



# FORUM LIFE

July 2021

## Happy 80<sup>th</sup> to Forum!

*“Forum was founded in July 1941 by three women who felt that all women should have a voice in what was a male dominated society. Most of the cultural and intellectual life of Brisbane seemed to have come to a standstill, yet a small group of women believed that now, in the midst of war, was the time to prepare for a world of peace, to keep their minds active, to think constructively, to train themselves to be ready to take on responsibility in the post-war world”.*

And here we are – 80 years later!!

Forum is thriving, our membership is diverse and our meetings are innovative.

As we celebrate our organisation’s 80<sup>th</sup> this year, take time to remember our founders Jessie Groom, Ruth Don and Marjorie Puregger and the struggles they faced when their efforts to form this organisation were met with derision and even anger by both men and women. Times have changed, thanks to generations of trailblazing women such as our founders and we are now the lucky ones who are reaping the benefits.

Excerpts taken from Forum’s history book *“Never Be Silent”*  
written by Maureen Whitehead, Historian

# Celebrating 80 Years!!

*Members and friends of Forum will be marking this milestone in our history with two celebrations! An evening event will be hosted by Bremer Forum on Tuesday 27 July and Cleveland Forum are hosting a daytime event on Thursday 29 July. If you would like to join us at either of these events please email: [forum@beconfident.org.au](mailto:forum@beconfident.org.au)*

# Congratulations Laura McLennan

## Winner of the Forum Bursary for 2021



Congratulations to this year's recipient of the NCWQ Forum Bursary, Laura McLennan.

Laura is currently enrolled in her first year of studies at QUT, studying a dual degree of Mathematics and Business. Throughout all of her schooling life, Laura maintained consistently high grades – and was a straight A student all the way through! Last year, at the end of Year 12, Laura was awarded Dux of the School, Caltex Best All-rounder and the STEM Future Innovator Award. Laura also received subject awards for Specialist Mathematics, Mathematical Methods, Legal Studies and General English. Laura received an ATAR of 98.5, as well as the highest achievement in English across the state. Currently at University, Laura.

has attained at GPA of 7.0. Whilst at high school Laura was involved with the debating team for several years and also coached younger teams. Public Speaking has been a significant part of her life as well, presenting weekly speeches to over 500 people as part of her school leadership roles of School Captain, Student Representative Council President and Interact Secretary. Laura has also participated in speaking competitions, receiving many awards of achievement. Now as a tutor, Laura strives to help others by improving their writing, speaking and confidence. An accomplished musician, Laura plays the flute, violin and piano and she has also been active within charity organisations such as Foster Care Australia, the RSPCA and the Australian Bushfire Appeal. Laura has huge career prospects ahead of her, and although she is not sure exactly what she wants to do, a career working for either ASIO or a Space Agency is on her radar. Whatever she chooses to do – we are positive that Laura will make a significant impact wherever she goes!

# Happy 59<sup>th</sup> Birthday Chermside Forum

Chermside Forum was founded in May 1962, and this year Chermside members celebrated their club's 59<sup>th</sup> birthday in style.

Such longevity for an organisation must be celebrated with cake and food, which is exactly what happened



....and if you are wondering about the candles,  $6 + 3 = 9$ , therefore  $5 + (6 + 3) = 59$ .  
Great logic we know!

## E-Forum

Our monthly E-Forum meetings have been a great success and we have received terrific feedback from everyone who has attended. If you are unable to attend face to face meetings and would like to improve your public speaking skills, you will find that E-Forum is a fantastic alternative! For more information, contact: [forum@beconfident.org.au](mailto:forum@beconfident.org.au)



## The Objects of Forum

- To foster Public Speaking skills
- To encourage personal growth, self confidence, communication and leadership
- To practice meeting procedure and duties of Office Bearers
- To encourage ongoing self-education and intellectual stimulation
- To uphold freedom of speech





# Ponderings from some of our newer members

**Mick Laverack** is a busy man..... *"I am a volunteer at St Vincent's Hospital and also enjoy learning to play the piano and music theory. I enjoy long walks and have walked the Kokoda Track, the West Highland Way in Scotland, the Portugese Camino and the Larapinta Trail in the Northern Territory. I attended a couple of meetings at Chermside Forum before making a decision to join. Seeing and hearing members present their speeches made me realise just how beneficial learning these skills can be. The research, preparation and practising of a speech is a great mental exercise. Learning to chair a meeting is another reason why I joined Forum, and I enjoy the company of other Forum members. I am very happy to have become a member of Forum"*.

