



FORUM LIFE

October 2022

FAREWELL YOUR MAJESTY

The past few months have been a momentous time in history for us all and, after celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June, the world is now mourning her loss. We have all had time to reflect on her life and the place she held in the hearts and minds of so many, and now, along with millions of others around the world we



thank her for her 70 years of dedicated service. Born in April 1926, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth was just 15 years old when Forum Communicators was formed and together, we have shown the world how to age with grace and poise.

Thank you, Your Majesty the Queen, Elizabeth Alexandra Mary Windsor

WHAT IS FORUM?

Forum is a non-profit community organisation.
It is also the best speaking organisation in Australia!

Forum members are vibrant, professional,
confident, skilled and capable.

We inspire our members with confidence.

We are well known for our stimulating, informative
and supportive environment.

We provide opportunities for our members to succeed
in becoming effective communicators and leaders.

We appeal to, and are sought after by all,
for the skills we offer.



FAREWELL TO OUR DEAR FRIENDS

VALE ANNE HARRIS

ANNE HARRIS was a true gem in Ipswich Forum and had the determination to do whatever it takes. Her *out-of-the ordinary* experiences in life left her audience gasping as she often shared speech topics that related to her life. Anne was not your regular 85 year old and she had the courage to lead the way. Anne was greatly admired by her Forum friends, especially as she was willing to take on the Treasurer's role, which is a rarity in any group! On Saturday 17 September dear Anne had no choice but to leave our wonderful group as she departed from this earth. This was something that came as quite a shock to her many friends and especially her loving family. Anne's journey in Ipswich Forum started on February



28, 2008. Anne bravely spoke at her very next meeting to the title of "*The Luck of the Irish*" and has continued to speak as often as she could ever since. Most recently, Anne presented a main speech to the title *Industrial Change* on 28 July this year, a speech that enlightened us to the difficulties she faced as a young woman in what was clearly the era of the 'man's world' in the mining town of Broken Hill. Anne's willingness to take on the leadership roles of President and Treasurer was a sign

of her true determination and dedication to serve and lead in her community. Anne became a Forum Assessor which enabled her to provide sound feedback on meeting procedure & speech-making in her own & other Forums.

Anne was heavily involved in several community groups where her Forum leadership skills and knowledge of the requirements of President & Treasurers' roles were greatly valued. These groups included F.O.I.L. (Friends of Ipswich Libraries); Art Classes; Australian Women's Register; Music Lessons and Spanish Group. This is a further reason why Anne was seen as a true gem to the Ipswich Community and she will be sadly missed by many.



VALE ANNE – WE SHALL MISS YOU DEARLY!

VALE ALICE KNUDSEN

Members like ALICE KNUDSEN don't come along to Ipswich Forum every decade, let alone for almost two decades.

Alice joined our Forum in 1998 and through her many years of health issues that initially flared up in her early 70's, she continued to be a valuable contributor to our group and the wider Forum community – in spite of excruciating nerve pain caused by her diagnosed illness of Peripheral Neuropathy.

Her many interesting speeches delivered throughout her 19 year membership have been kept by Alice's family. It was in these speeches that Alice's wonderful sense of humour and imagination often came to the fore, and one of her most memorable speeches was an *'interview'* created solely by Alice, who *'played'* the unusual role of an inanimate object - that of Andre Rieu's famous Violin. In this speech Alice described the often unfortunate circumstances that the instrument found itself in, particularly being abandoned and locked away soon after providing a world class performance to a magnificent audience, while others went off partying. Alice was a true marvel!

Alice took on the roles of Secretary, Vice President and President on many occasions and within a few years of joining, Alice extended her participation in Forum, taking on the role of Secretary of the South-East Regional Council.

Alice made use of the confidence she gained in Forum to serve her community as a volunteer at the Ipswich Art Gallery and also as a tour guide with the Ipswich Information Centre, which involved providing local information on guided bus tours around Ipswich. This experience enabled Alice and a fellow volunteer to lead a guided tour during a lunchtime outing at the Ipswich Forum Convention which was themed *"Trains, Planes & Automobiles"*.

No one was more disappointed than Alice herself when she was forced to abandon her beloved Forum membership in late 2017 after her debilitating illness took over, and finally led to her passing on 25 August 2022.



REST IN PEACE DEAR ALICE, YOU WILL BE GREATLY MISSED

WHAT HAVE OUR FORUMS BEEN UP TO?

