

## **Over 55 Walking Association Incorporated**

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD AT LAKE MONGER ON TUESDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2023**

Welcome everyone to the 2023 AGM of the Over 55 Walking Association Inc. It gives me much pleasure to be chairing this meeting as your President for the second year. I am very grateful for the support you have given me in this role and your continuing support of our Association which, as you will hear, continues to grow in strength and numbers and provides so much to enjoyment to us.

I would like to start my report by acknowledging, with respect, the former members who are no longer with us. Some through illness or reduced mobility can't attend our walks. Others have sadly passed away. I will not list names as it would be incomplete, but perhaps if you are aware of members who may be in ill health or have passed away, you might like to hold them in your thoughts and know that we are acknowledging them silently at this AGM. They are in our thoughts and they are missed.

We approach this AGM with a number of Committee positions that currently don't have nominations, but it is never too late for people to indicate that they would like to join the committee or assist in some way. Estelle Katauskas decided after last year's AGM that she would like to nominate for the position of Vice President and she has been an asset to the committee although regretfully she will not be renominating. I know of at least one person who is currently overseas who has indicated interest in taking up a committee role. So once again I encourage you to consider becoming involved, even if you haven't currently put your hand up. You can let me, or any committee member know of your interest at a later date.

2023 has been a good year for OFFWA. At almost every walk we have had visitors or new members and our numbers are up as Helen will report. This year we have not had to worry about COVID regulations or restrictions, although of course COVID is still around. Initially we had great weather but then the rains came and some walks were adversely affected and a couple cancelled but for most walks - come rain, wind or heat we usually had an impressive number of people turn up (dressed for the weather) to enjoy the camaraderie and friendship and of course the beautiful and varied walks!

We had a few changes to our events this year. As per the resolution at last year's AGM we did away with the midyear general meeting and I don't think anyone missed it!!! Although I remind members that according to the constitution the committee can convene a special general meeting at any time. Also, if 30 members wish to request a special meeting the request has to be in writing and signed by all 30, stating the business to be considered. Then a special general meeting has to be convened within 28 days after notice is given.

Changes were made to our social lunches. This year we didn't have the potato bake (for reasons outside our control), nor did we have a hamburger day. We did introduce a "shared lunch" whereby people were invited to bring along a plate of food to share similar to what we do for Melbourne Cup and, from my perspective it was very successful.

Another change – to lessen the load on the Lunch Coordinator, the sausage sizzles were taken over by two teams, each managing one of the sausage sizzles. The teams were led by John and Estelle Katauskas and Kevin and Rhonda Wolfe. And what an excellent job they did. Everything ran like clockwork - very smooth and quick. We will be looking for new people to take over the organization of next year's sausage sizzles so please consider putting your hand up. This year's organisers will be very happy to let you know what it involves and, as always, we have people stepping up on the day to assist. But we do need people to officially take on the sausage sizzle organisation.

Although most of us enjoyed the end of year luncheon at the Duxton Hotel last year, after much investigation of different venues we settled on having our midyear lunch at the buffet at the Crown, Burswood. It was the best option for value for money and the ability to purchase drinks individually rather than on a table basis. As you are aware we are also having the end of the year lunch at Crown on Tuesday, 14 November. Next year the committee will be considering all options for our mid-year and end of year lunch, however it is getting harder and harder to find suitable, affordable venues that meet our needs. We welcome suggestions. Half way through the year we brought back our "Suggestion Box" usually placed on the table near where we sign in. We specifically wanted suggestions with regards to walks, but anything else is welcome. We request that suggestions be written, rather than verbal so we have a record and don't have to rely on memory!

As no one was prepared to take on the organisation of a formal OFFWA "Get Away" we didn't have one. However, there were various smaller, informal/casual walking holidays at different venues organised by individual members that some of you enjoyed. We welcome any announcements next year about any possible informal walking holiday opportunities.

We have had a great committee this year and we worked well together with a friendly, cooperative team approach to most things. I believe this cooperative, team approach with people always willing to lend a hand is what sets OFFWA apart from many other not-for-profit organisations. Apart from the 13 people on the committee there are teams of people backing up various positions (the Raffle Team, First Aid Team, Social Team; Sausage Sizzle organisers; Melbourne Cup Sweep organisers; Walk helpers who put out signs and turn up at walks that have been cancelled due to storm conditions in case people still turn up; Selby Leeder who brings the books along each week; Gordon Barnett who keeps us informed and entertained each week with his well-researched history of our walking sites). We have a picnic at the end of the year as an occasion for the committee and volunteers to get together and so we can express our thanks. Last year I was stunned to see that were 58 names of helpers on the list on top of the committee members and I am sure it will be similar or even larger this year. So from me – a big thank you to you all who cheerfully, willingly and consistently "lend a hand" to make OFFWA an organisation we can enjoy and be proud of.

In conclusion I would like to list and thank our wonderful 2023 committee, some of whom are retiring this year and will be greatly missed. Thank you for everything you have done. Some of our valued helpers are also stepping down from their roles and we are grateful for their assistance. You have been a wonderful committee and group to work with.

Estelle Katauskas	Vice President ( <i>stepping down</i> )
Di Jeffrey -	Business Secretary
Valerie Newton – Barnett -	Meetings Secretary
Des Criddle	Treasurer
Gail Speedie	Asst. Treasurer
Shirley Lizza	Walk Coordinator ( <i>stepping down</i> )
Helen O'Neill	Membership Officer ( <i>stepping down</i> )
Alison Rennie	Raffle Officer ( <i>stepping down; also team</i> )
Geraldine-Hart	Social Coordinator Lunches
Fay Tyak	First Aid Coordinator ( <i>stepping down</i> )
Mike Davies	Web Maste
Dirk van der Plas	T Shirt Coordinator

While we still have our walk and Melbourne Cup lunch next week and then our end of year lunch, I would like to take this opportunity to extend every good wish for good health and happiness and I look forward to seeing you at our summer evening walks and next year.

Faye Jones, President

31 October 2023