

Firstly – humblest apologies for not being able to attend tonight, however I have a commitment in Brisbane. I would love to be with you. I am sure it is a celebration and an exciting evening.

It is with pride and gratitude that I proffer the Presidents report for the year Sept 2004 – Sept 2005.

For such a young network it is wonderful to note that our membership has continued to increase each month, currently at 48 members including 1 corporate and 1 male. With these numbers we manage to attract approximately 25 – 30 to each dinner function, with those mainly from the host town in attendance. Although each month sees some stalwart supporters who come along to all dinner meetings, we see some new members and visitors at each. We are encouraged by this response. Those who attend participate in support of one another, friendship, networking activities and, of course, entertainment and inspiration from our guest speakers.

These functions have been hosted at Ravenshoe, Millaa Millaa, Malanda, Herberton, Tolga, Yungaburra and Atherton which would not have been as successful, I am sure, without the wonderful efforts of the events coordinator Jane Lamont.

Thanks to Virginia Berry (speaker coordinator) our guest speakers have provided a variety of information and inspiration to us including our special guest this evening, Melanie Wicks former president of the CBWC and director of The 20/20 Group:

Desley Boyle, member for Cairns and Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women inspired us all with some words of wisdom and encouragement from her journey in business and politics.

Pamela Herriot from Atherton Antiques spoke about interesting and beautiful objects and identified the origin and age of some member's treasures.

Marcy Urken from Marketing Monitor presented "Every Excuse to Celebrate – Dates and Business Opportunities designed to bring you more business"

Nicky Moore spoke on "Embracing Change or jumping at opportunities when they come your way."

Helen Hume, an award winning artist, work shopped working in a small team to make your own creations.

Dr Geraldine McGuire provided examples of sustainable business strategies and outlined how local businesses can devise their own sustainability plans.

Danielle Hodgins discussed pre-nuptial and separation financial agreements between intending and married couples and defacto couples.

Robert Baker spoke on problem gambling and the effects of problem gambling on business, families and children.

Nicky Jurd shared her trade secrets to assist website owners affordably market their own website

One of the new initiatives of the committee has been the fabulously modern and diverse eNewsletter which has been professionally prepared and edited by Marcy Urken and Maria Pesavento. Maria has also created the amazing website that brings TBWN into the latest in hi-technology. Our subscriber list is well over 100 – plus ongoing distribution. Thanks ladies.

In response to the initial survey carried out with our membership, many training and funding opportunities have been made available to the membership base from a variety of providers and suppliers. These are advertised on the website in the diary of events section – so look in now and again to keep up to date in what is being offered. And, with one of the benefits of membership being 3 listings in the business directory on the website I am sure you have all taken advantage of this opportunity to promote your business.

Our current bank balance is approx \$3,800 and we owe a deal of thanks to our Treasurer Margaret Stevenson. And it is with much appreciation that we announce that Gary Shirvington and associates have volunteered to be our auditors.

There are a number of you who have also had some fabulous luck with our lucky door and raffle prizes, which have all been donated by members – some of who have taken the opportunity of a 2 minute 'spot' to promote their business. Thank you to Jeanette Suffield for managing this aspect and keeping up the supply of prizes – not an easy task.

In honour of women gaining the vote in Queensland a huge task was undertaken by a team under Rhonda Sorensen's inspiration to provide the celebration and excitement of the Gals Day at the Races. Gina Raccanello demonstrated her wonderful organisational skills along with Jeanette Suffield and Margaret Stevenson (and her offsider Lorraine, whose support, assistance and many hours of hard work we are most grateful for). And thanks to Gina we manage to stay in the public eye by way of her Public Relations abilities.

With amazing support from our Vice Presidents – Liz Duncombe and Rhonda Sorensen – our monthly meetings have continued to be actively putting into place the suggestions you made during the initial survey and from ongoing suggestions received in the 'Suggestion Box'. You are always welcome to attend the meetings which have preciously been held at 5.30pm first Wednesday of every month – at TAFE. This may, of course, change with accommodating the needs of the incoming committee.

For the first half of the year Trish Nemani was in the role of secretary – we are indeed fortunate to have had her support and hard work as she oversaw the process to finalise the incorporation of our network. And yes! Congratulations to TBWN which has become incorporated as of July 2005.

As you know we have been part of the Regional Business Women's Alliance which has seen a most encouraging range of support amongst its members. We welcome members from some of the sister organisations to our dinner functions and delight in representing our organisation at others.

What an amazing developmental year following our formative time in 2004. I know some of you are dying to be part of the planning team into the future and we look forward to the new direction and enthusiasm that always accompanies new leadership.

I wish to thank the outgoing committee for their diligence and many hours of hard work. And I would like to extend my congratulations and offer my support to the incoming team. Thank you for allowing me to be the figurehead for the fabulous TBWN during 2005 – I have enjoyed my role immensely and look forward to the wonderful things to come.

Jeanette Harvey