THE SPARTAN

CLUB PATRON - Robert de Castella

December 2019

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FROM THE PRESIDENT Jay Fleming (S1012)

Welcome to our December Newsletter dear Spartans! I hope your running has been enjoyable and that good health is serving you and your loved ones well. As 2019 draws to a close, I bid a warm welcome to our 70 (yes, 70!!) incoming Spartans who received their 'incoming' green singlets this year and trust that you will continue to run that little bit taller as you are now embraced by the wider Spartan family, and admired by those you're inspiring to reach 10 years to become Spartans. Keeping something up and maintaining the focus for 10 years is a great achievement you should rightly be proud of! Additionally, I acknowledge the 27 current Spartans who have hung tough to progress to the next milestone singlet colour. And as President it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the five Spartans we call 'Legends' who have successfully completed all 42 Melbourne Marathons since 1978 ... John Dobson, David Foskey, Bruce Hargreaves, Wayne Thompson and Roger Weinstein. This elite group is part of a larger distinguished group we called the 'Original Legends' about 10 years ago, when there were 13 of them, as it was the first use of the term Legend to describe Spartans who had completed every Melbourne Marathon at that time ... Neville Gardner (41), Frank Biviano (40)*, Manny Karageorgiou (dec'd)(39)*, Peter Battrick (37)*, Peter Ryan (37)*, John Dean (33), Jack Gubbins (dec'd)(30)* and Shirley Young (dec'd) (30)*. (* indicates didn't run in 2019) In addition to these, the other distinguished members of the 40+ club are Bryan Flegg (41), Chas Harcoan (41), Dennis Nish (41), Ken Bowes (40), Ian Campbell (40) and Jim Hopkins (40).

Running moderate distances regularly has been a significant part of my life for well over 50 years, and along with having my hands in soil either planting or mulching on an almost daily basis, these have been the twin towers of my thus-far, quite contented existence. They are the core of a routine I have somehow managed to maintain through my primary school years in the sixties ... through the self-discovery and family violence of my angst-ridden teens ... through the newly-married optimism/building our first home/becoming parents/teething/terrible twos/kinder drop-offs/pickups, of my twenties ... through our kids' primary and early high school years/music/swimming/dancing lessons/how come you bought her a nicer dress than me?/sleepovers drop-offs/pickups, of my thirties ... through our kids' late high school years, hormones/give me money and take me places I wanna go but stay out of my life/music/swimming/dancing/boyfriends/teen-angst/colouring of hair not needing colouring/shaving of legs not needing shaving/both kids moving out of home/losing both of

my parents/becoming grandparents, of my forties ... through the 'being there' for my struggling wife and now adult children/teen-grandchildren-angst, of my now late fifties. For me, running has been one of the main common denominators and the thread that has helped to weave these life stages together, most notably when it got me through a 5 year dark patch in the late nineties where on numerous occasions, the simple act of running literally kept me alive by distracting my straying mind from ending things way too prematurely.

In my professional life I have regularly been asked to help clients in the community and students on campus to help themselves regarding matters of depression and anxiety. Among other notable approaches, we discuss the human being as a self-generating source of energy that itself needs to be connected to sources of energy outside itself, much like an electrical appliance to a wall socket. Together we identify the most common 'disconnections' that happen due to the pace and pressure of modern life, which often tend to be slight variations of the following: 'disconnection' from joyful and meaningful ways of spending time, 'disconnection' from other people, 'disconnection' from hope in the future, 'disconnection' from nature, 'disconnection' from status and respect and 'disconnection' from meaningful values and a genuine passionate purpose. Unfortunately and perhaps ironically, such personal struggles are often compounded by a solid 'connection' to unresolved childhood and relationship traumas from which we are far better 'disconnected'. It is far too simplistic to say that 'reconnecting' with any one or more of these good connections and 'disconnecting' from the bad solves all problems and leads to sunny days with butterflies and daffodils, but a periodic review and reflection can be useful. If such organic self-maintenance solutions don't work sufficiently or quickly enough, then we are certainly extremely fortunate in Australia to have a multitude of professionals and advanced practitioners to turn to for professional assistance.