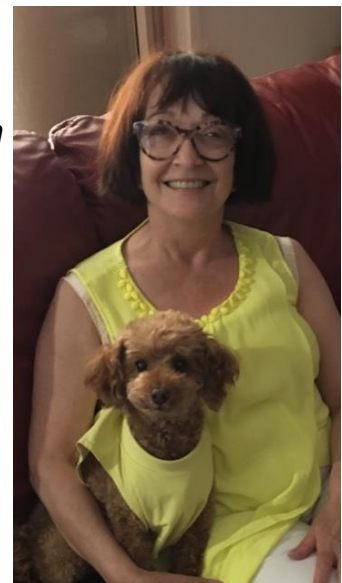


**Charles Clark:** *"Though I am a new member of Chermside Forum, I am not new to Forum. My wife, Frances, is a long term member and accredited Assessor. As she no longer drives and has some health problems, I recently joined so that I could take her and be with her. We now both enjoy the experience. Many years ago, in the 1970s, I joined Rostrum, along*



*with other members of the Electricity Industry. We eventually formed our own independent industry Club. Concurrently I occasionally acted as assessor for Chermside Forum, so I have known many of its members for a long time. I have a senior role in the Order of St John of Jerusalem Hospitallers, a world-wide Heraldic and Charity organization, and have to conduct many meetings so I am thankful for the training and experience gained through Rostrum and Forum"*.

**Roslyn Bates** has been *"married to Douglas for 31 years and is blessed with 2 beautiful daughters. My working life has varied, from Banking, Retail, Beauty Therapy, Aromatherapy and even dabbling in making my own skin care. I am now retired and do some volunteering at an Op-Shop. Earlier this year I did some Google research of speaking groups close to home, and this is where I discovered Chermside Forum, a speaking group close to my home that held meetings during the day suited me very much. One of my main goals for attending was to help improve my memory recall, since health challenges have caused some struggles with my memory. Other benefits I see for myself is to help build my confidence and meet new people"*. Roslyn is pictured with her gorgeous pup Coco.



## Featured Member

### Reg Bertrand – Chermside Forum



“I joined Chermside Forum in March 2014 because I wanted to find my voice and be a leader in my Australian Mauritian community. For those who do not know – Mauritius is an island off the east coast of Africa, in the Indian Ocean. This is where I was born and grew up. When I attended my first Forum meeting I felt very welcome and I thought at the time that I had found new friends. This proved to be correct - and with my Forum training I have gone on to become a leader in my cultural community, just as I had hoped.

I am very enthusiastic about all things related to Forum, including participating in debates, and I speak at every opportunity offered. I have held the office of Secretary twice, and in 2022, I will take on the role of President for the second time, which I am very much looking forward to.

Forum has been great for me as I find it stimulating and challenging – in fact I am so enthusiastic about it that I persuaded my wife, Kath, to join as well. We are a great team and we help each other every step of the way!”

## Looking Back

*The first meeting in Forum’s records devoted entirely to procedure, was held on October 15 in 1947. It was programmed as ‘Procedure for Formal Occasions’ and included: Opening a Garden Fete, Vote of Thanks to the Workers, Opening a Brain’s Trust, Response to the ‘Toast to the Ladies’ and a brief lecture on Parliamentary Procedure, by Mrs Marjorie Puregger.*

With the establishment of a fourth Forum Club in August 1947, attention was focused on better meeting procedure and better critics (now known as assessors.) The new Club resolved to use more women critics, rather than call on Rostrum men to assist. By 1951 just six Forum women were critics. This is interesting as many Forum women were well educated, yet for so long they had called on Rostrum men to attend their meetings to provide feedback. Take Miss J. Stephenson for example, she was Dais President from 1961-63 so was likely to have been a member of Forum throughout the 1950s. Miss Stephenson was a graduate of Queensland University with double honours in both Classics and Maths, she was a qualified accountant, had studied Commerce and was highly regarded in the business world. As well as all of this, she had also obtained letters in singing and had passed the Gemmological Society’s exam.

*Editors note: Luckily – things at Forum have changed - A LOT!*



# Who loves Debating?

Members from Cleveland and Chermside Forums meet annually to test their debating skills and see who can get their point across the most successfully. Whilst these debates are a lot of fun, members always take them very seriously and present well thought-out, well researched arguments. The topic of this year's debate was "*Is digital technology beneficial to all the world?*" and the adjudicator, Leanne Walker, declared it was the best debate she had ever been involved with!! Fine praise indeed, so congratulations are due to all of the debaters on their outstanding effort.



Pictured left to right are the two debating teams: Charles Clark, Bruce Kent and Reg Bertrand from Chermside Forum, adjudicator Leanne Walker (member of Bremer Forum and currently Forum's Chief Assessor), and Irene Henley, Betty Kenny and Jan Scott from Cleveland Forum. Well done to all of you!!

