurants, this reduced a dining experience to just over 1% of restaurant capacity.

For that reason, Revesby Workers' remained shut but not standing still. During that time, a small team of staff continued to work behind the scenes completing minor building works, rebranding facilities, developing plans to further enhance various offerings and implementing initiatives to improve the member experience for when reopening was a more viable option.

During lockdown, café TwoTwo//OneTwo, had been operating an all-day takeaway menu,

and was able to open to accommodate up to 10 sit-down patrons at a time.

By 1 June 2020, the club was able to open its doors more widely but had to adhere to Government guidelines for a daily documented register of members and guests. It required all members and guests entering the club to present their Membership Card and/or a Drivers Licence for scanning.

All club entertainment and activities, such as bingo, raffles, trivia, poker, snooker, darts, indoor bowls and live bands remained on hold during those weeks.

Vale Jim Finn

The club marked the passing on 7 May 2020, aged 85 years, of one of the club's longest serving members, James (Jim) Finn (born 23 December 1934).

In his youth, Jim served as an Able Seaman in the Royal Australian Navy, responsible for

essential repairs and maintenance to ship hulls, deck and cargo. Jim was an active member at the Hero's Hill (Revesby Heights) RSL Sub Branch and when the branch folded, was instrumental in establishing the cenotaph where it stands today. Anzac and Remembrance Day services have been held there ever since, and Jim attended each one to recite The Ode for the following six years, despite impending illness.

He was an avid supporter of the Canterbury Bankstown Bulldogs and an active Revesby Workers' Club member (Badge No. 311) since November 1963, just one year after the club officially opened. Jim was acknowledged by the club for this ongoing support with Life Bulldogs Membership.

Held in high regard by the Revesby Workers' Board, it was only befitting that Jim's service was the first held at the cenotaph and that a plaque acknowledging his contributions be positioned there.



Revesby Workers' Club Board of Directors, representatives from Revesby Height's Hero's Hill and Jim Finn's family at the cenotaph service acknowledging his contributions.



Daryl Melham's 40th Anniversary

Revesby Workers' Club President, Daryl Melham celebrated 40 years' service on the Board of Directors. Daryl's contribution to the club over many years undoubtedly shaped it into the progressive community-based organisation that it became.

Daryl has provided some additional points of reflection for the last 40 years:

The establishment of the original Revesby Workers' Club and its expansion in 1973 was the work of the first two presidents, Jack Dickens and Jim Donovan. This was before my time.

From November 1974 to June 1978, I was a casual barman and tray steward at the Revesby Workers' Club. It made my attendance at university possible. I was recommended for employment by Ken Comerford who worked in the cellar of the club. I remember my first night on duty, I was assigned to the auditorium, serving in the left-hand side bar. Col Dower was my supervisor. I had been taught to pull a beer by two women at the Riverwood Hotel.

The club has a long history of contested elections for directors. That continued in the time that I joined the club on the 30 June 1976. Eight hundred people, like myself, were in the auditorium being inducted as members.

I have vivid memories of attending the club

picnic at Warwick Farm on Sunday, 26 October 1980 when I was allocated to give out free ice-cream. The picnic cost the club more than \$80,000 at the time.

With the introduction of Random Breath Testing, which was supported by the club, the club also introduced a non-alcoholic bar which proved popular.

Under the guidance of Bill Bullard, the club supported local aged care facilities in Vega Street and Bill raised support for other charities to a higher level.

Norma Smith's election as President of the Revesby Workers' Club was the first for a large club in NSW.

Pat Rogan's election as President laid the foundation for an expansion and diversification for the club.

The expansion has continued, and it should be noted that Gough Whitlam not only opened the new club on Saturday, 18 August 1973 but three further extensions of the club.

The club has been known for hosting quality entertainment. Artists like Johnny O'Keefe, Col Joye, Sandy Scott, Tom Jones, Tina Turner, Jean Pitney, Chuck Berry, Vera Lynn, Julian Jorg and many more.