Personally, I have somehow accidentally (or perhaps intentionally) evolved my running and gardening to include most of the above 'connections'. On runs I regularly connect with people familiar and new, and obviously I also connect with nature, not only by immersing myself in it but also learning much about it by taking pics of plants, insects and birds I see on runs and entering them into fauna and flora apps on my phone. Additionally, I regularly exchange seeds and cuttings with total strangers I run past that guite often become total strangers no more. I also draw on their skill set and ask them to teach me stuff they know as everyone knows something I don't. I regularly connect with my meaning and purpose which for me in several industries over three decades has continued to involve helping people to help themselves, and in the process, learning much from them. I regularly connect with my hope and vision for the future which from a very young age has involved living a basic life low on technology (excluding flora and fauna apps © and modern conveniences, and eventually going back to the simple natural permaculture life off-grid that I enjoyed until age eight, not unlike the Amish and Indigenous lifestyles which I have always greatly admired. Yes, there is something wonderfully simple, organic and portable about running. It can be done anywhere in the world, solo or otherwise, in absolutely any weather, in familiar territory or exploring totally new places on the local map picked out over a coffee that morning, or on an overseas map for an upcoming solo or family holiday.

Running and robust physical activities have been a huge part of my mental health regimen and I feel extremely fortunate to have discovered the benefits to my mind, body and spirit at such a young age all those years ago. Aside from this Newsletter and when I'm specifically asked about my own regimen by students or clients, I have never been in the habit of overzealously sprouting off and telling people what they should and shouldn't do. Not only would that be an arrogance but it's also fair to say that everyone eventually discovers what they feel works best for them, and frankly many have regularly shared with me that they prefer screens and a couch to getting out of breath and having beads of sweat on the brow. This in no way makes them somehow inferior as we are all on our own journey and things evolve organically according to their timetable, not according to our version of their timetable.

Please share with the Spartan family your own benefits gained from running by writing a few words for the newsletter or the website when you next have a couple of spare moments.

I would like to wish all Spartans a Merry Christmas and safe New Year celebrations. May you hit the ground running next year and may your mission for the new year have a crystal-clear 2020 vision! (Sorry, but the corny optometrist ads have already started in the media and will continue throughout 2020 ... you see! ... so cornea! ... ©)

"Life is amazing. And then it's awful. And then it's amazing again. And in between the amazing and the awful it's ordinary and mundane and routine. Breathe in the amazing, hold on through the awful, and relax and exhale during the ordinary. That's just living heartbreaking, soul-healing, amazing, awful, ordinary life. And it's breathtakingly beautiful". - L R Knost

TRIBUTES

Anne Callaghan SF1

Anne was one of only two female Spartans in the original 88. In total she ran 34 marathons and the last of her 15 Melbournes was in 1993. Unlike many other 1978 starters, Anne had already run two marathons and was part of a group of women who paved the way for the much larger number of females who participate today.

There will be a more complete tribute published next year.

Ted Paulin - Race Director for 16 Years



Ted Paulin was unpaid manager of the inaugural 1978 marathon and then race director until 1994. It was his idea to recognise 10 year runners and as Chris Muirden records in <u>The Wall</u> "the inhabitants of Sparta were known as Spartans and they were known as stoic, strong, courageous – and I thought, I'll call them Spartans." There is a <u>comprehensive tribute</u> on the Melbourne Marathon website. The picture shows Ted running in 1978. He finished 8th, just part of a fine athletic career.

CoolRunning

After a couple of decades of being the leading running website / community in Australia, CoolRunning is closing. For those who like to participate in online discussions, there are three Melbourne Marathon groups on Facebook, including one devoted to Spartans. These groups are not affiliated with the Spartans Committee although committee members do participate occasionally.

HONORARY SPARTANS David Foskey (S0025)

Some time before the 2016 Marathon, the committee learned that Brenton Ponza and Tate Kemp were about to run one of the shorter Melbourne Marathon Festival events for the tenth time. We were expecting to induct many new Spartans but Tate and Brenton were a little different from the others running their tenth as they were, or had been, students at the <u>Cerebral Palsy Education Centre</u>. CPEC is the official charity of the Marathon Festival and also encourages its students to participate as part of their physical development.

The Spartans Committee recognised that finishing a 3km walk for these children was an achievement at least as impressive as those of us completing the full marathon. The concept of "Honorary Spartans" was born, and the club now has four <u>Honorary Spartans</u>. Tate and Brenton have now each finished 13 events so a blue singlet is as close as two years away. Tyler Parfuss completed his eleventh in 2019 and Tom Roach qualified by finishing his tenth. We have added a page for each of the boys to the website, and make annual updates.

