



VICTORIA LEAGUE FOR COMMONWEALTH FRIENDSHIP SA INC

NEWSLETTER – AUGUST 2009

Patron Throughout the Commonwealth

Her Majesty The Queen

Patron Throughout Australia

Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC

Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

Patron in South Australia

His Excellency Rear Admiral Kevin Scarce,

AC, CSC, RANR

Governor of South Australia

President – Mrs Nicola Downer, AM

Secretary - Tamara Schlichting

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From The President

Dear Members,

Since I last wrote to you I have been travelling a great deal and many of you will have the chance to hear about my time in Cyprus. My husband, Alexander Downer, was appointed as Special Envoy of the Secretary General of the United Nations, to oversee the talks in Cyprus attempting to bring this divided country together. This is an enormous challenge in a country which was effectively divided into two in 1974. More on that at the Annual General Meeting.

I would like to thank Vice President, Mr Mark Bouchier, for his assistance as acting President during my time away and Vice President, Miss Erica Cox, for hosting the June luncheon.

The Victoria League was most fortunate to be a recipient of a \$5,000 bequest from the estate of the late Lady Wilson, CBE. As you would know Lady Wilson was involved with the Victoria League for over seventy years and we were very close to her heart. The Executive decided to send the proceeds from the bequest to London for use in Student House.

The Victoria League in Western Australia celebrates its Centenary on Saturday 26th September with a dinner at the Royal Perth Golf Club in the presence of His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia, Dr Ken Michael, AC and Mrs Julie Michael. I am looking forward to sharing this special day with League members in Western Australia along with Vice President, Miss Erica Cox, and Executive members Mrs Barbara Stewart, Mr Vincent Burke and Mr Douglass Potts.

Vice President Miss Erica Cox continues to represent the Victoria League on the Joint Commonwealth Societies Council in South Australia of which she is Honorary Treasurer.

Our financial position has obviously deteriorated in the past financial year due to the global economic downturn and the ensuing fall in share prices. As a result we have a fairly conservative budget for the coming year with no major initiatives planned. However we live in hope for an improvement and a continuation of our work overseas. Thanks to the Honorary Treasurer, Mr Craig Whiteman, for his efforts on the reorganisation of our share portfolio.

NICKY DOWNER – President

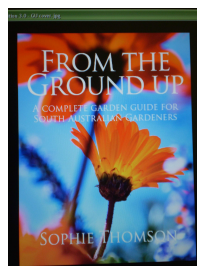
Victoria League Lunch - 16th June 2009

Sophie Thomson, ABC Gardening Australia



Members were delighted at the June lunch to hear all the latest gardening tips from Sophie Thomson, who has a particular understanding of South Australian Gardens. She has recently written a book specifically for South Australian gardens. Each guest received a sample bag of garden nutrients, so we expect to see some spectacular gardens this season.

Sophie's book would make a great Christmas present and is available at most book shops for approximately \$60



Victoria League Lunch - 18th August 2009



Dr Lyn Arnold, AO, Mrs Rory Willett and Mrs Elaine Arnold

The CEO of Anglicare, SA Dr Lyn Arnold, AO spoke to us in June about the things he had learnt as a result of his experience with both World Vision and Anglicare. A truly inspirational man, Dr Arnold explained that change is possible in the world today in spite of all the problems we face. A former alcoholic single mother transformed her life from addict to counsellor as a result of an Anglicare intervention programme. Micro loans from Australian aid to impoverished Thai residents enabled them to establish small businesses and take control of their lives. However little we contribute as individuals we can make a difference.

Commonwealth Awareness Project



Following the completion of the Computer Centre at the Uluru Children's Home which is supported by the East-West Overseas Aid Foundation and to which the Victoria League made a considerable contribution, the Executive has continued to support Engineers Without Borders. This organisation of young engineers working voluntarily overseas undertook an investigation into Sustainable Energy options for the Uluru Children's Home and Uluru Health Care Clinic. The Victoria League donated funds towards this project.

In May two representatives of Engineers Without Borders – Mr Stewart Davies and Mr Daniel Loden – attended the Executive meeting and presented their report. This report examined a number of energy saving options out to Uluru. These included developing:

- Bio-gas system with cow dung
- Solar water heating systems
- Windmill water pump
- Solar water pump
- Energy efficient lighting
- Efficient building design
- Networked computer system

These options were fully costed. The next stage is for Engineers Without Borders to present the Sustainable Energy Options report to The East-West Overseas Aid Foundation. Should the Foundation accept the report's recommendations a request for financial support may be forthcoming to the Victoria League.