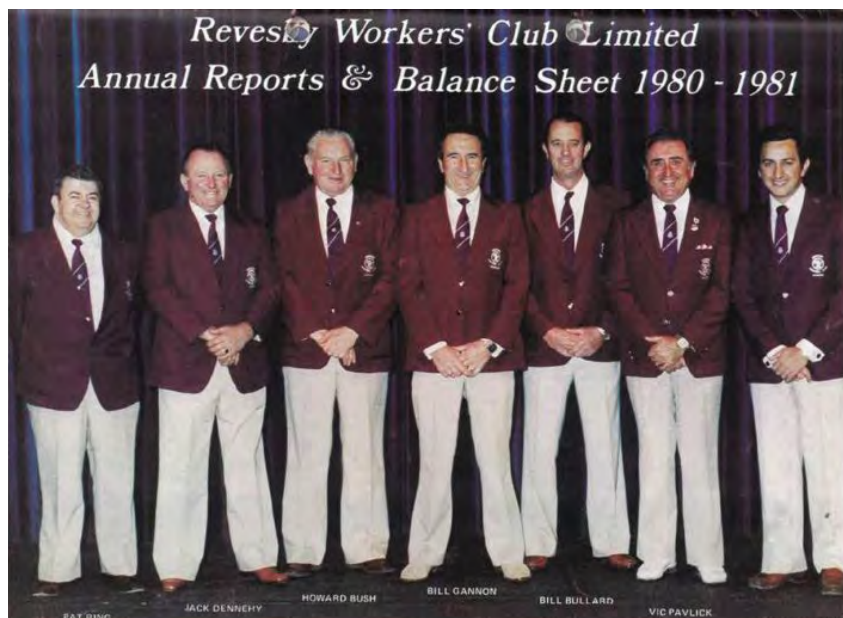
Live music was alive and well at the club. Wally The Worker was introduced to entertain our children. Seniors Concerts were introduced and have continued till this day.

Membership growth has continued in strength and is a true reflection of the club's community.

This is further echoed within the club's board, management and staff.

The change that has occurred has been for the better. Donations to local schools were introduced by our late President, Bill Bullard, and now \$3000 per school is allocated to 29 local schools on an annual basis. Scholarships to children of members have been increased. The Whitlam Institute has been sponsored by the club.

The Asbestos Disease Research Institute is also sponsored by the club. Bankstown Hospital, along with other organisations in the area has been sponsored on an annual basis.



Our many sporting clubs are also supported.
What I have detailed is only a portion of what our club provides.

We have been true to our traditions.

Daryl Melham

President

September 2022

Christine Butters Life Membership

Christine Butters was awarded Life Membership in October 2020. Christine was elected and joined the Board of the club on 29 September 2010. A truly well-deserved honour bestowed upon a wonderful ambassador for the club and the community.

Over the subsequent 10 years she made a major contribution to the progress of the club, but her involvement and contribution began well before then. With her husband Barry and children, she was involved with the club's cricket and soccer clubs, but it was with junior athletics she became most involved.

Christine became active in the Little Athletics club in the 90s and for the next 20 years was its driving force. She has held many offices, including:

Recorder 2000-2004

Records and Ranking Officer 2004-2008

Acting Secretary 2005-2008

Secretary 2008-12

President from 2012

Life Member 2008.

As President, she continued to be the “driver” of the centre, encouraging, mentoring and training new officers, as well as planning for the future, and engaging with families. Christine also contributed to the wider Little Athletics New South Wales, as a delegate and eventually Secretary of the busy Southern Metropolitan Zone, and the Region organisation.

Through her commitment and its wide recognition, she enhanced the reputation of the parent club both locally and in south and south western Sydney.

It was due to her tireless involvement in the

community – not only through Little Athletics, but leadership of local child-care and school parent committees – that Christine was encouraged to stand for the RWC Board.

She has been the active Liaison Director for the Revesby Ladies Group, the Garden Club, Darts, Scrabble, Underwater Spearfishing and Toastmasters clubs. While the activities were about as diverse as you can get, she approached them with her personal brand of engagement, excellent communication skills and insight.

After joining the Board in 2010, Christine progressively took on even more responsibilities, becoming a member of the Mooney Mooney Club Advisory Committee. For many years, Christine was a Board representative on the Revesby Now n Then Occasional Centre committee and was nominated as a club delegate to the long-term club partner Bankstown City Aged Care, of which she became a Board member. She regularly participated in the activities of the umbrella body ClubsNSW, attending conferences and seminars as part of professional development, leading to her election to the committee of the Western Metropolitan Region body. She was also nominated by the Board as a club delegate to ClubsNSW.