This video of Tom Roach's early therapy illustrates the challenges faced by these children.



The photos above show, from left: Brenton Ponza and his sister Vanessa, Tyler Parfuss and Tom Roach, Tate Kemp with friend Dom Manago.

STARTING BEHIND THE FINISH LINE Candida Baskcomb SF106

Volunteer applications for the Melbourne Marathon opened early in May. Having withdrawn my marathon entry this year, I knew all along I would otherwise be at a loss as to what to "do" that day. I opted to still be a part of this great day and got myself a volunteer position as a marathon medals presenter.

As a point of difference, my day would start where every marathon runners would end; behind the finish line. I was very excited, so much so - even I didn't sleep the night before the big day. My 7am - 2pm shift was located underground inside the MCG. Dressed wearing my sunflower yellow CPEC Volunteers T-Shirt (and Spartan buff for sense of occasion) I headed off on foot from home at 6am. It's a 50 minute walk - I know this because I had

already timed my walk to the expo two days before. The sky was clear and cool and I realised it would be perfect weather for running. As I get closer to the MCG, I see hundreds of runners gathering towards the start line. It is 6.30 am. I take a wide berth from the crowds of chattering... a smile disarms as I walk silently past in the opposite direction. Oh the smell of Deep Heat and excitement is in the air! I know that feeling.

By the time I have walked to the volunteer's tent, the marathon event has started. I am told to join the group waiting directly in front of me. We all follow our team leader into the MCG - via a very strict security check. We walk in single file down the stairs and onto the turf. We stand behind the marathon finish gantry and it's all stations go with technicians and official staff everywhere. It's odd to be standing on the other side of the finish line, where I see the digital clock is already ticking. On the huge TV screen behind us we watch the marathon leaders who are just 7 minutes into their race.

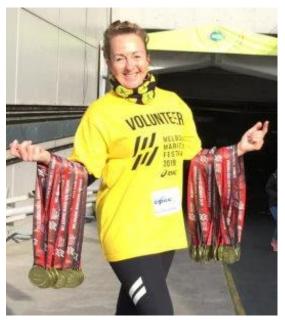
We get inducted about first aid, helping runners and keeping the flow moving on through from the finish line. We learn how to politely urge runners from stopping and taking selfies with the finish arch behind them and to prepare ourselves for all those other weird and wonderful things runners do after finishing. This includes everything from toilet accidents, vomiting, to crying and crawling. The stressful part for volunteers is also addressed. We learn how to manage those runners collapsing... what to do and who to alert. We were told a few horrific real case incidents. There was also mention about the 5 Spartan Legends taking part - running their 42nd MM and to keep a look out for them and cheer them in when they finished.

It was while I was standing listening to all this important and interesting information that I realised I was in fact in the wrong induction group. It was only when we were taken behind the scenes to the VIP athlete quarters down underneath, that could I hear the clanking of metal and knew I needed to walk towards it to find my correct volunteering position. It was so noisy! Clank clank clank clank ... I found 8 volunteers all grabbing marathon medals tied in bunches of 10 from huge buckets, looping them on to the metal railings that surround the end of the finishing Chute. This leads on to the massage area, bag collection and VIP athlete area. It is a whole new and fascinating underworld under the G - the likes of which I've never really noticed after my marathon finishes cause I'm either too tired or just want to get out!

We have plenty of time but tying up 8,000 medals seems a big task! I get to work. At first I can't seem to get them to loop up - so our team leader shows me...she has done this vollie



section for 7 years straight and clearly knows the knack. Each bunch weighs 1kg so they have to be looped on correctly otherwise they fall. One of the girls drops a whole heap of them and we all yell "OMG you broke them!!" Funny ... cause that's impossible. When we have hung up all the bunches of medals we have time to spare.. just under an hour to relax before the winner arrives over the finish line. Most of us eat our lunch now since there just won't be time later on! This is also my one and only chance to re-enact the photo of the "Big M" girl's pose from 35 years before where she is holding up marathon medals!!! I get the help of another vollie called Sarah, who thinks the idea is great fun after I showed her the photo of the 1984 girl! She loads up my arms with medals and after we roughly work out that 'pose' we have such a laugh with her taking photos of my posing as the new 2019 "MM girl". After the photoshoot we stand around chatting to the Ambulance guys - it's now a waiting game ... the lull period - the calm before the Tsunami of finishing runners flood in. We are all out in the sunshine warming up since it's quite cold underneath.



