

President's report to 2021 AGM

To say this has been a most unusual year would be an understatement. Covid-19 has put a major damper on things. But on the other hand, it has opened our eyes to future possibilities. The year was also unusual in that the current committee only started in February, because the “2020” AGM was postponed until then.

Membership has, inevitably, decreased over the year. In January we had approximately 1,500 financial members. On 12th October we had 1,414 members, a loss of 86 members over 9 months. Compared to quite high declines in membership a few years ago, the attrition rate in the last few years has levelled off.

Financially the club has also taken a bit of a hit, ending up around \$23,000 out of pocket for the 2020/21 financial year. This is due to a gradual but steady loss of ageing members and inability to run raffles, along with increases in some uncontrollable overheads like Owners' Corporation fees and ZOOM subscriptions. You can find full financials in the Treasurer's report.

On the bright side the committee is taking steps to control costs where control is possible:

- We have reviewed and are changing out fibre Internet plan at Moorabbin to a lower tier. That will save an estimated \$11,800 over 3 years.
- We have set in motion the moves needed to dump a very expensive high end A3 colour laser multi-function centre when the cast iron contract expires next year. That will save about \$6,500
- We are seeking and implementing a less expensive solution for our phone system (which is central to iHelp and other functions).
- In order to boost income a little we have put a proposal to the AGM for a modest fee increase.

There has been an amount of work done in transforming the Moorabbin club rooms to make spaces more suited to a modern technology club, with the end objective of recruiting new, younger members. Needless to say that work has been hampered by lockdowns and related restrictions.

The Coder Dojo initiative has been successful, with a number of kids turning up on Saturdays, accompanied by parents, to explore “coding” together.

The big project for the year has no doubt been the transition away from Microsoft and to Google Web Services. The email transition is virtually complete, with some remaining “mopping up” to do. Next will be OneDrive; members using OneDrive will need to find another home for their data.

The iHelp service has been very active during the year. At the start of Covid (2020) there was a very noticeable uptick in the number of requests for help, presumably brought on by people's greater reliance on computers and “devices” for social interactions and working from home. This “committee year”, since February, the number has averaged out to about 98 requests per month.

All in all, not a stellar year – it never could have been. But we have handled the transition to online meetings well and remain in overall good shape. For that I would like to thank, without naming anyone lest I forget someone, all the SIG leaders, volunteers, iHelp team and committee members who have all contributed during the year.

David Stonier-Gibson,

President 2020/21, Melbourne PC User Group

28th October 2021