

Australian German Association Inc

Newsletter

Issue: November 2009

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One is driven to waxing philosophical when confronted by the anniversary of a great occasion. Marking the day when 20 years ago East Germans had had enough and through sheer pressure of events and numbers brought The Wall down, there were these styrofoam dominoes, splashed with children's happy colours as though overcoming the original's weight and adulthood. And then, after Lech had pushed over the first one, the movement carried through them all, panel by panel, country by country, year by year, government by the people, generation by generation, hope by reality, reality by nostalgia, memory by memory..... The speeches, the fireworks, the musicians, the partying... the dominoes continue.

In Australia we even had a foreign policy theory named after them, and just before that theory was pushed over by a new one, there was another event that celebrates its anniversary this year. Far be it from your fearless reporter to suggest any equivalent sublimity, gravitas or sheer joy with happenings in Berlin. Far from it. 15,966 kilometres to be precise. But 35 years ago, in 1974, at Clunies Ross House in Parkville, the home of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, the first committee meeting of the Australian German Association was held. (The alert reader will marvel at the audacity of the mock-heroic juxtaposition of two totally unrelated events on the theme of "anniversary").

AGM and Annual Dinner

So it is that when on **25 November** members gather at The Terrace in the Melbourne Royal Botanic Gardens for our Annual General Meeting and Dinner, it will be the 35th such occasion. Apart from the glorious setting in Ferdinand von Müller's lasting masterpiece, the botanical theme will be continued by two of our guest speakers. **David Cantrill**, the chief botanist, will share some insights into one of Melbourne's finest assets, while **Hannah McPherson** of the National Herbarium of NSW will speak of her AGA Fellowship experience in Hamburg with 20,000 botanical specimens collected by Amalie Dietrich in Australia between 1863 and 1872.

Change of Prez

It will also be the occasion for the energetic **Graham Kraehe** to reflect on the years he so ably served as President of AGA. As members know, Graham has concluded his time as Prez and has handed the baton/gavel/swagger stick/glass to **David Charles**, who is no stranger to members, or to the uppermost echelons of industry and government, or to the German-Australian relationship.

New Members

Members will be delighted to welcome new members into the AGA: there's Florian Dehne of LEK Consulting, Bernard Lankes of Sun Microsystems, Nicola Watkinson of Austrade, Martin Ripple of Thales Australia Air Systems, Alex Baumann of Plus Architecture and his colleague Rainer Strunz from the same organization. (Was that tautologous?).



AGA Goethe Fellowship

It would have been difficult to miss, with a press release and note to members, but in case you missed it, we have a winner for the 2009 AGA Goethe Fellowship, and her name is **Jennifer Millar**. She's an Outreach Science communicator at the Scitech Discovery Centre in Perth and has a 1st Class honours Science degree from Curtin Uni. And she's into nanotechnology. She likes dealing with devices smaller than one-billionth of a metre (or one-millionth of a millimetre - your fearless reporter calculated this on all fingers and toes, and concluded that this was seriously small!). Jennifer wants to find out how German organizations involved in nanotechnology communicate with the German public and how that could be used here in nanotech educational programs. Wait for the implantable nanotech device that guarantees your winning at Trivial Pursuit. Or remembering that birthday....

What happened in Melbourne ...

Members will marvel at the program of encounters your AGA has presented in the past months. In Melbourne in April **Pat Boland** had a few drinks with us and astonished all with the sophistication of ANCA's machines, while **Michael Reich** joined us for lunch in June to give us a look at how his company Minova (now a part of Orica), keeps miners breathing and unburied. In July **Hartmut Schwesinger** of FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH showed how to promote an economic region which sprawls across a number of political divisions, and he was followed a week later by the third in the highly popular AGA Roundtable Series, held at Siemens Australia's offices in Bayswater, which dealt with "*Australia's way to a low carbon economy: triple dividend or spin?*" and was ably facilitated by **Dr. Wolfgang Kissel**. There were so many things on in July, one could get lost! **Tim Holding**, the Victorian Minister for a remarkable combination of responsibilities, namely Water, Finance, Tourism and Major Events, joined in at the AGA's event in support of the Melbourne Deutsche Schule, for a fine evening of conviviality and reminiscences. In the afterburners of the Melbourne Writers' Festival we caught up with **Marshall Browne**, author of 12 historical novels and thrillers, for some drinks at the RACV Club. He showed us how accountants and auditors can be heroes.

... and in Sydney ...

Meanwhile, in coathanger city, April concluded with a lunch for Telstra International's MD, **Drew Kelton**, who was ringing the right numbers in the complex universe of global telecommunications. **Prof. Fred Hilmer**, whose intellect competes with his CV for greater impressiveness, spoke of enhancing collaboration between industry and academia to strengthen Australia's innovativeness, all over lunch in June, while in August **John Mullen**, former global CEO of DHL Express and member of the Telstra Board, pulled together information from a huge career in explaining the implications of the recession on the logistics industry and outlook for 2010. **Dr. Ziggy Switkowski** repeated his expert radiations on the big energy gorilla in the nuclear corner of the climate change room from last year in Melbourne, while **Leigh Clifford**, QANTAS Chairman and former Rio Tinto CEO dug up some glowing gems of his own for the delight and general elucidation of the lunchtime gathering on 4 November at that club in Bent Street. One more to go: **Saul Eslake** will give his divergent view on matters economic under the title "*Reflections on the Global Financial Crisis*" over lunch on 2 December. Don't miss it, as the crisis might be over by the time coffee arrives....

And One More Thing ...

Just in case there was the occasional lapse of memory: happiness is a society in which all members are paid-up. Before threats of ostracism, boycott or other signs of displeasure are resorted to, would any errant members please spread some happiness?

See you in the cool of the Botanic Gardens !

Cheers !

Your fearless reporter



Frank Unger

Copy required ! If you have any news items or matters of interest worthy of publication in a forthcoming AGA Newsletter, please email them to [Frank Unger](mailto:Frank.Unger@aga.org.au).