



**BRISBANE WOMEN'S CLUB**

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2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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# ABOUT BRISBANE WOMEN'S CLUB



## Our Mission

Brisbane Women's Club (BWC) is one of the oldest and most influential women's groups in Queensland. It has been a strong advocate for women and a champion of social change for more than a century.

Today, the Club has a growing membership – a whole new generation of business and professional women looking for inspiration, wanting to be part of a voice for women in our community, and wanting to give support and encouragement to other less fortunate women in their community. BWC is a leader and facilitator, harnessing the skill of its members and building partnerships to create opportunity and to tackle issues of importance to Queensland women. As well as a vibrant program of activities and events, the Club's Charitable Trust supports initiatives that empower, encourage and enable women to fulfil their potential.

## Our Vision

That Brisbane women are able to reach their full potential in all aspects of life free of discrimination, with BWC members being a force for change supporting each other and the community



## Our History

The Brisbane Women's Club was founded in 1908 by Margaret Ogg, an extraordinary woman with a passion to improve the lives of Queensland women. Operating continuously for more than 109 years, from its inception the Club has had a strong social justice purpose. The Brisbane Women's Club was a key fundraiser and driver of the establishment of Women's College at UQ, actively campaigned for the pension and support for single mothers and today, through its Charitable Trust donations, financially supports a range of organizations and projects in QLD encompassing women's medical research, women's education, QLD country women, and women experiencing domestic violence.

# CHAIR REPORT

Brisbane Women's Club (BWC) can be proud of achieving another impressive year in 2016-17 on its revitalisation journey toward becoming Queensland's premier social justice women's organisation.

We commenced implementation of a 3-5 year strategic plan built around BWC's purpose and focused on:

- building our member base
- developing our corporate and government partnerships
- becoming an advocate in key women's policy arenas
- continuing to support disadvantaged women
- providing professional development opportunities for career women

It is an amazing performance for a not-for-profit with very limited staff and a dedicated cohort of volunteers.

BWC's membership has grown significantly during 2016-17 and we now have more than 239 members from diverse backgrounds. In a survey we conducted during the year, our members nominated volunteering and philanthropy and development of professional networks as key membership attractors. Our members also provided lots of ideas on improving member engagement. This topic will be a key focus area for the 2017-18 Business Plan.

During the year BWC has developed several significant corporate and government relationships. They include the Australian Institute of Company Directors focused on building women's board readiness and the Office For Women with BWC represented on their Strategic Advisory Group For Women On Boards. Also McCullough Robertson, Pitcher Partners and Bounce Financial generously hosted respective events on networking and negotiation and women's financial literacy.

Our key policy areas during the year centred on women's representation on boards and women's financial literacy. BWC received a \$20,000 grant from the Office For Women to deliver a financial literacy campaign, Invest In Yourself. It is designed to strengthen Greater Brisbane women's financial wellbeing by raising their awareness of their habits and beliefs about managing money and also building their knowledge and skills to enable them to make informed financial decisions at key points in their lives. The campaign was launched in July 2017 and will run throughout the next financial year.

Our grants program this year also supported our financial literacy policy objective with the Lady Musgrave Trust receiving \$5000 for its Homelessness initiative and the Logan Women's Health and Wellbeing Centre receiving \$5000 for a financial literacy program for disadvantaged women. We look forward to reporting on the wonderful work of these organisations over the coming year.



Our work for disadvantaged women also extended to The Big Christmas Wrap, our 2016 Christmas event supporting Friends With Dignity, where we brought some festive cheer to Brisbane women who have been made homeless by domestic violence.

Throughout the year we held a number of events giving our members the opportunity to build their capabilities in financial literacy, network and negotiation. There was also the chance to enjoy our Winter Conversations evening and the inspiring movie, Embrace, about an Australian woman's determination to create a body image revolution so women can love and accept their bodies.

Finally, we said goodbye to our CEO Balveen Ajimal who contributed so much during her tenure at BWC and we wish her well in her new career direction.

While we have achieved a lot this year, we have also learnt a lot as well on this revitalisation journey. We would like to engage you, our members, much more actively in 2017-18 to contribute to BWC's work. On behalf of the BWC Board, I want to particularly thank our devoted volunteers for all their effort, time and professional commitment. We are women working together to support other women in Queensland - what could be more important?

Thank you for your support.

Robin Francis

# FINANCE REPORT

## Summary

2017 was a year of consolidation and forward planning for the Club, given the exponential growth in our member base and events held in the two preceding years.

To ensure sustainable growth of the Club and to invest in our member engagement, the Board decided to invest in the operational foundations of the Club. This included a more sophisticated member registration and payments system and expert assistance in IT, communications and bookkeeping. This resulted in a moderate increase in operational expenses from the previous year of \$10,641.

Our philanthropic grants program was relaunched, with total grants of \$10,000 being awarded to the Lady Musgrave Trust and the Logan Women's Health and Wellbeing centre.