## On the subject of Debating

Forum member Toni Risson is pictured below delivering an informative and innovative tutorial on the techniques of debating to members of Bremer Forum. Eloquently and artistically using dolls and teddy bears to represent the debating teams, Toni



conveyed the message to all that the aim of the process is to cheerfully push your opponents off the table (without the use of physical force) whilst cleverly backing up your team members' well structured arguments.

# BAYSIDE FORUM

Under the inspiring Presidency of Elaine West this session, Bayside Forum members embraced the introduction of a variety of new segments with enthusiasm. The innovative ideas that Elaine introduced created greater participation and their Symposium on “Making Our Earth More Sustainable” including a Q&A was a fabulous success. Pictured below are four Bayside Forum members who were the presiding



experts on the Symposium panel, Adelia Berridge, Ben Cameron, Tania Kromoloff and Joy Martin. Each of these members had an important message to share. **Joy Martin’s** ‘Take 3 For The Sea’ presentation centred around the damage being done to our oceans by all of the plastics and rubbish that finds its way there, and how *Take 3 for the Sea’s* simple message of ‘take 3 pieces of rubbish with you when

you leave the beach, waterway or....anywhere” will make a huge difference to the future of our planet. **Tania Kromoloff’s** presentation of “Our Changing Climate and What Can We Do?” began powerfully with a David Attenborough quote – “we require more than intelligence, we require wisdom”. What can we do? Visit your local, State and Federal Members; talk to friends and family about the damage of climate change; plus – you can choose to live more sustainably. Finally, think about people power and join a group (eg Australian Conservation Foundation) and really make a difference. Remember: “*Anything we can’t do forever, by definition, is unsustainable*”. **Ben Cameron** convinced us that we don’t need or most likely want a big house. Tiny Houses is the new thinking for a country that is obsessed with keeping up with the Jones’s and having the biggest houses in the world. Tiny Houses can cost around \$70k, making a house and land package only \$270k – such an affordable alternative for the many who will otherwise never be able to achieve the prohibitive cost of a suburban home.

**Councillor Adelia Berridge** spoke to the title “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” and had everyone thinking about how the community can no longer sustain the \$22m cost to ratepayers for waste collection and why Redland City Council is now launching a campaign to shift our ‘throw and go’ habits.



# BREMER FORUM

Bremer Forum recently hosted interviews of two local celebrities, Glen Smith – Ipswich City Council’s Citizen of the Year and President Of ArtsConnect Ipswich Inc; and Campbell MacGregor - intrepid traveller, philosopher and valued member of Bremer Forum. This really was a great night and both of the interviewees had amazing stories to tell. Interviewing is another skills you can learn at Forum and

you will find that it’s a great way to stretch your imagination and build your confidence.



**Forums meet regularly in the following areas:**

[Ashgrove](#)  
[Chermside](#)  
[Cleveland](#)  
[Dalby](#)  
[Ipswich](#)  
[Gold Coast](#)  
[Wynnum](#)

**Our Online Forum is also available if you are unable to travel to regular meetings**

**Do You Need More Information?**

[www.beconfident.org](http://www.beconfident.org)

or email:

[forum@beconfident.org.au](mailto:forum@beconfident.org.au)

- Do you need to present confidently at work?
- Do you get nervous when asked to stand up and speak in front of others?
- Do you need to deliver a speech at a wedding?
- Do you attend meetings and want your opinion to be heard?

If you answered YES to any of these questions – then FORUM is for YOU!!





# Vale

It is with great sadness that we advise of the passing of two beloved members of Dalby Forum.

**Barbara Irwin** was a Forum member for 47 years, joining Ipswich in 1974 and then Dalby Forum in 1977 when she and husband Bill moved to the beautiful town of Bell.

Barbara was well recognised as a speech and drama teacher and influenced many young people in this art, encouraging them to find their voice.

Her contribution to Dalby Forum was immense – a consummate speaker, a vocal advocate, an insightful assessor and a great friend to all who knew her.

Barbara witnessed the changes in Forum over the years and embraced the new ways rising to all challenges.

Barbara has left a powerful legacy within our Forum and will always be remembered for her speaking prowess and the ability to turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Vale Barbara – you are missed by everyone who had the great pleasure of knowing you.



**Denise Jeitz** joined Dalby Forum 3 years ago with the main aim of better understanding meeting procedure to assist in her many community roles. She was the President of the local Zonta club and made a significant contribution to our community in this role.

Although only a member of Forum for a short period, Denise was well respected for her achievements over this time.

Denise was also active within her chosen political party, as highlighted in [this link](#) and was a great friend to all who knew her.

Vale Denise - you will be greatly missed