

Annual Report

Petroleum Women's Club of Perth

2025

President	Margaret Pytte Oct 24 – March 25
President	Jacqui Ure April 25 – September 25
Secretary	Anne Williams
Treasurer	Pauline Sedgewick
1VP (Activities)	Susan Putnam
2VP (Programmes)	Tricia Crane
3VP (Membership)	Antje Robson
Member at Large	Wendy Longshaw
Parliamentarian	Jacqui Ure Oct 24 – Mar 25
Parliamentarian	Wendy Longshaw April 25 – September 25

Firstly, let me say this Board has been together for the last two years under 3 Presidents - Sheena for 12 months, Margaret for 6 months and me for 5 months. This report covers the challenges and achievements which we encountered over the 2 year period

We are indebted to Sheena for bringing us the verve and enthusiasm of an expat and reminding us of our core function:

to promote friendship and understanding among the women engaged in the Energy, Resources and Professional sectors, and to this end, to encourage Members to participate in the Association's social, recreational, cultural and welfare activities.

In 2023, there was significant difficulty in getting a Board together and at our first Board meeting, Sheena identified to us that without change, PWP would collapse. We might survive for a year or two but ultimately the writing was on the wall. She led us through the fundamentals for change and alerted the board that we had to deliver a more fit for purpose organisation to move forward. We tried not to lose sight of this throughout the two years.

Margaret Pytte put her hand up in our time of need and volunteered to take on the role of President in October 2024. Unfortunately, life intervened and we saw Margaret depart Australia for medical treatments in the USA a few days after donning the mantle of President. She was not in Australia again until the following January. In February, knowing she had to return to the USA for further treatment, she advised us of her decision to resign after the March meeting – and so I landed in the role of President for five months.

However, the Board never ceased to operate. Each Board Member focussed in on their role and delivered in spades over the two years.

Some of the changes we made:

1. We moved the location on our monthly meetings to Royal Perth Golf Course club rooms. This change was hotly debated within the Board meetings it was recognised that there would be intense opposition to change from some members. However, the litany of complaints about the quality of the food in our previous venue was extreme and we explored quite a number of alternative venues.

I think you will agree the move was a huge success and I thank Royal Perth Golf Course for their cooperation, service and delightful food.

2. Finances. We ran into issues on several levels. We are primarily an organisation with a 'true' income of about \$5000. All other money relates to lunches or activities and what comes in, goes straight back out again in direct relation to the activity.

The 'true' income of the Club is directed towards the cost of:

- Insurance
- Club Pins and Badges
- Accounting software packages,
- Website
- Newsletter
- Birthday Cards

We were carrying excess cash accumulated over the years from profits on Members activities and this was now almost 7 times the 'true' annual income of the club. Our Constitution, and indeed the law, requires that if the Club folds, that this money be donated to another non-related not-for-profit organisation. Keeping in mind the difficulty the Club had in forming a Board that year, the decision was taken to reduce the funds quickly by subsidising three Special Event lunches each year – the Birthday lunch, the AGM and the Christmas lunch.

In addition, when RPGC increased the cost of lunch after 12 months, the increase was not passed onto the Members as we felt the best way to give the money back to Members was to subsidise lunch for loyal Members who attended our monthly General meetings.

Our objective was to reduce the Club funds to between \$12,000 and \$15,000. Today we have about \$20,000 in the bank.

We held back from increasing the cost of Membership as well while recognising that Membership would have to increase at some point in the future.

We adopted a policy that Activities should run at break even or minimal profit. BUT not at a loss.

The club had a storage facility in Osborne Park. It was full and to add any more documents to storage, we required another unit. The annual cost would now have been \$1640. Accordingly, we agreed to digitise as much of the information as possible and get rid of the paper storage facility.

We changed the accounting package from Quick Books to Xero – at less than half the monthly cost. Xero is also far easier to use and Sian Williams CA, Anne's daughter, gave us so much guidance. Pauline Sedgwick made a Herculean effort to set this up and should be recognised for this as well as her diligent recording of all financial matters. We would have been lost without her and the countless hours she put in to making the changes a success.