On the TV screen we watch the leading runners pass Flinders Street station - it will not be long now. We all start cheering as Isaac Birir enters the G running the final few 100 meters to finish in 2:16.31. What I wasn't prepared for was the massive bang of fireworks that went off after he crossed the finish line. It frightened the hell out of me! And if that wasn't enough to get the adrenaline going - heading off back down into the medals presentation area certainly was!

From now onwards runners will trickle down to us and we were armed and ready with medallions hanging from our arms. It was already decided that the youngest volunteer amongst us would get to hand out the first medal ... after which it's whoever the runner chooses ... well that's how it worked at this stage anyway! The early finishers start to walk down the Chute - some evidently fatigued, in pain or cramping

up badly. Some with shoes off and shuffling backwards down the slope towards us. It's hard to watch at times. I just clap even louder and harder. While it was quiet and we were waiting for more finishers to make it slowly down the Chute I was tapped on my shoulder by Isaac Birir. He asked me for one of the marathon finisher's medals. I didn't ask why I just presented his to him by placing it around his neck! Then he walked off back into the VIP athlete quarters.

Being the only volunteer amongst us who's a runner - more than ever I know what it feels like to receive your medal and I insisted no matter what that I actually placed the medal ribbon around each runner's neck. I said it was all part of the process of finishing followed by congratulations, cheering and clapping! We all clanked the medals against our legs to entice runners to keep moving towards us! Strangely the seasoned volunteers all stood back at this stage - in no hurry whatsoever to start handing out medals...like they knew something I didn't? Yep! They knew all too well that it was going to get totally manic soon enough with more runners coming in than we can hand medals out to. But I still was determined to present 'in an individual and more personal way' to each runner regardless. Our team leader was untying the medals from the railings and loading up our arms as fast as she could...at one point I had 5 bunches on each arm – that's 5kgs!! ... which is quite heavy especially when lifting your arms up to place the ribbon around runners' necks non-stop for a few hours. Gee I was glad I was used to gym weights!

Around about the 4 hour mark it is totally hectic. I was trying to separate knotted up ribbons as sweating runners queue and look on. We can hardly keep up. Still I am cheering and clapping yelling out "Nice work, well done, job done, congratulations, it's all over!" ...

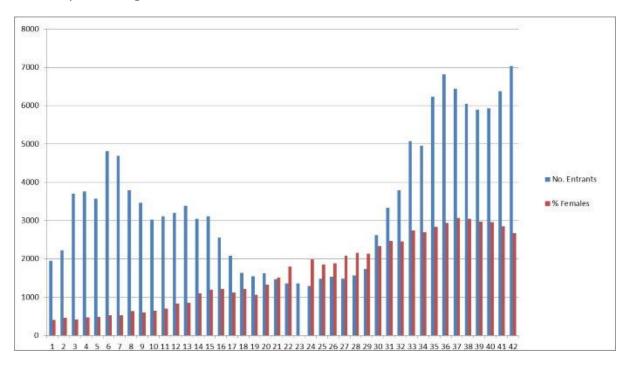
whatever came to mind. I tried to present medals to as many Spartan runners as I could see. However, there came a point when it was impossible due to the sheer volume of people. I did spot our guest speaker from the AGM walk through on my side - so I jumped upon the opportunity to give Doug Wilson his medal as the 4.10 pacer. There were also friends of mine who were very surprised to have me give them their medals!! Many familiar Spartan faces came though and it was a real privilege for me to present a few of you Legends with your 42nd MM medal. Along with a big hug. I wish I had had the time to take a selfie with you! Awesome job! Well done to all of you and everyone.

The gates were closed at 2pm sharp ... and as the remaining runners made their way towards the finish line - we were there cheering loudly until the very last crossed that line and received their medal! What a day! We had handed out 6,995 marathon finishers medals and I had lost my voice!

I had so much fun being a MM medals volunteer and couldn't recommend it more if you're unable to run yourself on the big day. As I made my way out of the MCG I decided I would absolutely do it all again ... but not next year. Next year, I want to be behind that start line.

SOME STATISTICS David Foskey (S0025)

Total Finishers The 2019 Melbourne Marathon set an Australian record number of 7037 total finishers. However, the 1880 female finishers' number was fewer than the 2004 in 2013. The graph below shows the total number of finishers as a blue line (in 1978 there were 1947) and the red line shows the percentage of females (1978 4%). The highest female percentage of finishers of 30.75% in 2014 declined to 26.72% in 2019.