Overall, over ten years of massive club development, Christine was an active and informed contributor to discussion, debate and decision-making at Board and sub-committee meetings. She used her detailed knowledge of the local community and its needs to assist with planning. She also brought her enviable energy and enthusiasm and was an effective advocate for the sub-clubs with which she has liaised. She enhanced the reputation of the club as a representative to many communities. All the more impressive, at the time of her Life Membership in late 2020, Christine continued to work as a midwife at St George Hospital.

There is no doubt of Christine's significant contribution to the club and that the honour of Life Membership Revesby Workers' Club was well earned.





Thanks For Your Service, Dennis Hayward OAM

Following the AGM on 25 October 2020, the club's second longest serving Director, Dennis Hayward stepped down. It was acknowledged at the time that his retirement would leave a big hole to fill on the board of Revesby Workers' Club. Dennis' strong commitment to the community will be long remembered as his greatest legacy, from organising charity raffles, to driving thousands of kilometres delivering relief packages to drought-stricken communities – Dennis was known for an unquenchable thirst for helping those less fortunate, and indeed succeeded and delivered on his promises in so many ways.

The respect that Dennis accumulated during his tenure was not through voice, but actions that reverberated across the community louder than an orchestra's crescendo.

He commenced his Directorship in 1993 and became a Life Member in 2003. Dennis was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in the 2019 Australia Day Honours List for services to the community of Canterbury Bankstown. These services include, but are not limited to, Liaison Director for Revesby Workers' Soccer Club, Women's Hockey Club, Netball Club, Physic and Dance Club, Junior Tennis Club, Marine Rescue Hawkesbury, Mooney Fishing Club, and Bankstown Stroke Support Group.

Beyond the club's walls, Dennis' dedication to the local community was evident through his ongoing delivery of meals on wheels and in late 2019, Dennis personally delivered care packages to 10 families who were living in the drought and fire effected regional areas of NSW.

The Board also appointed Dennis as a Patron of the Mooney Mooney Club, recognising his involvement in the club's amalgamation back in April 2004 and his ongoing support and dedication to the Mooney Mooney Club and its members.

Welcome New Director, Baden Kirgan

Following Dennis Hayward's departure, Baden Kirgan came aboard as the club's 39th Director.

A lifelong resident of Picnic Point (even attending schools in the local area), Baden earned



a Bachelor of Commerce majoring in economics before taking ownership of his family's printing business in 2000. He since turned it into one of the state's most prominent communication firms.

Baden joined Revesby Workers' Club in 1991 and became an active member of The Light on the Hill Society. Baden and his family were involved in the Workers' sporting clubs since the 1980s.

His election on to the Board of Directors brought a commercial focus to the Board and his experience was expected to be paramount in assisting the Board through challenging years ahead.

Vale William (Bill) Scott

The man that started out at the club in roles such as Barman, Entertainer and Entertainment Manager before becoming a Director, William Robert (Bill) Scott passed away on 30 November 2020 just one month short of his 94th birthday.

Bill was heavily involved with many of the sporting bodies as their Liaison Director and he enjoyed playing golf, bowls and even fished with the Fishing Club. He was passionate about the Revesby Workers' Club as he believed in what it could do for our members and give back to the community. This was quite evident through his strong involvement in several community initiatives such as the Gillawarna Village and other nursing homes.

Having been employed at the Club from around the time it first opened, Bill took on his part-time Barman position as a second job. Having sung throughout the pub circuit, Bill would often help with entertainment bookings for upcoming shows which was the reason for his move into the part-time Entertainment Manager role. It didn't take him long to become extremely popular with entertainers and members, and most members who attended shows in his time would agree that Bill had an unforgettable singing voice. Bill would often close shows with one or two of his favourite ballads and



have members dancing right until the end! Early members would recall Bill's involvement in the annual Revesby Workers' Club picnics.

Bill held his Directorship from 19 September 1971 until 18 September 1977 and was heavily involved in the growth from the old club to the new club; being the last surviving Director who opened the 'Big Club' with Gough Whitlam on 18 August 1973. The holder of Badge no. 358 eventually was appointed as an Honorary Member in 2020.

A loved husband to May (deceased), father, grandfather and great grandfather – the club farewelled a wonderful man.