Ashgrove Forum

Ashgrove Forum recently celebrated & commiserated with one of their long-standing members, Willo Riley. Due to family commitments, Willo has decided that she is unable to continue travelling to regular meetings and is now taking up casual membership. Willo is a popular and dedicated member of Ashgrove who has been with us for 18 years, and after she moved to Blackbutt some years ago has continued to attend monthly meetings, travelling 160km to Ashgrove, then 160km back home to do so. Members decided to have a club excursion to the South Burnett Region in July for Lunch at the Hotel Radnor in Blackbutt, to present Willow with the trophy for "Most Memorable Speaker". This trophy is awarded annually for the best 10-minute speech made by an Ashgrove club member. Willo made a highly interesting and entertaining speech entitled "*New Directions*" about the early days of the automobile when motor vehicles first appeared on our roads and driving licences were not required. She was voted "Most Memorable Speaker" at the AGM for the third time since she first joined Ashgrove. Last year's winner of the "Most Memorable Speaker" award, Ann Davies (pictured left), returned the perpetual trophy at the lunch in Blackbutt for presentation to Willo.



Also, in recognition of her 18 years of Forum membership, Willo was presented with a unique hand sculpted wooden pendant made from Mountain Ash (*Eucalyptus Tessellaris*). The suburb of Ashgrove is believed to be named for the large groves of Mountain Ash that once grew there, and as Willo has been a part of Ashgrove for so many years, our members thought it fitting to give her a gift that was once part of an Ash Grove.



The pendant (pictured right), was handcrafted by Bonita from TheBonTree, Woodford. Bonita hand makes jewellery art from the salvaged woods of local native tree species.

Ashgrove Forum continued.....



Pictured above is out-going President Carmel Towler (left) presenting Willo Riley with the coveted trophy for being Ashgrove Forum's Most Memorable Speaker 2022

Bremer Forum

Members of Bremer Forum are very excited to welcome their newest member, Andrew South. Andrew is a passionate, informed member of the local Ipswich Community who brings a healthy dose of intellectual rigour to our meetings, and is a regular contributor to all of our speaking segments. We look forward to sharing Andrew's Forum journey and are also looking forward to supporting Andrew when he represents our members in the upcoming Forum Summit Speaking Competition, which will be held at the end of this month.



Andrew is pictured above with Bremer Forum's President, Lorraine Foran

Cleveland Forum

Cleveland Forum celebrated its final “5th Thursday of the month” social day for this year, with an outing to Lamb Island. If you haven’t been there yourself, Lamb is one of the smaller bay islands, at just two kilometres long and one kilometre wide, and has a population of approximately 500 people. We all enjoyed a very interesting tour around the island on the new courtesy bus and were spoilt with morning tea at the Pioneer Hall which is situated on the northern end of the island. This is the only heritage listed building located on the island, and showcases some of the history of Lamb Island and its pioneers - and we were all impressed with its small, well organised and very well stocked volunteer run library. We were also treated to a tour of the nearby community garden, and again it was impressive and informative to hear of the work the community group does, and to see and taste some of their local produce. As always, we Clevelanders are very grateful to live so close to the beautiful islands that we can visit so easily.



Bayside Forum

BLUE SKY THINKING – THOUGHTFUL & A BIT OF FUN!

Recently, “Round Table Blue Sky Thinking” is a segment that we have featured at Bayside Forum and we heartily enjoy it! This is impromptu speaking based on a subject contributed on the day, and has resulted in some very thought-provoking responses – mixed with lots of fun. Depending on the time available, the length of time for responses is fluid – our latest one allowed us 90 seconds each to give our thoughts on the topic of the night.

Round Table Blue Sky Thinking

was introduced by Ben Cameron and our latest topic was “What would you do with unlimited funds & resources?”

- Ben started the ball rolling with his answer - he would build a community-based village in Maleny.
- Tania would work to ensure that we have a world that is in harmony with nature and where all consumers bought locally grown and/or manufactured products.
- Elaine’s dream would be to set up multiple scholarships similar to Rhodes Scholarships.
- Nora would love to help her family financially and have a more accepting world.
- Kate, ever the optimist, has driven 5660km within Australia and wants all the potholes filled! 😊
- Paul B would buy a safe house for every single person.
- Anna, if she could, would fix the ramping system for ambulances.
- Joy couldn’t decide on just one, so “Good Joy” would work to connect the community, whereas “Evil Joy” would travel with Rick Stein, eat, drink and have a great time 😊
- Richard’s plan would be to go sailing around the world (the apple doesn’t fall far from the tree!) 😊
- Matthew (visitor) would rehabilitate the waterways and restore our country to what it should be.



