

ALL THINGS ADELAIDE

Sally Campbell and Kate Twist were two very lucky outback Queensland ladies from the Mitchell-Tomoo/Dunkeld ICPA branch who embarked upon an adventure to Adelaide for the ICPA 48th Annual Federal Conference on July 31st and August 1st. They searched the Bureau website for weather reports and, with suitcases bulging with jumpers and scarves in preparation for a maximum of 13 degrees Celsius, the trip was planned! Due to mechanical issues, Kate's flight was diverted via Sydney, but she eventually arrived in time to have a nerve settling beer after a long day of travel at the Pre-Conference 'drinks and nibbles' event hosted at the iconic Adelaide Oval. It was an 'early to bed said Fred' as both women eagerly awaited the beginning of two full days of conference.

The first day of conference began overlooking the Adelaide Oval with the following inspirational words from Federal President Wendy Hick, "Put your gloves on, pad up and let's get ready to bat!" Not having watched a day's cricket in her life and, despite being a very poor excuse for a cricket enthusiast, Sally could not help feeling motivated and excited for the days ahead! Many very important motions arose across all portfolios, however, three areas of concern pertinent to our branch were the Rural Education Hardship Fund, the intent of, and an increase to, the AIC allowance and the need for Food and Fibre to be a compulsory subject in the curriculum.

Sally Campbell and Kate Twist at Adelaide holding their table sign and the beautiful table flower arrangement



The push for the introduction of a Rural Education Hardship Fund was evident in many motions. Driven by the ongoing drought of up to 8 years for many rural families across all states and territories, and the recent catastrophic devastation of the North-Western Queensland monsoon disaster, the need for a specific fund to assist families with education costs has arisen. There are some families who have had to pull their children out of boarding school due to a lack of funds in the disaster period. The current drought relief package does not provide for specific education assistance and farming towns are struggling to maintain enrolments. The idea behind the fund is, that if it were established, when a disaster strikes ICPA (Aust) would not need to spend precious time advocating for members and assistance could be instantly distributed to those in urgent need.

One of the many highlights of the conference was the presentation from keynote speaker and Olympic track cyclist, Anna Meares. Anna spoke from the heart about the highs and lows of professional cycling and magnetised the crowd with her story of a small-town country girl succeeding on the world stage. She urged for the need to focus on the "What IS?" which are the tangibly measurable 'right now' moments, rather than the "What IF?" thoughts that are driven by the fear of the future. It didn't matter if you were sitting in your seat worrying about drought, medical issues, on-going succession dramas or financing education, everyone in the room could elicit some inspiration from her words of wisdom. Anna highlighted that many people didn't know how capable and resilient they were until faced with adversity and that we need to treat that adversity like a muscle.... "you need to use it in order to strengthen it!" On a side note, she also mentioned how many kilograms she could dead lift, which neither Sally nor Kate took inspiration from!

The introduction of the Assistance for Isolated Children (AIC) Scheme by the Commonwealth Government in 1973 was a very hard-earned win for the newly formed ICPA. The guidelines outline that "the allowance is available for families of primary, secondary and certain tertiary students who cannot attend an appropriate state school on a daily basis because of geographical isolation." A motion brought to the table by Queensland State Council asked that the original intent of the scheme be recognised by categorising Geographically Isolated (GI) students separately to those students with special

needs or medical issues. State Council certainly did not want to take away from the needs of these other students however, they believed that it was becoming difficult for ICPA (Aust) to lobby and campaign for GI students when the number of recipients of the AIC is no longer a true reflection of the number of isolated families. Additionally, several motions called for an increase to the AIC Basic Boarding Allowance in accordance with the widening gap between the true cost of boarding and the allowance.



Adelaide Oval Welcomes ICPA

To compensate for the delectable food and Barossa Valley wines on offer at the Conference Dinner, exercise on Morning #2 was essential! Kate and Sally ventured off decked in ankle length active wear coupled with attractive gloves and beanies for an early morning exploration of inner Adelaide's streets. The darkness compared to Queensland time at that hour of the morning was noticeable but certainly added to the magic of Adelaide. Fairy-light-lined streets and gorgeous churches alongside the River Torrens were spectacular. One river duck scared the beejeezus out of us, but an amazing morning filled with memories was had!

Day two of conference began early with the AGM. Mrs Alana Moller was nominated, and successfully voted in as, the in-coming ICPA Federal President, taking over from Mrs Wendy Hick who will step down into the role of Immediate Past President after a wonderful four years in the job. A full panel of councillors were elected including the welcoming of three new councillors.

Mrs Patricia Mitchell, OAM, and ICPA Qld Patron presented "Why ICPA is as necessary as ever after 48 Years". During the presentation Mrs Mitchell made comment on the fact that the formation of the ICPA 48 years ago was based on the need for families to have assistance to educate their children during the time of drought and that in 2019, motions on the agenda reflected the same need. A sure sign of the relevance of the organisation still. After the presentation, President Wendy Hick then bestowed Federal Life Membership on Mrs Mitchell. The true meaning of the honour of the award was clearly evident in the surprise

and delight written all over Mrs Mitchell's face. As a Queensland delegate it was wonderful to be witness to the honouring of such a staunch supporter of ICPA. Her ICPA bio is to be revered and her commitment is to be envied.

Unfortunately, the Mitchell-Tomoo/Dunkeld branch did not have any motions to present. However, the St. George branch in Queensland had two motions and were unable to send any delegates. Therefore, late on the second day, Kate and Sally presented the motions on behalf of the St. George Branch. One was pertaining to the continuation of funding for Chaplains within State Schools and the second was relating to the difficulties resulting from AIC applications. Both motions were passed in favour with no discrepancies.

Another speaker in attendance was Mr Ben Stockwin, CEO, Primary Industries Education Foundation Australia (PIEFA). Ben advocates strongly for food and fibre into the curriculum and has developed a website called Prime Zone. (www.primezone.edu.au) This website has over 600 free primary industries education resources. Additionally, information can be found on available Food and Fibre scholarships which are going un-filled for up to \$15 000 for tertiary education. Following on from Ben's presentation, the Tambo Branch in Queensland, asked that ICPA (Aust) lobbies the relevant ministers to ensure that all sectors of Agriculture Production are taught in classrooms. This motion was very well supported and the need for all students to understand animal husbandry, production and cropping as well as the environment was acknowledged, especially in light of the recent protests by animal activists and in particular young protestors.

Following a momentous two days of Federal Conference, Kate and Sally met up with delegates from Charleville and Taroom for 3 days in the Adelaide Hills. What an incredible area this is! Lunching at Maggie Beer's farm and exploring the streets of Hahndorf were highlights and debriefing over Conference motions and fire-place fuelled Scrabble matches added to the experience. Many thanks must go to ICPA Federal Council for assisting the Mitchell-Tomoo/Dunkeld branch with the funding of our attendance at the Conference.



Furthermore, congratulations to the convening committee who worked so hard to bring together a fantastic conference in Adelaide. We certainly did love ALL THINGS ADELAIDE

Kate Twist

Sally Campbell

Left: Sally Campbell at Maggie Beer's Restaurant