

**President’s Report 2014 – 2015**

Another successful year has passed for the dedicated Maroochy Zonta team; continuing its efforts towards empowering women through service and advocacy.

Momentum for the year began last July, when one thousand birthing kits were assembled. The change of venue did not deter the many volunteers who gave up their time on the day. Once again, a shared afternoon tea was a great channel for friendship and discussion.

The number of breast cushions and drain bags being delivered to local hospitals, has remained steady. Since June last year, 92 breast cushions and 103 drain bags have been supplied by our club. We remain indebted to Tancie Thompson, Lin & Sylvia Simpson, along with their helpers, for the sewing of these items. A dozen copies of the DVD ’Side By Side’ (purchased through the Redcliffe club) have been placed in a borrowing library in a new breast-care clinic here on the coast.

Dinner meetings have had added interest provided by a wide variety of guest speakers. These have included Olympian Raelene Boyle, solicitor Paul Brennan, Area Director Christine Stewart, Dr Luc who does amazing work with orphaned children and women in the Congo, and author Ross Davies.

A musical production was to be our major fundraiser for the year. However, due to the director’s poor health, the project could not go ahead. October saw the culmination of two months of amazing effort by members, result in our High Tea Event - where the Coolum Civic Centre was transformed into a beautiful arena for eating, sipping tea, chatting and shopping. One hundred and fifty people were catered for and the success of the day was evident in the profit of $7500. Planning for this year’s event will begin soon.

Representatives from SunnyKids, Sonshine Sanctuary and Nambour Lions Emergency Accommodation Centre were our guests for dinner in November and gratefully received the huge hampers, comprised of groceries, toiletries and gifts. The generosity of members was unsurpassed, as three large cars were, once again, loaded to the roof.

The club was very excited to have four applicants for the YWPA award - the first applicants for quite a few years. Our winner, Jasraaj Singh was a guest at the February *Information* *Evening*, where she received her prize. Listening to this young lady speak about her upcoming voluntary work in Cambodia, was most inspiring and uplifting. Our thanks must go to Diane Faulkner, Marion Frederick and Joy Machray for facilitating the award process.

The Palmwoods Hotel was, once again, the venue for our International Women’s Day brunch on March 7. The guest speaker, Tigi Johnson, spoke from the heart about coming from Ethiopia as an orphan and her recent trip to Africa, to meet up with family and friends. A number of guests commented on how much they enjoyed the short information talks given by some of our members, alerting guests to what we do to make a difference in women’s lives, here and overseas. We appreciate the work of the organising committee: Marion Frederick, Petra Ladwig, Diane Faulkner and Barb Clyde.

Lyn Cosgrove, Jenny Garde, Uli Hosang and Dell Battle organised another very successful *Movie Night* for March 28, at the Nambour Arthouse Cinema. The movie, The Second Best Marigold Hotel, was a great choice and the amazing spread of delicious food, provided sustenance, once again. The change of evening, to a Saturday night, was unavoidable and didn’t seem to deter our many loyal supporters.

As a result of our successful fundraising activities, we have been able to continue to further the ideals of Zonta. Our support for victims of domestic violence continues through financial assistance to SunnyKids and Sonshine Sanctuary. We also continue our support for the Coolum Vietnam Support Group who sponsors disadvantaged women and girls in Vietnam.

A relatively new member of our club, Tancie Thompson, has taken on the role of facilitating the mature-age bursaries and for this, we thank her most sincerely.

Our member numbers have fluctuated again this year, with the induction of Judith McDonald and the resignation of four members. Our membership currently stands at twenty-one, with several inquiries relating to joining, being followed up by the membership committee. Our faithful band of HonZons continues to support every venture and for this, we are extremely grateful.

Our club’s website is in the capable hands of Petra Ladwig and we continue to improve communication through this avenue. We are very proud of Petra’s being selected as Chair of the District Conference, to be held in October this year.

After such a demanding year, was it any wonder that many of us celebrated the club’s successes at our Christmas party in December? After a delicious lunch, one of our members displayed a hidden talent and entertained the gathering with a most enjoyable musical act.

The club is now in possession of a new banner, due to the efforts of Judith McDonald. This banner has been two years in the planning and Judith saw it through to fruition.

And so, as my term as president comes to a close, I would like to sincerely thank the Maroochy Zonta members for their unwavering support. I am truly humbled by the fact that they entrusted this position to me for the past two years. I have learnt such a lot about Zonta, about the wonderful women I have worked with, and about myself. I will always be grateful to the hard-working executive: Diane Faulkner, Barb Clyde, Heather Stevens, Dell Battle, Mary O’Dwyer, Gaye Dieben and Uli Hosang for their help and encouragement. I wish the incoming board every success and will, of course, be of assistance in any way I can.

Well done Zonta Club of Maroochy – what you do, does make a difference to people’s lives!

Sandy Gray