We stopped sending paper birthday cards by post and moved to an electronic service saving about \$500 a year.

The email system we inherited was a nightmare and some Board members could not get access to the dedicated email for their role. Passwords had been compromised over the years and many email records were lost. because nobody could access them. The system we've put in now is very easy and it is administered externally so we will always have an independent source to resolve any issues.

Board members voluntarily donate the cost of phone calls, transport, hosting board meetings as well their time.

The website was upgraded and is also externally administered. It has storage for all our electronic records. The password can be stored in your systems. We have a photo of Perth City taken from Wendy Longshaw's balcony on the lead page. We have formed a Website Committee which includes Antje and I and hopefully we will get to grips with upgrading the content for the website after October.

Activites

Susan, albeit a relatively new member herself, joined the Board and threw herself into the role of organising our activities. She was assisted by Sharlini and Helge and earned our grateful thanks for producing so many varied outings. Well done Susan.

Constitutional changes

We had two constitutional changes over the period which Anne Williams lodged with the relevant authorities and dealt with all the legal aspects of it efficiently and comprehensively. Anne's performance as Secretary was excellent and she made all our jobs easier by diligently maintaining our records, dealing with external agencies and I ask you to recognise her contribution.

Membership and Membership Eligibility

Members voted to change the Membership criteria to allow a broader range of eligibility and allow the club to grow. Membership which had dipped below 100 in 2024 has increased by about 10% under Antje's care. Antje has had very significant personal challenges with illness in her family and spent a significant part of the year in Germany. She still produced Membership reports for every meeting and never missed a beat. She is to be commended for her dedication and contribution

Lunches and Programs

We saw a steady increase in numbers attending lunches over the previous years and Tricia managed a varied and entertaining program. Her attention to detail was awesome as was her dedication to sticking to the agreed budget and delivering the best possible event. And following it up with awesome posts on the Facebook page. An amazing effort.

The Board

It was a delight to work with each of you. A special mention must go to Wendy Longshaw who was a wonderful Member at Large/ Parliamentarian. She was the most fantastic support to me and I am so grateful to her.

Luncheon Bookings, Lunch Desk and Sunshine

We're also indebted to Kevina Stewart for all that she does coordinating lunches – ably assisted by Carol Davies. She manages to remember to remind everyone lunch is on, gets the bookings to RPGC on time and rounds up the money! And at the same time, she brings a ray of Sunshine to the role of our Sunshine Lady.

Rickie Inoue Award

This award was given annually till about 2013 when it was discontinued. Rickie was a young member who died and her family donated the trophy in her memory. It was awarded annually to the Member who was most hospitable in that year – and this year the Board has decided to award it one last time to Kevina Stewart. Well deserved and thank you Kevina for all you do.

Auditors

Corrine Kilbee and Helen Cristopher took this on at my request. A member indicated to Margaret Pytte that they thought there had been a “misappropriation of funds”. However, she was non-specific about the accusation and wished to remain anonymous. My first action as President was to request a thorough audit. Corinne and Helen inspected every document and bank statement we had and were most complementary about the diligence and accuracy with which Pauline kept our records. I was very glad to be able to move past what seemed to be nothing other than nasty and mendacious comment but which had devastated our Treasurer and the Board.

Newsletter

The problem with following in Sheena's Presidential footsteps was that she did so many tasks in the Club – one of which was creating the Newsletter. A baptism of fire for my journalistic career and I was very glad to hand this over to new member Amy Ross who is so much more skilled than I in this area. Thank you Amy.

Photographer

Sharlini - you made us all look good! Thank you for all your efforts in taking the photographs and posting them on Facebook

Special Interest Club Coordinators

Cycling, Golf, MahJong, Movie, Quilting, Walking

You are all awesome. Welcoming and dedicated. Thank you!

And we would be nothing without our Members. Thank you all for your support and your friendship. It was a pleasure to serve you. I feel we have left the club better equipped to deal with the future.

Jacqui Ure
President