Biyani Women's Shelter Announced

Revesby Workers' Club supported the development of Biyani House Revesby Women's Shelter that opened in November 2021 (Biyani is an Aboriginal word meaning "healing of women"). As part of its support, the club provided a premise it owned for a peppercorn rent. Biyani House was the only facility of its type in the whole of the Canterbury-Bankstown Council area and was launched to offer great support for women and their children fleeing domestic violence.

Revesby Workers' staff helped tremendously to get the shelter up and running by assisting with electrical work, gardening, replacing lights and administrative support. Furthermore, members Heather Minor and Ros Branson crocheted blankets and teddy bears to donate to women and children who attend the shelter. The club also

contributed over \$130,000 to the renovation and refurbishment of the home and contributed each year to the ongoing administration costs of the shelter.

Revesby Workers' Club was extremely proud to partner with Women's Community Shelters to offer our community a shelter within the Canterbury Bankstown council. Having the shelter within the community offers women and children in need a place of solace and hopefully a new beginning.

COVID-19 Closure 2021

By 2021, COVID-19 and lockdowns and closures were unfortunately not yet in the rear-view mirror. Contact tracing became a way of life as Membership Cards and Drivers Licences were required upon entry for scanning.

At that stage there was a one person every four-square metre rule applied and a restriction on the number of people allowed to be seated within each area. The maximum number of people in each individual group booking was 10 and bookings for the club's dining outlets were not available at that time.

Although functions in the Function Centre were available, each room had to adhere to the same one person per four square metre rule. Then, once again, the club was closed under the State government's COVID health regulation from 27 June to 10 October, reopening on 11 October 2021.





Tree House 2 Opening

The second development of its type, Tree House Early Childhood Centre 2, was opened in late July 2021.

Due to increasing demand from local families and the ongoing success of the first Tree House Centre since its opening in 2009, the club developed one of its existing properties located in Brett Street. This property was previously occupied as an occasional care facility. However, over the years the needs of families changed, and long day care services were required.

This second centre was designed to offer long day care services for 31 children aged between three and five years and adopted the same educational programs, facilities and services, and dedicated staff to encourage positive development in a supportive environment, already well established by the first Tree House Centre.

Aboriginal Recognition Artworks

Early in 2021, Revesby Workers' Club purchased artwork in recognition of our Aboriginal heritage.

The club secured two pieces of artwork displayed in the President's Lounge, entitled Ngurrawa Bidjigal and The Return Home.

Ngurrawa Bidjigal painted artwork pays respect to the local traditional people of the Salt Pan Creek area, a clan group of the coastal Dharug people, who have lived here for over 60,000 years.

Dharug artist, Leanne Tobin explains:

On The Lands Of The Bidjigal

We pay respect to the local Traditional people of the Salt Pan Creek area, the Bidjigal (also known as Bediagal), a clan group of the coastal Dharug people of the Sydney region, who have lived here for over 60 000 years. Their land covers Salt Pan Creek, Revesby and the estuarine surrounds north of Georges River.

Here we see a glimpse into Aboriginal life before dispossession resulting from British occupation in 1788. The perennial fresh-water streams provided enough fish, eels, shellfish (oysters, mussels), fruits, vegetables, game (wallabies, possums, birds) and honey that allowed one to go fishing in the morning, hunting in the afternoon, and to 'write' poetry at night.

The appearance of the golden blossoms of the Coastal Myall wattle (seen on the right-hand side of the painting) indicated the start of the mullet and eel runs. The abundance of food at these times would be a cause for communal celebrations with people from neighbouring 'country', gathering along the river to feast, sing and dance in ceremonies of age and gender.

Despite being pushed to the fringes by the encroaching new-comers, Aboriginal people continued to live here 'on country', engaging in seasonal labouring with the increasing numbers of industries that arose up to the 1930s. As the land was freehold it became a refuge for Aboriginal people from other places, escaping the Aboriginal Protection Board control and much of the early discussions about social change and political action arose from here.

Other poor working-class non-Aboriginal Australians and migrant-refugee families came to co-exist in this little paradise. A symbiotic, social enrichment of life.

