

COMBINED OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION AGM 2015

SUNDAY 25 OCTOBER 2015

Firbank Grammar Learning Hub, 51 Outer Cres. Brighton

Hosted by Firbank Old Grammarians' Association Inc. (Est. 1918)

School Tour: Commenced from Firbank House at 1.30pm

Conducted by Angela Minahan (Events Coordinator, Firbank Grammar School)

MINUTES

Chair – Melissa McLean, President, Firbank Old Grammarians' Association

1. WELCOME:

Melissa welcomed attendees to the AGM, explaining that the Principal, Heather Norton was an apology due to her father's illness in Sydney. She had been looking forward to meeting with the group and wished the attendees a successful meeting.

2. ASSOCIATIONS PRESENT:

- Firbank Old Grammarians' Association [Melissa McLean, Pam Hammond (secretary), Sally Cooper (vice president), Victoria Breidahl (treasurer), Felicity Gould]
- Ivanhoe Girls' Old Grammarians Association [Liz Taylor (secretary), Sue Lees]
- Korovian Club [Shelby Versa (president), Jan Miller (treasurer), Hayley Carra, Jennifer Jaeger, Sam Atkins, Anthea Moisi]
- MLC Old Collegians' Association [Elida Brereton (president)]
- Old Kilvonians [Lauren Matthews (president), Deb Duce (community relations officer)]
- Old Lauriston [Mia Kikuchi (alumni manager), Kate Wipfli (president)]
- Old Ruytonians Association [Sarah Blyth (president)]
- Old Strathconians' Association [Laura Loftus (president), Karina Skourletos (secretary), Annelie Smith, Catherine Potter]
- PLC Old Collegians' Association [Belinda Steel]
- Presentation College Windsor, Past Pupils Association [Margot Hannan (secretary), Andree Moloney, Marilyn Commins, Pauline Wilson]
- St Catherine's Old Girls' Association [Virginia Edwards, Deborah Berry]
- Tintern Old Girls' Association [Carol Robertson (president)]

3. APOLOGIES:

- Firbank Old Grammarians' Association [Mary Trumble, Fiona McKell]
- Korovian Club [Sarah Morgan]
- Star of the Sea [Kris Johnstone]
- St Catherine's Old Girls' Association [Phoebe Norman (president)]
- MLC Old Collegians' Association [Maria Mercuri (manager development & advancement)]
- Ivanhoe Girls' Old Grammarians Association [Annie Paras]
- Tintern Old Girls' Association [Lynne Franke (secretary & archives)]

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COGA AGM 2014

The minutes of the 2014 AGM held Ivanhoe Girls' School were accepted.

Moved: Ivanhoe Girls' Old Grammarians' Assoc.; Seconded: St Catherine's Old Girls' Assoc.

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

COGA sub-committee report

Carol Robertson, Tintern OGA, explained that time pressures prevented a meeting not eventuating. It was still considered worth pursuing, but possibly using technology rather than face-to-face meeting.

6. **CORRESPONDENCE:** There was no correspondence.

7. GENERAL BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

- a) Engagement with past students, maintaining and promoting contact with alumni groups
- FOGA has a broad age range on the committee (19 – 91yrs), and now has established FYGA (Firbank Young Graduates Alumni) led by their young vice president, to suit the needs of those who left school in the past 10 years. This group has its own Facebook page. The School Captain is invited onto the committee each year
 - Korovians have started sporting competitions between past and current students. They also held a Captains and Vice Captains cocktail party as part of the school's 125th anniversary.
 - MLC Old Collegians have 4 to 5 younger past students on the committee. They use Facebook to help connect with past students and had a highly successful twilight networking event at Docklands with around 60 attendees.
 - Old Ruytonians committee is all young. They recently sent out a survey to all members to gauge wishes. These included social media, mentoring and sporting events. They have employed a consultant to establish a mentoring program and conduct the initial sessions.
 - St. Catherine's Old Girls' committee includes 4 to 5 young past students and the previous year's School Captains (ex officio). They had four networking events in 2015 which included Years 11 and 12. There were 3 or 4 Old Girls of different ages as speakers at each. The focus varied at each (law, creative industries, medical, marketing and communication). They will host a Captains and Vice Captains Reunion in 2016 as part of 120th anniversary of the school.

Effectiveness of social media vs hard copy publications.

- Firbank has two editions of the school magazine annually, which includes significant information and article related to FOGA, posted to all members of the school community. FOGA is investigating the possibility of an eNewsletter, in addition to their own email, Facebook and LinkedIn. The school also manages the FOGA 'Firbank Connect', a Potentiality program. The weekly school eNewsletter includes FOGA information/dates as appropriate.
 - PLC sends out a quarterly magazine with Old Collegians articles within. PLCOCA uses email and Facebook.
 - Tintern OGA has not been able to access email and other contact details of their members due to the school's privacy policy (PLCOCA and PCW also have this difficulty). A survey was sent out by the school for Tintern OGA using these emails.
 - Old Lauristonians has had problems with Potentiality, with the program not meeting expectations. Others expressed similar frustrations with this program.
 - At St. Catherine's the privacy issue is addressed by having Yr 12s sign a form from SCOGA to say that they agree to be a SCOGA member and are asked to provide their contact details.
 - Ruyton sends out two magazines per year with old girls information included.
 - Old Strathconians send out two monthly eNewsletter, but have difficulty accessing email addresses. They have a Facebook page as part of the school Facebook. The school communications person posts all information and places appropriate posts onto the OSA Facebook page. She also approves incoming posts.
- b) Schools having a dedicated communications manager include Kilvington, Korowa, Strathcona
- c) Social media, Facebook page or LinkedIn group for the Combined Old Girls Association: The group was very appreciative of Ivanhoe Old Girls hosting the COGA archives on their website: <http://www.ivanhoegirls.vic.edu.au/ivanhoeggs/igoga> and for this to continue. Frustrations were expressed related to changing contacts amongst the COGA members, with some associations not responding to the FOGA invitation to this AGM.

