

## **President's Report 2020-21**

**Denice O'Neill-Schlank President**

Dear Members,

It has been an honour to be President for this last financial year, and it gives me great pleasure to present my President's Report for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Taking over the role of President in August 2020 was at a time of great uncertainty and right in the midst of the Covid-19 global pandemic lockdowns. My first meeting as President was on Zoom with an audience of 32 registered members and guests; it certainly didn't feel real! My role was made easier thanks to the great support from Vice President Maree Hearth, who has been an integral part of the Club.

My goal and focus for the year was to ensure the Club continued to offer great value to members and importantly, that the Club continued. A lot of businesses and clubs suffered severely during this time and without the loyalty and commitment of our members and strong dedication of the Committee, we too may have faltered. I would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge my committee; Vice President, Maree Heath, Past President Simon Jarman, Mark Osbourne, Amy Fisher, Scott Warren, Stuart Whitehead and Scott Andersen. Thankyou.

Our challenges started in March 2020 and as we adapted and changed the monthly dinner offerings to online speakers via Zoom, we felt we weren't fulfilling the objectives of the Club as defined in the Club Rules. Thus, we made the decision to put the Club into 'pilot light' mode in September 2020. Restrictions eased in regional Victoria and we were able to move around, restaurants were opening again with maximum table numbers of 10. Going out for dinner is something I very much enjoy, and an idea came to me to have each Committee member host a table, spread over various restaurants. This not only allowed members to meet up, but also helped support local businesses. Our intimate dinners were a hit and for the months of October and November members enjoyed dinners at Tulip Restaurant, Zigfrids, Sawyers Arms, The Elephant & Castle, The Telegraph Hotel and The Arborist. Our committee meetings were also held at Sawyers Arms at that time; it was certainly a nice way to discuss the business of the Club.

February 2021 saw the return of our regular monthly dinners and it was great to welcome members and guests back and to enjoy the opportunities a face-to-face format can offer. The Club is in good financial standing to continue to run our normal dinner formats for the future.

In March 2021 we appointed Emma Jarman as the new GBC Executive Officer. Emma has done a great job jumping into this position. Emma's focus will be on improving the data management of our members and to improve our timelines, efficiency, and communication.

During this year we farewelled Jon Mamonski as Executive Officer, and more recently two long-serving Committee members; Stuart Whitehead & Mark Osborne. I thank them for their service and enormous contribution to the Club.

This year the Geelong Business Club celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> year anniversary. This is an incredible milestone and I am very much looking forward to celebrating the history, tradition, and commitment of our member base, both past and present, over the next 12 months.

Finally, to the members, I thank you for your loyalty and patience with us as we made changes and adapted to everything that the last year has thrown at us. Your words of encouragement and support have meant a lot to me and the Committee.

It truly has been an honour to serve as your President and to uphold the legacy of those before me.



Denice O'Neill-Schlank