The Return Home blown glass artwork tells the story of Salt Pan Creek and the creek being



an entry-point to the ocean where adult eels would start their epic migratory journey north, occurring sometime between January and April. It was created by Dharug artist, Leanne Tobin with blown glass fabricated by Ben Edol.

Leanne Tobin provides the context behind the piece:

The long-finned eel (*Anguilla reinhardtii*) is known in the local Dharug language as Burra and is an Australian native species found in the waterways all along the east coast, from Queensland to Tasmania.

Eels are totemic, and form part of the spiritual psyche of all east coastal Aboriginal people and their rivers. The eels' significance is seen in the name of the city of Parramatta or Burramada in the Dharug language, translates as 'the place where the eel lies down'- the place of the spirit of Burra

the eel. Parramatta River along with the Cooks and Georges Rivers are several major rivers in the Sydney basin that form 'migratory paths' for the eels: where the freshwater creeks and rivers merge with the saltwater.

Revesby is located on the land of Bidjigal people, one of the many coastal Dharug clans. Salt Pan Creek is an entry point to the ocean where the adult eels start their epic migratory journey north, occurring sometime between January and April.

This migration is commonly known as the 'running of the eels'.

The flowering of the Coastal Myall (*Acacia Binervia*) signalled the start of this event for the local Bidjigal. For the people living around the estuaries, it was a time of great feasting and clans travelled from far away to celebrate, conduct ceremony and share the eels.



Tribal Pride from the Bankstown Koori Elders Group

Once fully matured, the eels make their way out of the freshwater creeks, dams and rivers along the length of the east coast.

Changes occur to adapt them to their new saltwater environment. Their eyes enlarge, their eye pigments change, their pectoral fins grow larger and they lay down fat reserves in readiness for their long ocean voyage.

They then swim downstream and amass, lying in wait for a full moon and high tide whereupon they enter the ocean, swimming thousands of kilometres to their northern spawning ground in the Coral Sea. There they breed, lay millions of eggs and then die.

Upon hatching, thousands of leaf-shaped, transparent larvae commonly known as ‘glass eels’ are then swept along by the currents down the coast.

The glass eels, upon entering the freshwater, feed on the micro-organisms from there, resulting in them taking on the colours of the river. They then move inland, back to the rivers of their forebears, to continue the circle of life.

The Dharug, along with other neighbouring nations hold stories of an Ancestral Creator in the form of an eel/serpent that at one time long ago, formed

the rivers and mountains here. The eel is seen as an especially important nutrient for expectant mothers and for the ill and elderly and is held in high regard by Aboriginal people as a significant food source.

Another piece displayed in Brett Street Foyer – Tribal Pride – is a 190cm sculptural work made from clay, wood and sand. This piece was created by 11 Elders from the Bankstown Koori Elders Group and features hunting tools, shields, message sticks and digging tools, all etched with designs of bush tucker, totems and culture. The sand under the piece comes from Broken Hill.

Glass Etchings Relocated to Brett Street Foyer

The iconic Sydney landscapes captured within 2-metre-high glass panel etchings were carefully repositioned in an illuminated display casing outside the Sports Bar in Brett Street Foyer. These panels were part of an earlier club renovation, in the 1990s, and for many years were located in the former Skyline Lounge and Bar.





Alan (Dick) Moroney with Club President Daryl Melham AM

Innings: 93 Years

Revesby Workers' Club Life Member and former Club Director, Alan (Dick) Moroney passed away in October 2021 aged 93.

Affectionately known as Dick, a name he adopted from his father Richard when he was just a young boy, he was nicknamed 'Little Dick' and didn't know his true name was Alan until he attended school!

He joined Revesby Workers' Club in 1967, was a director from 21 September 1997 until 24 September 2006, whereby he was the Liaison Director for Mixed Indoor Bowls, Darts and Garden Clubs.

Shortly after commencing his directorship, he was appointed the club's alternate delegate in 1997 to the Federation of Community, Sports and Workers Clubs.

A dedicated member of the club's Charity Fundraising Committee, Dick had been awarded Life Membership for his considerable and ongoing contributions to the club. On the day he passed away he was also awarded Life Membership of the Australian Labor Party for his decades of service.

