# President’s Annual Report for 2020/21

As President of the ACT Branch of Lord’s Taverners Australia, I am pleased to present my report for 2020/21. This was of course a year like no other. For the first half of the year we were concerned that we might not be able to meet our commitments, and so cut back on some of them. Then with a lot of hard work and some generous support we found ourselves unable to disburse as much as usual as the activities and programs we traditionally supported were cancelled or postponed.

Support for the Young and Disadvantaged

We were pleased to be able to disburse $21,850 during the year to those causes which support our aim of giving the young and disadvantaged a sporting chance. This was down on previous years mainly because some of the activities we usually support, including the National Cricket Inclusion Championships and Dream Cricket, were unable to go ahead. Our disbursements included ‘Spirit of Cricket’ awards for Cricket ACT’s competition; Junior Taverners Awards to two promising young cricketers from the region – Julia Basset and Zak Keogh; and grants to Blind Cricket ACT, Wheelchair Rugby League and Deaf Cricket ACT.

For the 14th successive year, the Lord’s Taverners ACT Disabilities Awards scheme provided awards and grants to the value of $8,000 to 11 young athletes, and a further award to Wheelchair Soccer through Brandon Stroud. We also continued to provide support to Pegasus to assist riding for children with disabilities.

Membership and Fund Raising

Members numbered 146 as at 30 June 2021. Members’ subscriptions and donations were as ever the foundation of our fundraising, and their support was greatly appreciated.

Although we were concerned at the beginning of the year about the prospects for fund raising, in the event as a result of hard work, the generosity of members and a $20,000 sponsorship (see below), revenue for the year totalled $55,500, and we ended the year with $44,696 in the bank. Sales of the excellent wine which Geoff Merrill labelled especially for the Taverners raised $3,250, and under Noel Smith’s leadership we achieved a very good return of $6,122 from the National Raffle. Our annual winemaker’s dinner, featuring Darren Di Bortoli, and our Annual Dinner, with Manuka Oval curator Brad van Dam as our guest speaker, both proved successful. Committee members and other members also helped us to run a Bunnings sausage sizzle and two canteen days at Phillip Oval on cricket finals days.

Sponsorship

A highlight of the year was the offer of a significant sponsorship from the ACT franchise of the Australia-wide financial advisory firm, Morgans Financial Ltd. The offer is for up to $20,000 a year for three years, with the condition that at least $10,000 is to be invested in ways that will ensure the long term viability of the Lord’s Taverners ACT. In return, Morgans asked that we acknowledge their sponsorship at key events, include their logo on our website and present them with a token of our appreciation to be displayed in the foyer of their Deakin Office. Morgans have been similarly generous with other local charities in the past.

In accepting this offer, the Committee considered that Morgans’ sponsorship would enable us to develop a sustainable financial basis which would take us beyond the year-to-year funding we have worked with for many years and enable more predictability both for the Lord’s Taverners and for our beneficiaries.

The Committee decided that our present financial positon would enable us to invest all of the $20,000 this year, and that we could as well invest the $15,000 we normally aim to hold in reserve at the beginning of each financial year together with ten per cent of non-donation net earnings. These funds have been placed in secure investments, and all money invested will be available at short notice should it be needed by the individuals and organisations we support.

Committee Matters

Your Committee worked hard again in 2020/21. We were delighted to welcome Adelaide Jones and Bruce Calder to the team, and have benefited from their presence and advice.

The Committee will undergo further change after this AGM. After seven years as President, I will make way for new leadership. Our Vice President, Nan Bak, has nominated to replace me, and Murray Radcliffe to replace her as Vice President.

Hamish Arthur resigned from the Committee in July after sevenyears; we are indebted to him for all he did for the Lord’s Taverners, especially in managing our website and social media, and were sorry to lose him. We are fortunate that Chris Hunter and Keith Hardy have renominated for the positions of Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

Looking Ahead

As noted, having begun the year in a strong financial position we are well placed to reach out further to the causes we support. Our effectiveness in this will depend in part on how well some of the organisations we support can recover from the lockdowns and slower pace of activity, and whether their carnivals and gala days can go ahead. We welcome the revival of Blind Cricket ACT, are looking to partner again with Every Chance To Play, and aim to grow further the very successful Disability Awards program.

The program of events which we had planned for the year has been disrupted by the COVID-19 lockdown. While it is difficult now to schedule events for the rest of 2021, we are planning to host a breakfast at the Realm Hotel on 27 January 2022 to celebrate the first ever Women’s Test Match to be played in Canberra. Other events are being planned and will be notified on the website and in e mails to members.

Sponsors and supporters have again been good to us this year. We thank especially our new Principal Sponsor, Morgans Financial Ltd, and of course Muriel Wilkinson, whose generosity over many years has underpinned the Junior Taverners Awards; Fox Antiques; Daana Restaurant; Cricket ACT; Kookaburra; and Canberra golfer Brendan Jones. We are indebted also to Gail Farr for her invaluable help with the disability scholarship program; and to our honorary auditor, Dennis O’Connor.

With Committee members, I will be available at the AGM to respond to questions on any of the matters covered in this report.

Ric Smith

November 2021