[On the move.....](#)

Jonathan Turland of Glenunga International High School led the delegation which originally planned to travel to Uluru, South India and visit the Children's Home, instead travelled to Vietnam and Cambodia. The students worked with street kids, went to museums and were educated about land mines in the area. Since then Jonathan, who led the original group of students to Uluru has left the school and has gone to work in Cairo with African refugees.

Michael Ierace – the music student whom the Victoria League sponsored recently returned to Adelaide where he starred in a concert at Pilgrim Uniting Church. Together with Amir Farid, they performed major solo piano works and popular music for two piano's including works by Saint-Saëns – Variations on a theme of Beethoven op.35; Chopin – Ballade no 1 in gmin op.23; Liszt – Benediction de Dieu dans la Solitude and Ravel – La Valse.

Stewart Davies – Program Director of Engineers Without Borders is leaving the organisation after several years to join the commercial world. We have liaised with Stewart for a number of years over the Victoria League's involvement at Uluru Children's Home, South India.

Victoria League members honoured in
Queen's Birthday Honours List

Congratulations to...

Mrs Gay Gardner, AM



Immediate past President and Executive member, Mrs Gay Gardner was made a member of the Order of Australia for her service to aged persons through the provision of community housing and support programs and through the Abbeyfield Society (Australia). Abbeyfield is a community based, not for profit organisation which provides housing for people in need. Abbeyfield provides accommodation for 230 residents in 23 houses and supported accommodation for 94 persons in 3 hostels.

We applaud Gay for her extraordinary efforts with so many organisations and her work with migrants with legal difficulties.

Mrs Anita Aspinall, AM

Victoria League member Mrs Anita Aspinall was made a member of the Order of Australia for her service to local government and the community through environmental, aged care and historical organizations. Anita addressed the League in her capacity as President of The National Trust of South Australia. A former Chairman and Mayor of the District Council of Stirling and the Adelaide Hills Council, Anita has served on a number of environmental management committees and made a huge contribution to the community.



National Conference

Queensland – The Queensland branch of the Victoria League recently changed its name to The Victoria League in Queensland Inc. The branch will host the National Conference at the Gold Coast from 28th to 30th May 2010. The conference will be held at the Gold Coast Council Chambers and promises to be an informative and jolly occasion! The President, Mrs Ellen Morton can be contacted on 07 5539 6211.

News from Victoria League Student House

Student House offers residential accommodation for students between the ages of 18 – 30 from all Commonwealth countries. The aim of the League is to provide a safe and friendly home from home for young Commonwealth people who are undertaking full time studies. The building consists of four Victorian houses adapted and converted with twenty four, twelve double bedrooms, three double units and four bedsits. The cost of maintaining Student House grows every year and because of the stringent standards set by Westminster Council there is a request for the installation of gas central heating at a cost of £200,000 to replace the current night storage heaters. An option of installing secondary double glazing is being explored as an alternative at a lesser cost of £30,000.

Student House is trying to start Alumni for ex-residents. Ex-resident Miranda DeGraaf created a Facebook website called “The best place to live in London, is the Vic League” – soon to be changed to The Victoria League Alumni. Student House Warden, Sue Wilson is keen to receive current contact details of all former residents. Her email is victorialeague@btconnect.com.

New Members

A warm welcome is extended to Mrs Rosemary Bingham and Mrs June Miller who have recently joined the League.

Obituary

Miss Rhonda Hoare, OAM

It is with sadness we report the passing of Miss Hoare in June this year, a member since 1974.

Forthcoming Events

Lunches 2009

Tuesday 15th September 12 noon & AGM

Guest Speaker: Nicola Downer, AM

“Cyprus – My Experience”

Tuesday 20th October 12 noon

Guest Speaker: Mr Hieu Van Le

Lieutenant Governor of South Australia

Venue

The Naval, Military & Air Force Club,

111 Hutt Street, Adelaide

Cost: \$30

Christmas Cocktail Party 2009

Tuesday 1st December 5.30pm

Propose Toast: The Very Rev'd Dr Sarah Macneil

Dean, St Peter's Cathedral

Venue

Wheaton House, Pulteney Grammar School

160 South Terrace, Adelaide

Cost: \$20

For bookings telephone 8223 2914 or

Email: contact@vcleague.com.au