Local School Grants

Grants to local schools, which had been first suggested by the late Bill Bullard OAM when President in the 1980s and early '90s, remained fundamental to Revesby's club grants programs. Bullard started the initiative in 1995 when schools were initially granted \$1000. The amount escalated to \$2000 and, currently, to \$3000. In 2018 for instance, each of 27 local schools received a \$3000 grant, as well as an additional school, the Brooklyn Public School, on the Hawkesbury River close to the Mooney Mooney club. By its 19th year, this program delivered \$84,000 collectively to the schools annually and \$1.6 million in total; two were special education schools.

This funding goes towards much needed resources which help create more support and better learning environments for students and parents. Each year, the local schools attend a presentation night to their stories of how the funding would assist their school.

COVID-19 meant that the numbers at the 2020 presentation were limited, but this did not distract from the exciting programs each school had put together as a way of using this funding to enhance the learning of their young scholars. Each school made a submission as to the proposed allocation of the funds of which included playground upgrades, extra support staff and learning devices to name a few.

The club has always shown a strong commitment to continue this support to all the local schools to further benefit the local community as a whole.

Local School Grants Presentation.



Official opening of Rogues Sports Bar.



Rogues Sports Bar Announced

The latest club refurbishment, Rogues Sports Bar, was opened Tuesday, 14 December 2021 by Club President, Daryl Melham AM, at a private function that included members of the RWC Darts Club and Snooker Club, for whom both the snooker tables and dart boards were retained in the upgraded facilities.

A vast array of beverages awaited the thirsty, with various beers on tap – including a Guinness, a delicious cocktail list and even a list of tasty alcohol-free beverages that would tingle the tastebuds of even the staunchest of drinkers.

The tasty American inspired food menu allowed patrons to order either at the bar or via QR

codes – the latest in hospitality innovation – from tables.

The Sports Bar was the last original space within the Club to be renovated. Dating back to 1973, when the ‘Big Club’ was officially opened, it was last renovated in the early 90s.

When designing this new space, the priority was to maintain historic integrity and to reinvigorate the atmosphere of this very under-utilised space by creating a Sports Bar that still encapsulated the usage of snooker and darts, but also offered local sports fans a space dedicated to all sports viewing.

The name was inspired by the framed Rogues Gallery illustrations that hung in the original Sports Bar. A rogue portrays a person of likeable character





who behaves unexpectedly with light-hearted mischief. Each illustration had been recreated and showcased on feature panels either side of the new bar, as a nod to the rogue well-known personalities of the Sports Bar.

The entry to Rogues Sports Bar was directly off Brett Street Foyer, as it always was, but gone were the heavy framed glass doors, creating a spacious entrance with uninterrupted access to a large central bar.

A bar framed by warm brick columns, black granite counter and illuminous green glass feature tiling. The hanging cage of screens, also mirrored on entry, conveniently displays live sports, coming events and menu selections.

Ample seating was placed on either side of the bar, a combination of low and high table options, accompanied by well thought out comfort seating for those long games. Seating on the left to flow seamlessly to an outdoor terrace, designed for those long summer days.

State-of-the-art audio visual featuring two LED 158-inch wall screens on either side of the entrance and over twenty-five 55-inch screens throughout meant not a moment of live action would be missed. The TAB facilities were no exception with a series of dedicated 55-inch screens, and convenient self-serve Easy Bet Terminals, the place for racing.

The snooker and dart enthusiast were not neglected thanks to a space behind the bar. Featuring the six snooker tables and 12 dart boards, all retained from the original Sports Bar. This included a 1912 Grand Duke that was once owned by professional billiards player, Walter Lindrum and played on during the 1961 and 1969

Australian Open Billiards Championships, until it was purchased and restored by the Club. In fact, it was responsible for bringing to the club, Australia's Eddie Charlton, a billiards and snooker luminary – one of the finest exponents the craft of all time.

The final touch was to move the two Henry Lawson poems, The Good Samaritan and The Glass on the Bar, from either side of the entrance to the bar, to the Henry Lawson Library, completing the refurbishment.

The Departure of Craig Epton

It was bittersweet to say goodbye to Chief Operating Officer, Craig Epton at the beginning of 2022.

His strategic, operational and financial management mastery would be missed, but he was leaving for the wonderful opportunity to become Chief Executive Officer at St George Leagues Club.