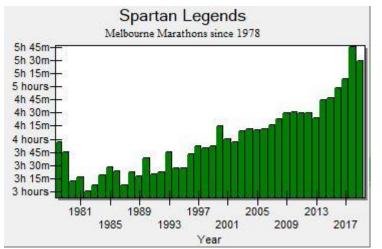


Spartan Inductees The table below shows the number of new Spartans inducted in the last few years, compared to the initial 88 who ran the first ten.

	1987	1988	1989	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Female	2	0	2	5	8	6	12	9	13	16
Male	86	74	66	20	31	33	34	37	43	54
Total	88	74	68	25	39	39	46	46	56	70

Spartan Finishers 2019 289 Spartans, including those who ran their tenth, completed the 2019 marathon. Using our database records, we calculated the number of Melbourne marathons these Spartans have completed as 4,789 at an average number of runs per finisher of 16.6. There will also be several hundred 2019 finishers who will become Spartans over the next few years.

Spartan Legends 2019 The graph shows the average times of the five remaining :



Spartan Legends: John Dobson, David Foskey, Bruce Hargreaves, Wayne Thompson and Roger Weinstein. 1982 was the "tailwind" year, and times have steadily increased since. The poor 2018 time was due to injury (JD) and pacing duties (WT).

A NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY Anne Ziogos SF0045

Another year is coming to a close. As with most other years, it has been an extremely busy one both in the Spartan Camp and personally. With a Spartan Committee, we are trying to promulgate changes to make the club more in tune with modern times. We have introduced a few new articles of merchandise and regular meetings at the Tan for a run and a coffee. Due to family and running commitments, I haven't attended many meetings, however it is still great to hear that we have a good attendance. Please come and join us with a family member, a friend or a four legged friend.

Personally, I haven't participated in many adventures, but hope to make up for it in 2020. We are also having the first wedding in our family and that has really lifted the mood for all family members.

Our numbers as a club are growing and will continue to do so as the club becomes older. Welcome to all the new member and we hope you also have many happy running years ahead of you. We have had new members join our committee and it is very pleasing to have new blood and ideas coming in to help build a better club which caters to our widening membership group. We were very lucky with the marathon conditions this year. We had lovely cool weather and a nice breeze blowing to help us stay cool. I paced this year and that brought a lot of pleasure helping first time runners reach their goals. I did the 5 hour and 20 minute group. We did well as a group and managed to get through the cut-off point in running the whole course with 5 minutes to spare. Most runners kept at the pace and were doing well until the 31 kilometre mark. At that point they slowed down, to walking /running pace and finished in a respectable 5.30 hours although they had been initially expecting to finish the marathon in 6+ hours. Congratulations to the runners who put a lot of effort in and stayed with me for most of the way and thank you to the runners who kept me on pace when I took off. I was also fortunate to host the three Teganuma runners. They all ran extremely well and one of the runners came in 5th place and collected \$1000 for his trouble.

Have a safe holiday period and a happy time with family and friends. We look forward to another busy 2020. As well as eating and being merry during the festive season, if you are participating in any summer events, have a great run and happy training for the rest of the time. Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy 2020.

SPARTAN RUNS Jay Fleming

We will be providing the option of a sweetish nibble of some sort at each of the Spartans Runs to complement the hot beverage of your choice. These will be as healthy a version as possible of either a slice of cake or scones or mince tarts or wafers ... you get the drift. If members wish to ramp it up a notch, you're welcome to bring your own home-made offerings or some from culturally diverse backgrounds to share among the tables. Food, along with running is a wonderful people-glue! We will finalise the 2020 Spartans Runs Calendar in the next Newsletter and on the <u>website</u>. Look forward to seeing you there!

NEW SHIRTS



Helen van der Nagel (SF0043) is shown at left wearing the new 10 year T-shirt. <u>Check out the other options</u> available, including a generic training shirt.

We have some copies of Doug Wilson's book "Kundalini Running" available for \$20. Contact Jay Fleming at <u>flemingjay2@gmail.com</u>.

Our caps, buffs, mugs, stickers are described <u>here</u>.

Perhaps it isn't quite the time to be thinking of jackets but if you'd like to plan ahead you can order <u>here</u>.

