



The Elves are back in Town



Figure 1 Lorraine Watt presenting John Bayliss with a \$900 cheque, Some Toys, Best Clubman 2017 & 2018, Vin Cheers Bendigo Bank and more toys

2018 provided another fantastic day highlighting the skills of the club's toy elves and the amount of effort required in making the day a success it was.

This year approximately 750 toys were manufactured by club members and some of their wives. In particular John Parrent acknowledged the ladies saying "The toys this year would not be as colourful if not for the artistic skills of the ladies".

Naturally Kevin Cross & Ewan Bennet took the day in their stride and assessed the activities as they occurred.

At any given time the club has 80-85 members. With approx 25% of the members being involved manufacturing the toys it is the most successful activity conducted by the club. The following members should be acknowledged for contributing their time, effort & skills. Noel Archdall, Ewan Bennett, Bert Bartlett, Rod Bew, Kevin Cross, Gaven Davis, John Dunn, David Feather, John Feeley, Gerry Gilliland, Ron Higgins, Eddie Hunter, Gilbert Icke, Brian Jones, Jeff Killeen, Derek Lowden, David

Palmer, John Parrent, Anne Miller, Tim Rickards, Roger Stebbings, David Taylor, Paul Uccello

The following ladies volunteered their time to assist. May Simpson painted the faces on the tricycles, Margaret Conner made the mattress for cradles, Margaret Davis provided the games packaging, Eileen Taylor crocheting pillow & blankets, Helen Bartlett sewed the covers for the pushers and Janice Rickards with Judy Icke painted the artwork on the carousels.

John Bayliss commenced the official handover advising this would be the last time toys would be manufactured from this site as it had been earmarked for the new aquatic centre. So toy making will be interrupted in 2019 until the new workshop in the Vern Wright Reserve was built and set up. However John said "while the new workshop is being built the toy makers are so keen at what they do they have said they would make the toys at home".

Vin Cheers, Board Chairman of the Bendigo Bank, commented, "The quality of the toys is excellent and I thank our customers who make it possible for the Bendigo Bank to support WOSP".

Cr. Antonella Celi acknowledged our use of the Bunurong lands and commented, "I love practical toys that arouse a child's curiosity". Antonella highlighted that this would be the last time toys would go on the truck from this workshop and we should acknowledge & celebrate this achievement.



Figure 2 Janice Rickards, Margaret Conner, Judy Icke, Eileen Taylor & Margaret Davis being thanked at the Christmas Lunch. Absent was Helen Bartlett & May Simpson

Mike O'Grady from Westernport Christmas Giving Project, an off-shoot of the Emergency Relief Organisation thanked WOSP saying, "Parents will get a food hamper and each child under 12 gets a toy". He continued, "Hastings Hall is available from the 12th December for 10 days & distribution to the families is scheduled for the following Tuesday & Wednesday.

Russell Butcher from Rosebud Salvation Army said, "Many thanks for providing toys to us over the last 10 years. Our system of distribution allows the parents to select the toys. Some parents, who are not desperate, really appreciate them & would love to buy more. However others expect the best of electronic gadgets".

John Parrent, WOSP Toy Session Leader, expressed his pride in the team which ranged from 70 to the late eighties. John said, "we like to make toys that help young children to interact with their parents or elders" and said he would welcome any feedback in that regard.

Ken Northwood, president of Food for All, consists of members from the local churches, Society of St Vincent de Paul, community groups and individuals. It is ecumenically and community based with the aim of providing weekly food parcels to those that require it. Ken said "Generally we provide 2400 food parcels each week and spend \$66k each year saving \$30k by working with the supermarkets". Ken thanked WOSP saying, "Small children like the wooden toys while the older children want electronic gadgets". He suggested, "4 stumps, bat & ball for children to play cricket on the beach with their elders would be well received"

So much happened during the day one highlight went almost unnoticed. The members of the Ceiladh Dance Group, Ross Montalto, Rob Ingles, Lorraine Watt & Norma Cromwell presented John Bayliss with a cheque for \$900 being the funds raised from Lorraine's recent garage sale. This brings their total contribution to the club in 2018 to \$1400. Thank you Ceiladh.

Christmas Lunch

Again this function proved to be a well-attended and relaxed affair helped by the new layout and atmosphere of the Rye RSL which only opened the previous Sunday after extensive modifications.