Craig came to Revesby after an extensive recruitment process in 2018 and a successful seven-year tenure at Campbelltown Catholic Club in the role of Executive Manager, Club Operations. He joined the club during what was a busy period and between CEOs. Craig was responsible for the operations of Revesby Workers' Club. Craig also had oversight of the Mooney Mooney club, Revesby Sports Club and worked closely with the Property Manager and the club's real estate partner on the Revesby Village Centre operations.



HOW OUR CLUB GOT STARTED

Written by Brien Higgs 1961

First, I should put the question of why? Two main reasons:

1. **The abominable conditions that existed at the Revesby Pacific Hotel**
Many of you will recall the 40-minute hot and crowded train trip to Revesby after a hardworking day. The dash to the hotel and the bottle to get a drink in the 6 o'clock swill conditions that existed. The majority of the hotel drinkers agreed that we should have better and warmed to the idea of a club being established in the area.
2. **Welfare in our community**
In a working-class area, there will always be incidences of hardship occurring, caused by sickness, death or unemployment. There had been a number of cases in our area and these had been effectively treated by running of games nights. Once again, the formation of a club was deemed to be the answer.

Revesby Workers' Club

Recognition of Representatives

Presidents

NAME	PERIOD OF OFFICE	CEASED
John William (Jack) Dickens*	24/01/1961–	11/06/1963
Michael James (Jim) Donovan*	19/07/1963–	18/09/1977
Brien Joseph Higgs*	18/09/1977–	30/04/1978
William (Bill) Gannon*	1/05/1978–	28/10/1982
Noel Edward (Bill) Bullard* OAM	6/12/1982–	23/01/1995
Norma Jean Smith* OAM	3/02/1995–	30/11/2008
Patrick Allan (Pat) Rogan* OAM	30/11/2008–	26/09/2010
Daryl Melham AM	26/09/2010–	present

Vice Presidents

NAME	PERIOD OF OFFICE	CEASED
Edward Lawrence (Ted) Smith*	15/09/1967–	2/03/1971
William Nugent (Bill) Hills*	19/03/1971–	18/09/1977
William (Bill) Gannon*	18/09/1977–	1/05/1978
Noel Edward (Bill) Bullard*	1/05/1978–	6/12/1982
Daryl Melham	6/12/1982–	26/09/2010
John Rodwell	26/09/2010–	present

Directors

NAME	APPOINTED UNDER		
	ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION	ELECTED	CEASED
John William (Jack) Dickens*	21/12/1960	25/09/1961–	11/06/1963
Raymond Cousin (Ray) McCormack*	21/12/1960	25/09/1961–	18/01/1963
Herbert James (Herb) Barron*	21/12/1960	25/09/1961–	29/03/1963
George Allardice Johnstone*	21/12/1960	25/09/1961–	26/10/1974
Michael James (Jim) Donovan*	21/12/1960	25/09/1961–	18/09/1977
Herbert James (Herb) McDougall*	21/12/1960	25/09/1961–	18/09/1977
Edward Lawrence (Ted) Smith*	21/12/1960	25/09/1961–	02/03/1971
William Nugent (Bill) Hills*	22/03/1963	26/09/1963–	18/09/1977
John Victor (Vic) De Sailly*	26/04/1963	26/09/1963–	29/05/1967
Robert Sydney Gordon Sentence*	19/07/1963	26/09/1963–	01/03/1964
		06/04/1966–	01/06/1966
Harry Nelson*	01/03/1964	25/03/1964–	06/04/1966
Kenneth Arthur (Ken) Books*		01/06/1966–	02/03/1971
Kenneth William (Ken) Prentice*	03/06/1967	04/09/1967–	18/09/1977
NAME	APPOINTED UNDER		
	ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION	ELECTED	CEASED
William Robert (Bill) Scott	04/03/1971	19/09/1971–	18/09/1977
John George (Jack) Pitty*	04/03/1971	19/09/1971–	18/09/1977
Brien Joseph Higgs*		20/10/1974–	19/09/1976
		18/09/1977–	30/04/1978
Graham Campbell*		19/09/1976–	18/09/1977
William Alfred (Bill) Gannon*		18/09/1977–	28/10/1982
Howard Greenwell Bush*		18/09/1977–	28/10/1982
John Stephen (Jack) Dennehy*		18/09/1977–	27/11/1982
Noel Edward (Bill) Bullard*OAM		18/09/1977–	23/01/1995
Victor John(Vic)Clift*		18/09/1977–	28/09/1980
Victor (Vic) Pavlick*		18/09/1977–	21/09/1997
Patrick Joseph (Pat) Ring*		19/06/1978–	26/09/1982
Daryl Melham AM		28/09/1980–	present
John Edward Gibbons*		26/09/1982–	30/09/2007
Ronald (Ron) Polley*		06/12/1982–	26/09/1993
Norma Jean Smith* OAM		06/12/1982–	30/11/2008
Keith Heaslip*		28/03/1983–	20/08/1993
Terence (Terry) Semlitzky		26/09/1993–	28/10/2018
Dennis Hayward OAM		26/09/1993–	25/10/2020
Patrick Allan (Pat) Rogan*		27/03/1995–	26/09/2010
Alan (Dick) Moroney*		21/09/1997–	24/09/2006
Ian Stromborg OAM		24/09/2006–	present
John Rodwell		19/11/2007–	present
Christine Benham		30/11/2008–	present
Christine Butters		29/09/2010–	present
Kylie Wilkinson		28/10/2018–	present
Baden Kirgan		25/10/2020	present