Our Challenge To You

See what fascinating and/or thought-provoking responses your Forum devises. Remember, responses are still based on “opening/body/conclusion”.

Pictured left are: Ben, Tania and Joy

Chermside Forum

Chermside Forum members are enjoying an enjoyable and stimulating session under the direction of their President, Reg Bertrand, and have been treated to challenging impromptu speaking sessions, thought provoking ten minute speeches and many vocabulary quizzes which have been led by quiz-master Bruce Kent. Margaret Townsley recently delivered an interactive workshop on Meeting Procedure, Charles Clark enlightened members on the duties and importance of the Chairman, and Michael Laverack delivered his first ever extended speech focused on the history of Chermside.

During all this excitement, we received the sad news that one of our much loved and very long-standing members, Frances Clark, was retiring from Forum after 58 years due to ill health. We send our very best wishes to Frances, her husband Charles and their family.

As our year comes to a close we are planning to celebrate Christmas with a party at the Geebung RSL on November 24, and extend an invitation to all Forum members to join us. We are also looking forward to meeting up with friends old and new at the Forum Summit, which is taking place at the end of October.



Pictured left to right:

Anne Davies (Ashgrove Forum), Margaret Townsley, Francine Field, Reg Bertrand, Kath Bertrand (all from Chermside Forum) & Pam Tranter (Cleveland Forum)

WHAT HAVE OUR MEMBERS HAVE BEEN UP TO?

Toni Risson – Bremer Forum

If it hadn't rained that night

Weather events provide inspiration for all forms of creativity.

Bremer Forum member Toni Risson is President of Women Writers Qld, and in that capacity, Toni has just released a collection of short stories about rain. And who better to launch it than ABC 'weather girl' Jenny Woodward.

Toni set her members the challenge of writing a story that begins, *If it hadn't rained that night*. The result was a deluge of stories, from crime fiction and mystery, to historical drama and romance. She was delighted when Jenny agreed to do the honours. 'Rain,' said Jenny, 'how could I resist?'

To the strains of *Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head* and *It's Raining Men*, Jenny launched the anthology on 13 September at the Brisbane Square Library in a room filled with umbrellas. The event opened with Gene Kelly's iconic dance routine from *Singin' in the Rain*.

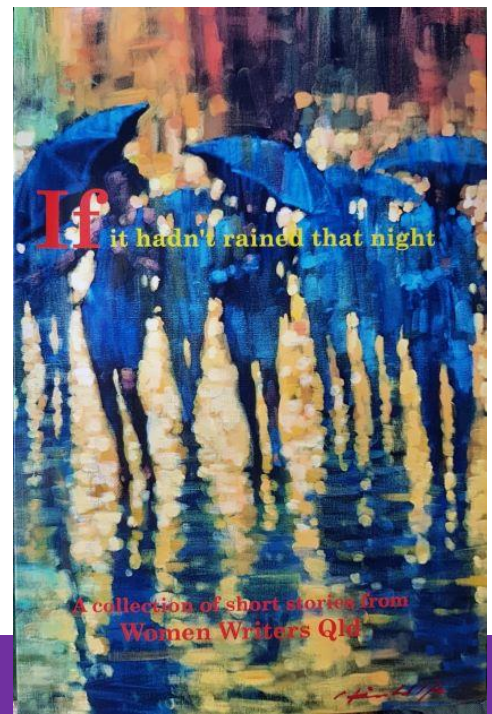
The cover of *If it hadn't rained that night* features a painting by Brisbane painter David Hinchliffe, whose work was exhibited at the Red Hill Gallery throughout September. David loves Queensland thunderstorms and many of his paintings depict rainy streetscapes.

Jenny Woodward grew up in Toowoomba, where she was presenting the weather from 1975. She joined the ABC in 1986 and last year took to the road with a one-woman show called *Weathering Well*. Jenny is Australia's longest serving weather-presenter.

Great writing is part of great speaking, and Women Writers Qld welcomes new members if you want to hone those skills.

