



## Presidents Report for the 2022/2023 Year

Following on from the very successful 21/22 year, the 2023/23 year has proven to be significantly more difficult as the succession of significant national wage increases have impacted operations.

These challenges led to BAG seeking and obtaining Council's approval for a modest increase in admission prices, the first such increase since taking over operations in October 2017. While these increased prices did not take effect until the final quarter of the year in review, it is anticipated that they will realize somewhere in the order of an additional \$42,000 per year in revenues over a full year.

### **Highlights**

The following are just some of the achievements and highpoints for the year under review:

- Maintaining our **"Certificate of Excellence"** for the entire year with Trip Advisor
- Maintaining a **4.6 Star** rating (out of 5) on Google throughout the year.
- Continued administrative support for the Mitchell RSL & Combined Sports Club
- Awarded a **"Best of Queensland"** tourism award by TEQ.
- Successfully passed our Workplace Health and Safety and TEQ Audits.
- Completed the reconfiguration of the Spa Java café.
- Continued growth in visitation to the Great Artesian Spa.
- 77168 visitors to the Great Artesian Spa (previous best 65128)

### **Overall Financial Performance**

As expected, given the comments above, BAG's overall financial performance subsequently slipped into negative territory. As you will read in the audited statements, BAG recorded a net loss for the 22/23 year of \$48435. Given the previous profitable results (particularly from the two prior years) this was disappointing. Although some of this loss could be attributed to the deferral of funded programs from one financial year to the next, the impact of rising wages has been the primary driver of this result as you will see in the attached financials.

### **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 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 Buses being kept very busy throughout the year.*

**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 working with Rotary to stage Christmas in the Park.*

### **Looking Ahead**

*As we move ahead, there is still much to do. Despite, the financial challenges of the year under review, we are still committed to enhancing the range of product available at the Great Artesian Spa to ensure the longevity of its positive impact on the Mitchell community. While we have been focussed on the construction of an additional pool, there are strong indications that the current gym will be relocated to the rear of the hall (with funding from Maranoa Regional Council) before the end of the 2023/4 financial year. This proposal will see it become a 24 hour access facility and leave the current gym space vacant. That would open up the possibility of re-purposing that space to possibly a sauna or even massage facilities so our scope of possibilities is definitely widening. Although not directly related to the year under review, I am very pleased to report that BAG has successfully secured new tenders for both the Spa and Bottle Tree Bulletin which removes the uncertainty of tenure experienced as we ran up to the expiry of the existing agreements.*

*As always, 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 encourage all members to promote the organization as widely as possible in the hope that people will be incentivized to play a role, no matter how small.*

*Unfortunately, my cautionary words in last year's report regarding pricing and wages pressure have, to a large extent, been proven prophetic, so we will need to be at our very best to continue successfully operating the Spa and VIC to ensure a positive result for the Mitchell community.*

*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*