

President's Report 2018

2017-2018 : A very successful year

At the beginning of our 2017-18 Term of Office your Committee was facing a very bleak financial forecast as we had made a loss of \$71,806 in the 2016-17 year and were forecasting a loss of \$100,000 for this year.

I am very pleased to be able to tell you that through several concurrent measures we have been able to significantly reduce that loss to only \$9,430 for the 2017-18 year.

There are several reasons for this. The first was the withdrawal from our on-selling of Optus Mobile Telephone plans. This enabled us to reduce our losses on the Mobile Broadband Services from – minus \$38,723 last year to an on paper gain of plus \$13,841 this year. (This “gain” was from the timing of licence renewals etc. as we are no longer providing any Optus Services).

The second major improvement was the introduction of our new Membership Management System which has enabled us to reduce our Office Staffing costs from \$87,530 in 2017 to \$68,209 in 2018. This has largely been due to the new System's ability for our Members to “self-renew” their subscriptions and we are hoping that the implementation of further improvements to our Systems will enable us to reduce these costs even further.

There are several other cost saving steps that have been taken but foremost amongst these was the installation of Solar Electricity Panels in Moorabbin which was an initiative from our previous President – George Skarbek.

George has decided not to stand for this year's Committee but he has provided many years of Service to our Committee – mainly as President – and I would like every Member of Melbourne PC to join with our Committee in thanking George for his outstanding Services over the past years.

Also leaving us this year is our Vice President, Frank Maher who is our representative on the Body Corporate for Moorabbin and has been making several cost cutting improvements such as reducing the costs of consumables by replacing paper towels with a hand dryer.

Frank has kindly offered to remain as our representative on the Body Corporate and we are most grateful that he will continue to use his many years of building management knowledge to continue to keep our costs down at Moorabbin.

Finally, another member to leave is Paul Woolard who is the Interest Group Leader at the East SIG Group and was assistant to our Interest Group Co-ordinator – John Morris - on the Committee.

Paul has been instrumental in providing training in the use of our new Systems by the Interest Group leaders and as Paul is continuing to be part of our Web Development Team we are grateful that Paul will continue to assist our SIG Leaders in getting the best I.T. Systems in the future.

I hope you will join me in thanking these 3 Members for their valuable contribution to our Committee over the 2017-18 year.

Committee

We have been very fortunate in having a very talented and experienced team over the past 2 years and I am pleased to say that most of the previous Committee chose to stand for Committee again when I took over as President from George Skarbek.

This included George himself, who took on the I.T. Portfolio which I had previously held when Vice-President and the two Executive positions of Treasurer and Secretary – which are extremely demanding in both time and energy.

Treasurer

Following Bill Ford's retirement we were very fortunate that Stewart Gruneklee offered to take over the position of Treasurer.

Stewart has attacked this role with great enthusiasm and has quickly mastered the intricacies of our accounts – including our new "Quick Books On-line" environment which has enabled us to gain more accurate and timely reports of our financial position.

I am very pleased to say that Stewart has volunteered to remain in the role of Treasurer for this coming year and I am very much looking forward to working with Stewart again.

Secretary

John Swale (Member number 16) has got the most in depth knowledge of the history and rules of our club and once again we were very fortunate that John volunteered to remain in the role of Secretary for the past year and again for the upcoming year.

John's workload as Secretary has been very heavy and he has been assisted on Committee by Peter Bacon. I am again pleased to say that both John and Peter have offered to continue those roles in the coming year.

Vice-President

As mentioned previously, Frank Maher has not only taken on the responsibility for the Moorabbin premises but he has provided me with extremely wise advice on some of the major decisions over the past year. In fact, Frank's Management skills are such that I have invited Frank to chair our Committee Meetings in order to improve the flow and decision making of the Committee Meetings.

This year the position of Vice-President has been accepted by Stephen Zuluaga who has been largely responsible for the promotion of our new Melbourne Computer Club initiatives via the "melcc.org.au" web site.

Stephen is also taking over the "I.T. Portfolio" from George and I am sure that Stephen's experience in I.T. Systems will be a great help in ensuring that we can further automate the Membership Management processes within Melbourne PC.

Committee Portfolios

Every Member of the Committee has a particular Portfolio to look after. These include:- Office 365 Management – Harry Lewis, SIG Co-ordinator – John Morris and Volunteer Co-ordinator – Phil Lew.

All of these have been managed exceedingly well over the 2017-18 year and I am very pleased to say that all 3 Members have elected to remain in those positions for the coming year.

You can be assured that your Club is in good hands with the experience that these folks bring to their Portfolios and I am very much looking forward to working with all of them in the coming year.

Promoting our club

The Melbourne Computer Club – a great success from the start !!!

Last year George informed you that the Committee had registered the business name "The Melbourne Computer Club".

This year, we have firmly established that arm of our Group as a credible organisation with many new Facebook and Meetup subscribers and many of those new subscribers have become Members of our Group.

In fact 2 of the new Members of our incoming Committee – Hugh McDonald and Bahador Nayebifar came to us via the Microcontroller Moorabbin arm of the Melbourne Computer Club.

We have held several exciting "Events" under the arm of our "Computer Club" and some of our longer established Groups such as the Essendon Group have renamed themselves as the "Essendon Computer Club".

This does not imply a change in our basic ethos of "Members helping Members" – in fact to the contrary – but it does enable us to recruit younger Members who have the skills to assist us with some of the more modern "Computer Skills" so that we can indeed continue to help our existing Members.

Other matters

As George reported last year, our Office Manager – Dianne Vogt-Keldermans went on permanent sick leave in January 2017.

On January 25th 2018 Ms Vogt-Keldermans was granted a Diversion Order by the Moorabbin Magistrates Court provided that she wrote a letter apologising to all Members of our Group.

The contents of that letter are as follows:-

"Dear Members of Melbourne PC User Group Inc.,

My name is Dianne Vogt-Keldermans, on the 25th January 2018 I appeared before the Moorabbin Magistrates Court regarding allegations made by Melbourne PC User Group Inc. of altering nine proxy votes.

I applied for and was granted a Diversion with no conviction recorded on the understanding that I apologise to Melbourne PC User Group and its Members.

I sincerely regret all actions that led us to this point and humbly request your forgiveness.

I remain yours faithfully,
Dianne Vogt-Keldermans.”

As of the time of writing of this report, Ms Vogt-Keldermans has enlisted the assistance of a lawyer to claim that she was underpaid during the time she was office manager. We disagree with the claim and have engaged legal advice on behalf of Melb PC and cannot comment further at this time.

John Hall,
President