For information about the group, or for your copy of *If it hadn't rained that night* (\$19.50) email:

president@womenwritersqld.org.au



WHAT HAVE OUR MEMBERS HAVE BEEN UP TO?

Toni Risson – Bremer Forum

Toni has also recently been involved in a literary art exhibition, in which six Ipswich based poets submitted a poem for display in the local Art Gallery and members of ArtsConnect Ipswich were invited to create a painting inspired by one (or more) of the poems on show. Toni submitted a delightful poem about her childhood memories of Mermaid Beach, which led to the creation of many beautiful works of art. On the opening day of the exhibition, all of the poets involved were invited to



to read their work to the audience, allowing everyone there the opportunity to meet local writers and artists, and gain some insight into the creative process that goes into these works.

*Pictured left:
Glen Smith (President of
ArtsConnect and Toni
Risson)*

Leanne Walker – Bremer Forum

In September, Leanne Walker co-presented to a full conference room at SWIMCON22 in the SeaWorld Conference Centre, speaking on the subject of 'Managing Behaviour in the Pool by Catering for Neurodivergence'. Leanne along with the founder of shareshapeandshine.org, Tammy McMillan, tackled the issue of ensuring that all students with neurological difference (including ADHD, ASD and Anxiety and their associated emotional, social and sensory dysregulation), are provided with the necessary teaching adjustments to enable them to experience success in the pool.



NCWQ FORUM BURSARY WINNER 2022

Olivia Chissell

I am a first-year student studying a Bachelor of International Studies majoring in International Relations and French at the University of Queensland. Public speaking has always been a passion of mine, and I have competed in many fields of public speaking, including Lions Youth of the Year, and as a member of the Cleveland District State High School debating team. I have presented speeches to crowds of over 2000 in my role as school captain and received the Outstanding Representative in Public Speaking award in 2020 & 2021, and I am the 2022 recipient of the ZONTA Young Woman in Public Affairs Award. I am also a volunteer and member of my local Lion's club, engaging in a multitude of community and international projects. My experience in public speaking also includes being invited to perform speeches at my local ZONTA and Rotary clubs. I have also participated in mock International Forums presenting position summaries across a range of issues including sustainable environmental and economic development. In conjunction with Education Queensland International, I have presented tours promoting secondary education in Queensland schools.

My ultimate career aspiration lies within the field of International Relations and Australian foreign policy. The Forum bursary will contribute to the completion of my degree, by helping to fund the required exchange component to be completed in France in my final year of study. I believe that public speaking is an essential skill, and I am truly grateful for the support of Forum in recognition of my pursuits in this field. In my leisure time I am an avid football fan and player, I love to read classical literature, write poems, play drum-kit and French Horn.



FEATURED FORUM MEMBERS

Merle Henderson – Chermside Forum

I joined Chermside Forum 45 years ago with a certain amount of fear and trepidation and if anyone had told me then that I would still be a member in 2022, I am sure I would have laughed hysterically. A friend of mine from High School days, Ronnie Ward (McGrory) talked me into joining when I confessed to her that, after marrying and bringing up three kids, I had lost my confidence. I wonder why! Perhaps as my husband, Colin, was a Shorthand Court Reporter we lived in fear that “anything we said could be taken down and used in evidence against us.” Forum helped me regain my confidence and today I still enjoy the cut and thrust of speaking and the challenge it presents. I really did feel nervous and unsure in the early days when Forum was much stiffer and more formal than it is today. I was terrified of making a mistake when I took office and, while most of the Critics were helpful and encouraging, some seemed to enjoy cutting us down to size - and we weren't very big! After some time, I thought that perhaps we all took ourselves too seriously, and possibly a lighter approach would be better, so I started to write skits for our Xmas breakups so we could laugh at ourselves. To my amazement some of the senior members eagerly took part and to see them joking about themselves is an experience that I shall never forget. I do feel that, by joining Forum, I have met so many interesting people from so many different backgrounds that my life has been enriched enormously and I really must mention at least one long-term member of Chermside Forum, Betty Riches, who gave so generously of her own personal “riches” - always being there with help and guidance, and who eagerly embraced change. Overall, it has been a joy to belong to Forum even though, after giving a speech, I still toss and turn in bed at night as I remember the best parts that somehow I managed to leave out! When my husband died a couple of years ago, our 2 sons were not allowed to come from Canberra for the funeral because of Covid and my daughter suggested I do the eulogy. Shocked at first, I reluctantly agreed and I shall never regret it. *Thank you Forum for giving me the courage.*