Secretary / Secretary Manager / Chief Executive Officer

NAME	POSITION	PERIOD OF OFFICE	CEASED
Brien Joseph Higgs*	Secretary	24/01/1961	
	Secretary Manager		02/01/1962
	Secretary	05/11/1971–	03/06/1974
Charles Cooper Taylor*	Secretary Manager		06/06/1974–
Robert William Boddan	Acting Secretary Manager		11/05/1976
	Secretary Manager		16/06/1976–
Noel Edward Bullard*	Secretary	20/03/1978–	01/05/1978
Brien Joseph Higgs*	Secretary Manager		01/05/1978–
Edward Camilleri	Chief Executive Officer		20/03/1991–
Craig Epton	Acting Chief Executive Officer		27/09/2019–
Scott Bennetts	Chief Executive Officer		02/03/2020–
			11/05/1976
			20/03/1978
			07/05/1991
			21/10/2019
			01/03/2020
			present

Patrons

NAME	ELECTED		
Robert Joseph (Joe) Kelly M.P. (M.L.A.)*	21/12/1970	re- elected	20/10/1974
Vincent Joseph (Vince) Martin M.P. (M.H.R.)*	20/10/1974		
Patrick Allan (Pat) Rogan M.P. (M.L.A.)*	20/10/1974	resigned	21/02/1995
Ald Raymond Cousin (Ray) McCormack (Mayor)*	27/09/1981		re-elected 26/09/2010
Alan John Ashton M.P. (M.L.A.)	30/09/2001		
Norma Jean Smith* OAM	30/11/2008		

Life Members

NAME	ELECTED	NAME	ELECTED
Michael James (Jim) Donovan*	12/06/1968	Keith Heaslip*	25/09/1994
Edward Lawrence (Ted) Smith*	12/06/1968	Norma Jean Smith* OAM	25/09/1994
George Allardice Johnstone*	12/06/1968	Howard Greenwell Bush*	24/09/1995
Herbert James (Herb) McDougall*	12/06/1968	Terence (Terry) Semlitzky	28/09/2003
William Nugent (Bill) Hills*	21/12/1970	Dennis Hayward OAM	28/09/2003
Robert Joseph (Joe) Kelly*	24/09/1978	Patricia (Pat) Pride	25/09/2005
Merv MacFarlane*	23/03/1981	Patrick Allan (Pat) Rogan*	25/11/2007
John Ingelby (Jack) Webster*	25/09/1983	Alan (Dick) Moroney*	25/11/2007
Noel Edward (Bill) Bullard* OAM	28/09/1986	Alan John Ashton	18/09/2011
Victor (Vic) Pavlick*	28/09/1986	Ian Stromborg OAM	30/10/2016
Brien Joseph Higgs*	27/09/1987	John Rodwell	29/10/2017
Phyllis Johnstone*	27/09/1992	Christine Benham	28/10/2018
Daryl Melham AM	27/09/1992	Linda Downey	27/10/2019
Ronald (Ron) Polley*	26/09/1993	Christine Butters	25/10/2020
John Edward Gibbons*	26/09/1993		

* Denotes deceased at the time of print