

Social Group Report 2001

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The social group events continue to be very popular with over 100 attendances during the past year. As is custom we have visited eateries, theatres and places of interest far and wide around the Melbourne metro area.

Our summer activities were located in some of Melbourne's beautiful seaside areas – Port Melbourne, Rickett's Point and Williamstown. It was a hot summer day when we ventured out to Williamstown. As we arrived we caught sight of some pelicans sailing along the foreshore to the warm summer breeze. Williamstown market was buzzing with activity. We perused through the range of handmade crafts and home wares, clothes, hats, accessories, homemade cakes and other sweet delights, and enjoyed the entertainment provided by the roving musicians. A stroll through the market was followed by a tasty gourmet lunch from the Customs House Hotel menu selection. We also toured Port Philip Bay by ferry and then went to the Williamstown Botanic Gardens where we rested our feet in the shade. One of our group members, in his usual style, arrived later in the day well after the social group had departed from Williamstown so he decided to trace our steps by venturing to all the locations we had visited to soak up the ambience.

Following dinner at Molly Blooms Irish pub the group decided to go for a walk along Beaconsfield Parade and enjoy the mild evening sea breezes. We settled ourselves down at a seaside café where some of the group had dessert and a giggle about the scenario that had transpired earlier when one of our group members nearly became fish food when his weight dislodged a plank on the pier.

The bowling activity at Chadstone didn't turn out quite as we planned as when we arrived all the lanes were booked out and the first available lane would be much later that evening. However as we had some enthusiastic bowlers amongst our group we were not dissuaded by this mishap and ended up bowling at midnight.

The tribute to the Big Bands event at the Chapel off Chapel venue attracted a modest group who enjoyed the music of the 30s, 40s and 50s. The Ted White Big Band consisted of an orchestra of about 20 musicians playing percussion, brass and wind instruments with Ted White as the zany singer of the popular swing and jazz tunes.

Our middle-eastern taste buds were awakened at the Turkish dinner night where we enjoyed a banquet of Turkish cuisine delights. Our group seemed to grow throughout the evening as people continued to arrive at the restaurant unexpectedly much to the surprise of the organisers and the restaurant staff. After our bellies were treated to an assortment of dips, bread, salads, grilled meats and seafood ending with dessert we were entertained by the displays of a scantily dressed belly dancer who was trying to entice the young men at our table.

Dinner at the Hyatt Food Court was an interesting event as the after meal time entertainment meant that the Food Court was transformed into a dance club. Following our meal we found ourselves ensconced in a nightclub, with loud music, guys dressed up in KISS costumes and ladies dressed up to impress.

During winter the social group met for afternoon tea at the Fairfield Boathouse by the Yarra. Our guest host for this event was our regular social group member, Joe. Joe arrived at our table with bag of bargain priced scones that he had just purchased at the meals and drinks counter. We were quite bemused by the cost of the bag of scones as Joe opened the bag and commenced munching on a scone. We later discovered that the bargain priced scones were in a box labelled "Duck Scones" and were left over scones, a few days old, that were on 'sale' and to be fed to the resident ducks. We all had a laugh and jokingly suggested to Joe that he better be on alert in case he finds himself starting to quack and waddle about. As the winter afternoon chill set in we moved into the Parlour room, and enjoyed the delightful devonshire teas served with generous sized scones, strawberry jam and cream. The Parlour was a cosy room, which had a warm wood fire heater and a friendly little cat that was quite at home on the armchairs close to the fire.

Thank you to all who attended throughout the year and brought life and humor all our events.