2017 also saw an award of a \$20,000 grant from the Office of Women to undertake our much anticipated Invest in Yourself project. This project is intended to run until June 2018 and will be largely self-funded by the initial grant.

Our investment portfolio, which is managed by Investment adviser AspireRetire, continued to generate strong capital growth, increasing the capital strength of the Club. In the twelve months up until 30 June 2017, the portfolio increased in capital value by \$54,979.31 and earned investment income of \$45,256.61 (including franking credits refunded to the Club). We are pleased with the performance of our investment assets to date.

Overall, the Club experienced an income loss of \$17,439, due to the additional operational expenses and grants. However, our balance sheet continues to grow (by \$65,550.54 during 2017), underlying the stability of the Club. Overall, the board remains confident in the Club's financial position, which will sustain it for the long term.

Amanda Sartor





# INVEST IN YOURSELF

This year BWC and our program partners, collaborated to create a financial literacy campaign: *Invest In Yourself*.

This is a ground-breaking campaign that aims to empower women to be financially literate, resilient and confident; armed with greater self-awareness of their habits and beliefs and, through access to financial guidance, resources and tools, make wiser financial choices.

The campaign is about connections - we connect women with the knowledge and expertise tools to manage their money and achieve financial independence. Our objectives are to:

- raise women's self-awareness of their habits and beliefs about managing money
- ensure women have the necessary knowledge, skills and capabilities to make informed financial decisions
- improve access for women to financial information and advice
- provide tools and resources for women to help increase their financial understanding and awareness
- promote opportunities for women to build their financial management capabilities

Through the learnings we gained in developing this campaign, we see that there are some very common issues and beliefs about finance that apply to women from all backgrounds and all financial circumstances. Through *Invest In Yourself*, we are demonstrating our commitment to supporting women to have:

- control over their finances - managing their spending and debt
- resilience to meet unplanned and unexpected events - using insurance, wills, cash buffers and credit rating
- financial independence - long term planning for future security
- goals to turn their dreams into reality - the importance of investing - not procrastinating

Launched in July 2017, the campaign will run throughout the next financial year and beyond. A huge thank you to the Office for Women and the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS) for funding this campaign. Also thank you to our sponsors and industry partners Bounce Financial, Vision6, Digital Glare, Financy, Jobs Shared, Logan Women's Health & Wellbeing Centre, The Mindful Wealth Movement, Serena Darling Consulting and Wellthy.





“I am constantly distracted by worrying about money. I’m working full time yet still I can’t pay the bills. I wish I understood how to make a budget.”

# EVENTS

Throughout the year we have held a variety of events:



## AUG 2016 Networking Event

Networking with masquerade masks! – avoid the cringe worthy feeling and just get down to making connections. This event was an ideal event for members and a terrific way to help them take advantage of networking opportunities to advance their business or career or just meet new people. It was an evening filled with meaningful discussion, insightful questions and a whole lot of fun.



## SEP 2016 Members Evening at GOMA

A wonderful evening at GOMA followed by the Cindy Sherman Up Late event. There was live music and the opportunity to take a walk through the Cindy Sherman Exhibition and hear from contemporary practitioners at a Storytellers' talk.



## NOV 2016 Big Christmas Wrap

Supporting Friends with Dignity, we brought some festive cheer to Brisbane women who have been made homeless by domestic violence. We had more than fifty members and our sponsors, the Powerhouse, Leishman Legal, Daily Wrap and Vulcana Circus, contributing the venue, catering, gifts, money and time.

We spent a great afternoon together after one of Brisbane's massive November storms wrapping presents, drinking champagne, being entertained by Vulcana doing amazing things with swathes of fabric, being guided by the wonderful Vivienne Anthon in present-wrapping techniques, and hearing about the wonderful work of Friends With Dignity supporting women fleeing domestic violence.



## MAY 2017 Winter Conversations

An evening for our members to catch up with each other. Also a chance for us to keep everyone updated on all the exciting work we have been doing and the new initiatives we have been putting in place at BWC.

## FEB 2017 Embrace Movie Screening

Members attended a private screening of the ground breaking Australian documentary, Embrace, featuring the dynamic Taryn Brumfitt where she explores the global issue of women and body image. This event was held in partnership with The Queensland Medical Women's Society and was thought provoking and empowering, sending a positive message of 'self-love'.

# MEMBER SURVEY



To enable us to work more closely with our members, we undertook a survey to find out more about what they would like from BWC. We received an encouraging response and the information and insights have been useful in assisting the board in building an ongoing membership engagement framework for 2018. The feedback also helped inform the direction of our recent board strategy day.

Two definite trends that emerged from the survey were requests for:

- more informal networking events held in the city on weekday evenings
- more regular communication through social media

We discovered that the vast majority of our members were referred by a friend and wanted to participate in networking, volunteering and philanthropy.

We would like to give our sincere thanks to all of you who completed the survey. Also congratulations to Anita Healy who won a year's free BWC membership for taking part.