Ivanhoe had the same issues when organising the 2014 AGM.

Suggestions for a dedicated email addresses / contact information for the COGA included Facebook, LinkedIn, Google Docs, or Dropbox. The emails need to be the association emails, not personal. Melissa McLean agreed to investigate these possibilities and will discuss a LinkedIn group for COGA with Mary Trumble (FOGA Vice President and an employee of LinkedIn).

d) Mentoring update

- Korovians are starting a program linking Yr 10s with old girls.
- Strathconians conducted a program in 2014 mentoring Yr 11 and 12s, supported by the Careers coordinator, beginning with breakfast. It was set out like an expo, with old girls from different professions/careers in separate rooms for girls to access. Connection was made with the old girls using 'MailChimp' (a free online email marketing solution) linked to Excel spreadsheet.

Suggestion made that COGA organise an event focusing on mentoring open to all member schools.

“Hall of Fame” – ways schools acknowledge past students:

- Firbank GS, as part of their centenary, selected 100 women to represent the breadth of achievement of all past students which was published and presented at a special dinner. FOGA is keen for this to be ongoing, with others acknowledged possibly every 10 years.
- St. Catherine's OGA have a sub-committee who use set criteria to make selection. About 50 profiles have been done to date and are on the school's website, and framed and displayed at the School.
- MLC has a “Women of Influence” lunch for 40 old collegians each year. This is hosted by the parents association
- Strathcona GS has an annual “Medal” awarded.
- Korowa GS, as part of their 125th Anniversary, created 125 different swap cards for girls to collect packs of 12, with folders in which to place them. Each card had a photo and profile.

e) Events / Activities / Funding

Most schools are using either Trybooking or a Potentiality program to book events.

There are a variety of membership fees and support amongst the schools:

- FOGA, \$250 membership which supports a 50% scholarship, prizes, gifts and the archivist. They hold reunions for every 5 and decade groups, organised by the School Events Coordinator. Most schools said they focus on these peer groups. They have recently held a reunion in Geelong for Western District members, also Brisbane, with a Sydney and Canberra reunion planned for 2016.
- Ruytonians, \$300 membership, which helps fund a person to assist the committee.
- Tintern OGA, \$75 membership with a communications manager assisting. They also assist with funding a disadvantaged girl.
- MLCOCA donates to education focused charities and scholarships from membership funds.
- St. Catherine's OGA receives \$300 per membership. Their reunions are free, either cocktails or afternoon tea, supported by Community Relations Officer.
- Strathconians contribute to the salary of the Communications Manager.
- Kilvington GS offers a 5% discount to children of past students.
- Lauristonians encourage past student businesses/individuals to donate door prizes/gifts to give out at reunions to encourage more attendees.
- PCW PPA has been holding Sydney reunion for 30 years, along with those in Melbourne.

8 National Council of Women Update: Pam Hammond – FOGA delegate to NCWV

This event was facilitated by a group of young women, mostly recent graduates who became interested in the alleged alienation of young people to the democratic process.

Students from affiliated schools were invited to list themselves to make three minute presentations on the theme of the day ‘My Vote, My Voice’, in the Legislative Council Chamber, to an invited audience of students of diverse backgrounds, community members and a panel of women who have held elected office.

The event was held close to the 20th anniversary of the UN’s Fourth World Conference of Women held in Beijing, China, ‘Action for Equality, Development and Peace’, so this year’s theme focused on the question ‘How are we progressing towards gender equality?’ We were fortunate to have a group of women at this event who attended the Beijing Conference. It was also close to the 70th anniversary of The League of Women Voters Victoria which began on the 8th August 1945. The League aims to encourage all people to regard their vote as a privilege and a right.

There were speakers from seven schools, with students from three other schools also attending. Students who spoke did an outstanding job in both preparing and delivering their presentations. They displayed impressive knowledge and insight into the issues affecting young women in Australia and overseas in progress towards gender equality. Copious photos were taken and the event was recorded for the Hansard team to produce an audio file sent out to each school. Students were invited to send their speeches into NCWV for inclusion on the Young NCWVic WordPress blog. <http://ncwvic.blogspot.com.au/2015/10/my-vote-my-voice-beijing-20-event-at.html> Sarah Morgan, Korovian delegate, is the NCWV Youth Adviser and is doing a great job in this role.

Post Script: Having FOGA affiliated with NCWV means that the Association gains a wealth of information about other women’s organisations and women’s issues locally, nationally and internationally. There is also the opportunity to have input into local, state and national government policies. Information can be seen on: www.ncwvic.org.au

The Chair extended thanks to all those who attended the meeting.

Thanks were given to FOGA for hosting and to the school for a most interesting school tour.

HOST AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS:

2016 – Korowa (Korovian Club) – meeting date TBC

2017 – Melbourne Girls’ Grammar School Old Grammarians Society

2018 – St Catherine’s Old Girls’ Association – TBC

MEETING CLOSED: 4:15pm

Afternoon tea served in the Learning Hub