



## Presidents Report for the 2020/2021 Year

During a period when much of Australia and the world was suffering financial devastation from the effects of Covid 19, BAG managed to complete its most successful 12 month cycle ever. Quite ironically, this amazing result was significantly influenced by the Covid crisis and the Government's response to it.

### **Highlights**

Consequently, 2020/2021 was a year in which several new highs were set and some significant milestones were reached. These included:

- Maintaining our **"Certificate of Excellence"** for the entire year with Trip Advisor
- Maintaining a **4.5 Star** rating (out of 5) on Google throughout the year.
- Continued administrative support for the Mitchell RSL & Combined Sports Club
- A significant upgrade of the gardens at the Great Artesian Spa
- The successful upgrade of the Gallery lighting by FOG
- The publication of the Booringa Bi-Centennial Archives to full internet access (via eHive)
- Awarded a "Best of Queensland" tourism award by TEQ scoring 94.6 out of a possible 100 for "Consistent Delivery of an Exceptional Experience"
- Successfully re-negotiated a further 3 year lease on the Great Artesian Spa
- Exceptional growth in visitation to the Great Artesian Spa. (Every month considerably higher than the same month in any prior period)
- 53000+ visitors to the Great Artesian Spa (previous best 23806)

### **Overall Financial Performance**

As expected, given the statistics above, BAG's overall financial performance has remained firmly in positive territory. As you will read in the audited statements, BAG achieved a net profit for the 20/21 year of \$126,700, up from the result of \$12000 in 19/20 and vastly better than the loss of \$67900 in 17/18 (the first year of Spa operation). It should be borne in mind however that this result was substantially influenced by the "one off" inclusion of approximately \$60,500 from Job Keeper and Cash Flow Boost supplements .

What this great result has meant however is that BAG has been able to move forward with some of the long overdue improvements such as another Community Bus and the redevelopment/relocation of the Café service area at the Great Artesian Spa.

### **Other Highlights**

- **Bottle Tree Bulletin** –BAG continues the publication of the BTB which is a steady (if small) earner for the organization and well read by the community.
- **Digital Media** –BAG continues to maintain its portfolio of digital media with an active presence on Facebook (BAG & Spa), Instagram, Google, Trip Advisor and constantly maintained web sites for both Mitchell and the Great Artesian Spa. The

*reach of these sites is vital to BAG's ability to both engage and inform the community and successfully market its product.*

- **Partnerships** – *Good business is built on good relationships and BAG strives to maintain good working relationships with other community groups and organisations. These relationships (like those with RESQ+, the Mitchell RSL & Combined Sports Club and the Maranoa Regional Council), bring together complimentary skills and resources and create a situation where so much more can be achieved together than would be possible on a stand-alone basis.*
- **Tourism Promotion** – *Promoting our tourist potential continues to be of critical importance to the economy of the town and the success of BAG. Continued membership of and participation in all local, regional and state tourism bodies is consequently essential and something BAG pays close attention to. It is pleasing to note that our participation and input is now being actively sought by groups such as the OQTA.*

*Of course, our two great tourism ambassadors Darryl and Ross continue to play a vital role as well with the Community Bus being kept very busy throughout the year. Thankfully, we will be able to reward them with a new bus with far less kms and far fewer rattles (hopefully for Xmas).*

**Community Assistance & Functions** – *BAG continues to provide support to other groups and community members. As in past years these included the Mitchell RSL & Combined Sports Club and the Mitchell Golf Club as well as working with Rotary to stage Christmas in the Park.*

### **Looking Ahead**

*Moving forward, there is still much to do. We are currently developing an application for funding to install a (much needed) third pool at the Spa. While the matter has been discussed with Council, we are still awaiting a firm quote for these works. Of course the Sewerage Farm and Sleeping Car are still to be dealt with although initial discussions have been started for both.*

*Perhaps the biggest challenge we face, is the relatively low community involvement in BAG and an absence of younger faces at our meetings. While BAG seems to be the first port of call in a community crisis or emergency regular involvement remains quite low which does not auger well for the longevity of the organisation nor the community aspiration to grow and build. Perhaps this is because there is still a very limited understanding of BAG's role, achievements and activities so I have attached a list of our organisational achievements since incorporation in 1992. Hopefully, if this history is more widely publicised, there will be a better understanding of the role BAG plays in the community and some more residents will be inspired to contribute just a couple of hours of their time each month. At least they should understand that BAG does more than "just write letters of support" as we were recently described.*

*In closing, I would like to thank the*

- *Management Committee and BAG members for their support, insights, and enthusiasm,*
- *Jeff, Bree and the staff at the Spa for their dedication and commitment and*
- *All those groups, individuals and Councillors who work with us and share our vision and commitment to build a better future for our community*

*Rob Cornish*