



PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC.

72nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 29 APRIL 2023

TREASURER'S REPORT

Murrough Benson

A deficit of \$920 was recorded in the year ended 31 December 2022, compared with a surplus of \$6,436 in the previous year. This result was, however, impacted by two important one-off expenses totalling \$10,737 associated with the Rabaul and Montevideo Maru (RMvM) Group: redevelopment of its website and a *Montevideo Maru* memorial seat and story board installed at the Mornington and District Memorial Gardens at Mornington, Victoria,.

Partially offsetting the impact of this one-off expenditure on the bottom line was a most generous donation of \$5,000 from long-term member, Ken McKinnon, to help the Association further pursue its objectives. Ken was the Director of Education in the then Territory of Papua and New Guinea (TPNG) from 1966 to 1973.

On the income side of the ledger:

- Membership subscriptions were down \$2,297 as the long-term slow decline in member numbers continued. New members continue to come on board but not in sufficient numbers to offset the losses. Membership rates have not changed since September 2020.
- Net income from functions (including raffles and silent auctions) was up \$1,754 as the easing of COVID-19 restrictions allowed numbers at events to increase as well as additional regional events to be held. A Rabaul and Montevideo Maru Group dinner was also held for the first time since 2017 and attracted around 100 people in Canberra.
- Net trading income fell by \$2,138, largely reflecting reduced sales of the PNGAA book *Land of the Unexpected* (published in 2021) and virtually no commission earned on the sale of non-PNGAA items that had boosted earnings quite significantly in 2021.
- Interest earned on investments showed a pleasing increase of \$916 as a result of higher rates on offer when the two term deposits were rolled over mid-year.
- In addition to the \$5,000 general donation already mentioned, members generously donated \$2,120 to the newly established Scholarship Fund.

On the other side of the ledger:

- Journal layout and printing costs were down \$1,565. Jeannette Gilligan (trading as Dragonwick Self-Publishing Solutions), who does such a wonderful job of setting up *PNG Kundu* for printing, very generously reduced her charge by 20% early in the year. We also enjoyed, for the first time, the full-year benefit of reduced printing costs achieved after changing over to Lismore City Printery (LCP) in mid-2021. Our printer's business was devastated by the floods that hit Lismore in Northern NSW in February 2022 but they still managed to arrange for our printing to be done by another printer in the region and at no additional cost to us. We are very pleased that LCP is now pretty well back to normal operations again.
- Partly offsetting the journal layout and printing costs was an increase of \$806 (10.9%) in postage costs of the journal.
- It was a nice surprise to see our insurance costs (for public and product liability cover as well as Association personnel cover) come down by \$268 (11.1%) for the year.
- Due to the need early in the year to expand storage capacity to accommodate the growing PNGAA Collection, storage costs increased from \$3,152 to \$6,870. This increase also reflected a quite substantial increase in rental rates.
- Website costs were almost halved in 2022 (down \$2,101), largely because in 2021 we paid in full for a three-year hosting and management arrangement that came at a substantial discount on the annual rate. One-off technical support charges were also well down.

The Association's financial position remains sound. Total Member Funds (the difference between Total Assets and Total Liabilities) fell by the amount of the deficit generated in 2022 to \$138,433. Notwithstanding this solid position, some vulnerabilities remain.

Apart from the long-term decline in membership, for as long as the Association has been in existence the results achieved, both financially and in terms of services delivered to members, have been heavily dependent on volunteers whose enthusiastic support has always been greatly appreciated. I mentioned this in my report last year but it bears repeating. Unfortunately, it is becoming increasingly difficult to fill gaps in this volunteer workforce as people drop out for a range of reasons, other commitments, health and age amongst them. The alternative if we can't find people to help out with a range of tasks will be to resort to commercial providers, the cost of which will have to be passed on to all members if we are not to erode our Member Funds, potentially quite quickly. Such providers would also be very unlikely to deliver the level of personal attention to which our members have become accustomed. So if you think you may be able to help out in any way, no matter how small, please let us know. Location is not necessarily a constraint and you don't need to be on the Committee either. Alternatively, if you know of someone who is not a member and may be able to help we'd love to hear from them too.

In closing, I move the motion that:

The Audited Financial Statements tabled here today be adopted as a true record of the financial transactions of the Association for the year ended 31 December 2022 and the Treasurer be instructed to prepare and lodge the 2023 Annual Return with the Department of Fair Trading.

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