# GRANTS



The Brisbane Women's Club continued our tradition of our annual grants program that continues to support Queensland women in one or more of the following ways:-

- providing projects or support aimed at improving the lives of women;
- mentoring and guiding women to achieve equal participation in social, cultural, economic and political arenas of Australian life;
- exercising leadership around issues affecting women.

In June 2017, the Brisbane Women's Club grants were awarded to The Lady Musgrave Trust and the Logan Women's Health & Wellbeing Centre.

Each organisation received a grant of \$5000 to help fund their critical work which aligns with Brisbane Women's Club's commitment to supporting women's social welfare initiatives that empower, educate and enable Queensland women to achieve their potential.

The grant for the Lady Musgrave Trust will help fund their Forum, "Women and Homelessness - Innovative ideas to end homelessness," to be held in Brisbane on 30 August 2017.

Karen Lyon Reid, CEO of The Lady Musgrave Trust said, "The Trust is honoured to have the support of the Brisbane Women's Club for our 9th Annual Forum - which is the only community led collaborative Forum focusing on women's homelessness. As two of the oldest charities in Queensland (The Trust est 1885 and The Club est 1908) we continue to work towards the same goals to this day - to assist women so that they can have sustainable, happy and positive lives for the future."

The Logan Women's Health & Wellbeing Centre were also awarded a grant to support 30 vulnerable / disadvantaged women to receive one-on-one support, coaching and evaluation as part of participating in a 6 week online course on financial literacy and resilience.

Stacey Ross, Manager of the Logan Women's Health & Wellbeing Centre said, "Receiving this grant meant so much to Logan Women's but more importantly for the women who are a part of the incredible community we support. We are honoured to be the recipients of the grant and to be partnering with BWC and are very excited to see the positive impact we can collectively achieve together."



# OUR BOARD

Our Board is drawn from a wide cross-section of the community, reflecting our diverse membership and supporter base. Our purpose is what unites us all and that is to support and advocate for women on issues of social justice, disadvantage and discrimination, and career success.

The BWC Board is actively committed to supporting projects and activities which support women in Brisbane and Queensland to have successful professional careers, to escape from disadvantage and violence, to

build confidence and skills, and to achieve financial literacy and well-being.

This year we began transitioning to a new Board and farewelled Cara Brett, Balveen Ajimal, Sujata Saha and Marie Howarth. We thank them for their significant contributions and commitment to BWC.

We have commenced an active recruitment campaign for like-minded women to take on a Board role with BWC and look forward to introducing you to the new team in the very near future.



**Robin Francis**  
Chair



**Amanda Sartor**  
Treasurer



**Patrice McKay**  
Board Member



**Nina Psaltis**  
Board Member



**Rachael Hockaday**  
Board Member

# OUR SUPPORTERS



We would like to give a huge thank you to all BWC supporters and sponsors for their generous contributions throughout the year.

McCullough Robertson  
Studio 4 Photography  
Brisbane Powerhouse  
Leishman Legal  
Daily Wrap  
Vulcana Circus  
Office For Women

The Qld Medical Women's Society  
Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD)  
Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (DCCSDS)  
Pitcher Partners

Bounce Financial  
Pilot Partners  
Digital Glare  
Vision 6  
Unique Finance  
SunSuper  
Serena Darling Consulting

Also a special thank you to all of our panellists:

Hilary Langford  
Balveen Ajimal  
Cara Brett  
Serena Darling  
Katherine Feeney  
Danielle Hughes-Brown

Denise Sweeney  
Anthony Cappello  
Belinda Drew  
Rachel Hunter  
Carol Lewis  
Bronwyn Morris

And finally a huge thank you to our devoted volunteers for all their effort, time and professional commitment, particularly Zoe Flottmann and Monique Subasic.

# 2017 GALLERY



# GET INVOLVED



With the incredible support of individuals, organisations and community groups, BWC is able to make a real difference. There are plenty of ways to get involved and support our network.

## Membership

If you would like to join this growing community of energetic and passionate women, you can do so on our website [www.bwc.org.au](http://www.bwc.org.au) and register online.

## Volunteer

Volunteering is a great way to get involved with BWC. We are fortunate to have many wonderful and talented people as part of our membership that donate their time and energy into assisting with events and support of other members. If you would like to get involved please contact us.

## Business & Corporate Sponsorship

Businesses of all sizes can help make a real difference through initiatives such as workplace awareness and staff fundraising, giving programs, business donations and corporate partnerships. To find out how your business can get involved contact the General Manager at [bwc.org.au](http://bwc.org.au) to arrange a meeting.

For more information visit [bwc.org.au](http://bwc.org.au)





WHEN YOU HAVE KNOWLEDGE  
AND SELF AWARENESS, YOU  
HAVE THE TOOLS TO TAKE STEPS  
TOWARDS FINANCIAL FREEDOM –  
WHATEVER THE END GOAL.



[bwc.org.au](http://bwc.org.au)