After a 3 course lunch the formalities started with the door prize being won by Margaret Conner. Then the ladies Janice Rickards, Judy Icke, Eileen Taylor, Margaret Davis & Margaret Conner were acknowledged for their contribution in manufacturing the 2018 toys.



Figure 4 Margaret Conner ~ Door Prize

Raffle winners were David Feather, Tim Rickards & Ron Higgins.

Margaret Conner was the lucky door prize winner and now has sufficient chocolates to last till Christmas.

Kevin Cross was awarded the 2018 Best Clubman. His framed certificate was wrapped up. In the process of unwrapping he could see "black & yellow" and immediately let out with "what an insult" as he recognised the Tigers beanie.

The audience loved the interaction as Crossy, a one eyed Collingwood supporter, is always being teased about his allegiance. Thanks for the award Crossy said. "I love the workshop. It gets me out of the house where I can talk to people and do something useful as well".

One notable absence from the luncheon was Bert Bartlett. Unfortunately Bert was rushed to Frankston Hospital early that morning with fluid on his lungs. Get well soon Bert. You are missed by all.

In conversation it was surprising how many members were involved in making a ukulele. Initially Chris Dovey was the only person making one. Now other interested members are Bevan Jones, Brian Jones and David Feather

Once the formalities were over John Bayliss was seen dancing to the music on the dance floor.



Figure 3 Raffle Prize winners: Ron Higgins 3rd, Tim Rickards 2nd & David Feather 1st



Figure 5 2018 Best Clubman Kevin Cross

2018 Best Clubman ~ Kevin Cross



At the age of 90 Kevin is a one eyed Collingwood supporter and well known for wearing his Magpies beanie to the workshop. Kevin is one of the more senior members of the Woodworkers of the Southern Peninsula (WOSP). An excellent sense of humour but believes he has earned the right not to suffer fools and lets it be known. Very popular with the Wednesday toy makers as he is clear on what he will & will not do & how he will do it. Kevin has proved to be a very popular recipient of the Best Clubman Award.

In 2007 Kevin was introduced to the club by David Fraser. At the time Graeme Scott was president. Jack Kane was the session leader, who put Kevin on one of the lathes and started to teach him to turn wood. Since then he has made his fair share of bowls, platters, pens & candle sticks which he is gradually giving away as gifts.

I recall one of his projects as making wooden pen cases. He worked with Bert Bartlett to make a rather clever jig that would enable routing the top & bottom of the pen cases. Subsequently the hinges were added providing him with many pen & pen case sets; a very professional outcome.

Kevin has become regular attendee on toy making days each Wednesday although more recently he ends up washing the dishes with his friend, Ewen Bennett, the 2017 Best Clubman.

Pre WOSP.

During the war Kevin lived with his family in Wonthaggi. His dad served, his mum worked in a munitions factory and Kevin applied to join the Navy. However as he was rejected he decided to complete his apprenticeship.

After the war, like most teenagers Kevin played cricket & football in his youth. He played with the Surrey Hills Combines in the Eastern Suburban Churches league. After a clash with an opposition player he broke his femur & finished up in hospital for 9 months. To kill time in hospital and being good with his hands he learnt to make macramé belts.

In 1952 Kevin married Avis and had 3 children Peter, Jennifer & Michael.

As a sheet metal worker, Kevin lived in Blackburn and worked for an Oakleigh firm that used to make hot water services, tanks & boilers.

In 2000, well after his retirement, when the real estate prices were booming he & his wife, Avis, sold up & moved to Rye. They holidayed in New Zealand a few times and travelled to China with Probus. "Never again" says Kevin.

In 2005 his wife, Avis, died after 53 years together. Initially it was a shock but with the assistance of his family, Kevin became to enjoy the Peninsula way of life. Initially he tried bowls before joining WOSP. Being an independent and resourceful person Kevin sees no need to go into Aged Care as he can do his own cooking & washing.

In recent times he has obtained the help of a council house keeper so that he can do the things he wants to do rather than the things he should do, like housekeeping. He has enlisted the assistance of the community outreach group 39+ which offers a range of support services for older people in the 39+ post code area.

It was a pleasure getting to know Kevin. Behind the rough exterior is an independent friendly person that will always meet you half way if you are prepared to do the same.

Kevin is a well-respected elder of WOSP.