FEATURED FORUM MEMBERS

Joy Mann – Chermside Forum

I was first introduced to Forum in Cairns in 1968 and as I was due to go to Melbourne to an Australia wide conference as Secretary of the church organization *Mothers' Union*, I was keen to brush up on procedure. We moved to Brisbane in 1969 and at that time, there was a waiting list to join Chermside Forum, so I didn't resume my membership until 1970. As you can see I have been a member for over fifty years and have seen quite a number of changes within Forum, from very formal meetings and attire, and strict rules and regulations about presenting speeches, to the more casual and friendly meetings nowadays. In 1970 on our name tags and at meetings we were addressed by our husband's name – Mrs. F. Mann. All branches had a number and colour, Chermside was No. 23 and our colour chartreuse. We were given a six month apprenticeship as novice members, but after that time had expired we had to speak if called upon by the Chairman. We were also expected to step up automatically to become Committee member, then Treasurer, Secretary, Vice President and finally President. For me, Forum has always been a learning journey, and researching topics for speeches is always interesting. Workshops are helpful and informative and we are so fortunate to have skilful presenters who communicate well. I love meeting new people and catching up with old friends at shared meetings, Conventions and Conferences, and in my early days of membership I was fortunate to meet two of Forum's founders Lady Groom and Ruth Don, both inspiring ladies - but there have been so many inspiring ladies in my journey and we have been so very lucky in having such a plethora of wonderful leaders to guide us.

Forum has been an important part of my life, guiding me as a member of the Speakers Panel of *Mothers' Union*, and helping me to assist my children with vocabulary and procedure, rules and regulations - along with the help of a well used 1969 copy of "Mr. Chairman" which was written by another of our founders, Marjorie Puregger. Forum has never been afraid to transform and bring our profile and ideas up to date. It is still alive and active, and may it continue to be so for many years to come.



Pictured above, Joy Mann with her two daughters Cheryl and Robyn

STEP UP & SPEAK WELL

Your journey to becoming a more confident you

Forum's **Step Up & Speak Well** Personal Development Course covers a set of skills to equip you for a range of scenarios, such as:

- Delivering business presentations
- Delivering special occasion speeches
- Presenting yourself well in a variety of situations
- Receiving constructive feedback and effectively putting it into practice

Do something today that your future self will thank you for

Contact us forum@beconfident.org.au



MEMBER'S TESTIMONIAL

"I really love our Forum meetings, they are always innovative and designed to stretch us in our goal to become better speakers. As Forum members we are trained in using our speech making skills but sometimes we find comfort behind a lectern with a copy of our script close by. However, as women in the community or workplace, we also must look to developing our non-contextual confidence. In other words, to expand our conversational skills, to learn to speak up, to have a message and be brave enough to share it in a setting where sometimes the male voices dominate. To be able to answer questions, give directives and propose solutions to problems – all things that women do so well at home – but apparently not so well in public life." Barbara Horsburgh, Ipswich Forum

E-FORUM



E-Forum meetings are held online on the first Monday of the month (with the exception of Public Holidays). If you want to experience what Forum has to offer, yet are unable to attend face to face meetings, E-Forum is for you! Our meetings are always educational and enjoyable, delivering opportunities for speaking as well as learning segments focusing on self confidence, speech writing and communicating effectively. Visitors are always welcome and we also invite existing Forum members who wish to broaden their skills to join us.



www.beconfident.org.au

The Objects & Values of Forum

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

The Values of Forum

Forum is a community of individuals who are unique and diverse, providing a space for everyone

- We respect individuality
- We share knowledge and ideas
- We value a well-run meeting
- We aspire to speak well
- We support and encourage one another

**“If you can speak you can influence.
If you can influence you can change lives.”**

**Our Online Forum meets regularly if you are
unable to travel to face to face meetings**

- 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?
- Do you need to prepare an agenda or run a successful meeting?

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



Do You Need More Information?

www.beconfident.org.au

or email:

forum@beconfident.org.au

Forums meet at the following locations:

[Ashgrove](#)

[Chermside](#)

[Cleveland](#)

[Dalby](#)

[Ipswich](#)

[Gold Coast](#)

[Online \(E-Forum\)](#)

[Wynnum](#)