CANNELLINI BEAN DIP Anne Ziogos

This is an easy and nutritious recipe to make and enjoy on warm summer days. You can serve the cannellini bean dip with crispy vegetables, pita bread, corn chips or crackers. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS

x 400 g can cannellini beans drained
2½ tablespoons tahini
tablespoon olive oil
Juice of one lemon
clove garlic crushed
Salt and pepper to taste
2-3 table spoons of water (if needed)
Lemon slices and Italian parsley to garnish



Place all ingredients except water in food processor and blend.

Add water a teaspoon at a time to thin to a desired consistency.

Place dip on a serving plate, garnish with lemon and parsley and serve.

MILESTONES TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED AT THE 2020 AGM

As we all know our Club recognises milestones of any runner who has completed (or is about to complete) 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 or 40 Melbourne Marathons so it's important that when you have a milestone coming up you let us know. So, if you have an upcoming milestone or a past milestone that hasn't been recognised as yet, please contact Felicity Doolan at <u>spartans.team@hotmail.com</u>. If you cannot find all your times/results still contact Felicity or John Dean as they may be able to help.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOW DUE FOR 2019/2020

The Spartan financial year is 1 July to 30 June, so fees for 2019/2020 are now due. Can't remember if you have paid? Look up your name via this link: http://melbournemarathonspartans.com/financial-spartans/. If you are not there you haven't paid so here's how:

\$20 via EFT:	Cheque for \$20 via Post:
Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club	"Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club"
BSB: 633-000	PO Box 162
Account No: 139201743	Rosanna Vic 3084

Please include name and/or Spartan Number Please include name and/or Spartan Number

If you are a current member, you do not need to fill in a Membership Form* but please advise of any changes to your contact details via <u>spartans.team@hotmail.com</u>. OR*: download the <u>membership form</u> and email or post it in.

BONUS ARTICLES

Because it's Christmas, we have additional articles on the website as PDFs©

Kevin Cassidy is not a Spartan, but his three Melbournes are only part of a very <u>impressive</u> <u>athletic history</u>.

Rupal Ramesh Shah tells her story of running the <u>six marathon majors</u> and <u>eleven</u> <u>marathons in eleven years</u>. The latter records her thanks to Spartans committee member John Kaparelis who was acting as sweeper for the Sydney marathon. There are also <u>photographs</u> taken after the Sydney marathon.

SPARTANS' CLUB STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

To advance the sport of marathon running to athletes of all ages and abilities and to encourage and assist all runners to achieve Melbourne Marathon Spartan status.

To provide a platform and environment for runners to receive and to build upon their achievements enabling progression through the various Spartan milestone singlet colours.

Assist in the promotion and publicity of the Melbourne Marathon and the charities it supports.

BENEFITS OF BEING A SPARTAN

The Melbourne Marathon Spartans Club is a club consisting of marathon runners from all walks of life, ages and abilities that have achieved Spartan status by having run ten Melbourne Marathons.

The benefits of membership include regular newsletters, organised training runs, being presented with a Spartan singlet after ten years and subsequent milestone Spartan singlets each five years, the opportunity to attend our AGM and hear a top-line guest speaker, being able to avail of refreshments and free massage after finishing the marathon.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE NEWSLETTER?

Do you have a story about your path to becoming a Spartan, or would you like to pay a tribute? If so, please email us at spartans.team@hotmail.com and we'll include it in the next Newsletter. The story from Candida Baskcomb above is an example. If you would like to read previous newsletters, look.here.

Life Members

Paul Basile, Rod Bayley, Peter Battrick, John Dean, John Dobson, Peter Feldman, Jay Fleming, David Foskey, Jack Fredrickson, Christine Hodges, Ken Matchett (Dec'd), Conor McNeice, John Raskas, Ron Young (Dec'd), Shirley Young (Dec'd), Peter Ryan, Maureen Wilson

COMMITTEE						
President	Jay Fleming	0418 374 783				
Vice President	Paul Basile	0439 718 281				
Treasurer	Rod Bayley	9077 7192				
Secretary	Anne Ziogos	9592 4481				
Webmaster	David Foskey	0432 146 747				
Immediate Past President	John Dean	9337 7179				
Committee	John Dobson	0412 688 287				
Committee	John Kaparelis	0447 447 448				
Committee	Colin Silcock-Delaney	5598 6090				
Committee	Felicity Doolan					
Committee	Matt Callaghan					
Committee	Vicky Chung					

JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or if you know someone who might like to join, <u>please use this link</u>