



FORUM LIFE

July 2023

CONGRATULATIONS PENNY HAMILTON OAM

Penny Hamilton has been a member of Forum since 1991 and during that time she has been an outstanding contributor to our organisation. Penny has also been a dedicated and invaluable member of many other community organisations, and it is due to her commitment and continued support of Emerge Toowoomba and YellowBridge QLD that Penny was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in this year's King's Birthday Honours List.



Penny is currently the Chair of Emerge Toowoomba – a social enterprise which puts all profits made from its business back into the youth and community programs it runs, as well as providing a dedicated youth space where young people can have access to safe mentors, resources and have a place to call their own.

For many years Penny was the CEO of YellowBridge QLD, a not for profit organisation whose core work is in community housing, disability support, home services for seniors and youth support. Prior to joining YellowBridge QLD Penny's professional life was based within the rural community and included the social sciences of agriculture, rural education and environment.

***Congratulations Penny,
this award is very well
deserved.***



Order of
Australia
Honours

FEATURED MEMBER

Coral Cogzell

I joined Club No. 17 Tweed Heads Coolangatta in the sixties. It was an afternoon tea meeting and hat and gloves were the normal attire. The minutes of the meeting referred to attendees as Mesdames Punch, Ross, Willis etc. and I was named in the syllabus as Mrs. G. Ross.

I went to hear Lady Cilento speak at a function, two little kids in tow (one in a pram), when two other ladies in attendance, Joyce Punch and Elsie Willis told me about Forum and invited me to a meeting. From the first meeting, I was hooked. My conversation no longer limited to domesticity and motherhood, my thirst for the wonderful English language was assuaged.

When I moved to North Queensland, I attended Home Hill and Ayr Forums whenever I could, and I was honoured to be given the opportunity to speak at a Forum Convention in the Whitsundays.

After moving to Brisbane and marrying Graham, I joined Ashgrove Forum and was thrilled to be in the presence of my idol, Lettie Morelle. While a member of Ashgrove, at Barbara Eutick's insistence, I became a Forum 'Critic'. Returning to the Gold Coast, I joined Southport Forum, and in 1995, when the position of State President was on my horizon, I formed Palm Beach Currumbin Forum.

I realised I loved helping people reach their potential (as Forum did for me) and I have never stopped touting Forum - even to strangers on the train, or more recently at a Big Morning Tea where I was guest speaker. Two women who didn't know me had introduced me to this wonderful Forum Association, so I consider it my duty to do the same.



Coral Cogzell, pictured left, was awarded Life Membership of Forum Communicators in 2015



FEATURED MEMBER

Coral Cogzell continued

I think the highlights of my initiatives during my active Forum years have been:-

- ❖ The Forum Fellowship Tour – which was a moving convention throughout Queensland.
- ❖ Production of the magazine “The State We’re In” which promoted Forum far and wide throughout the community.
- ❖ The Forum Convention held at Coolangatta, which had a Shakespearean theme. Two outstanding memories I have of this event are of Ruth Don (one of Forum’s founding members) as Banquo’s Ghost, and the ‘Not So Merry Minstrels’.
- ❖ Workshops I have presented on how to deliver a humorous speech
- ❖ Most of all, the life-long friends I have made State-wide, really too many to mention by name, but to have friends the calibre of Lorraine Foran, Pam Tranter, Mary Loch and Julianne Caffery is just priceless.



*Pictured above, two of our past
State Presidents:
Coral Cogzell and Jannene Wall.*

VALE Cath Wood

Cath Wood was a pint sized, much loved Ipswich Forum member who was an active leader for much of the 41 years of her membership in Forum. Sadly, Cath passed away on the evening of 11 April 2023 at the incredible age of 98 years.

Cath was born in Tralee, in 1924 at a difficult time in Ireland. Her father's family was involved in the Irish fight for independence and the tragic Civil War that followed. His brother, Paddy Buckley, was murdered in an infamous incident at Ballyseedy, just 100 years ago. Cath's father escaped at the time and came to Australia. Two years later he brought his wife and two young children to Brisbane.

Cath's FUNERAL service was held at St Mary's Catholic Church, in Ipswich, where Cath had given much service to the Catholic community during her life in Ipswich. The funeral service was conducted by Cath's cousin, Father Brian Buckley, an Augustinian Priest. Members of Ipswich Forum and the State

Committee were in attendance to acknowledge Cath's dedication to Forum. Also in attendance were her large family of six children and her extended family, friends, neighbours, and the many others who recognised the special way Cath had touched their lives, as she spent so much of her own life serving her community. Cath served as a catechist for at least 30 years, helped with school tuckshop, ran the bingo, did lamington drives, baked for fetes, supervised high school exams and helped out in so many other ways.

Forum was one of Cath's real passions. She was encouraged to join Forum at the ripe old age of 58 by a friend and Ipswich member, Margaret Gilmore. Initially, Cath fought against this, but finally she decided that she needed to join Forum to gain self-confidence, after she had struggled to introduce herself at a special gathering following the first Mass conducted by her cousin.



This special dynamo soon became Ipswich Forum's Treasurer, and held one role or another from that moment on - either Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President, President, Chief Assessor, or Delegate.

Cath extended her Forum involvement to the South-East Regional Council in 1992 holding roles such as Treasurer, Secretary, and SERC Delegate and became Chair of the Assessors' Panel in 2000 to 2005 and then joined the Finance Standing Committee in 2005-2007.

It was in 2019 that failing health & age saw Cath forced to leave her home in Basin Pocket and move into Riverview Gardens Aged Care Facility, where she continued to have an unforgettable effect on those around her, as witnessed by the tears of other residents at her funeral.

Those that remember Cath's Forum journey, will treasure her dedication to Forum, the bundle of energy she brought to the group, and her total commitment at all times.

They will know her artistic talents were often used generously to create invitations or programmes for special occasions that Ipswich Forum hosted. Her unforgettable speech about the love-making antics of the most colourful of BLUE-BIRDS – all hidden by the darkness of night – will not be forgotten.



There have been many members who joined Ipswich Forum after Cath, and many would be aware of the strong role that she played in their Forum Life. I am just one of them.

REST IN PEACE, Dear Cath, your prayers have been answered and you are now with your beloved FATHER IN HEAVEN.

Tribute written by Lorraine Foran

Pictured L-R: Daphne Burrows, Past State President Elaine West & Cath Wood cutting Ipswich Forum's 50th birthday cake in 2012.

What have our members been up to?

E-FORUM – Alisa Beagley

I'm Alisa, an 18-year-old who has been home-schooled all the way from Kindergarten to Year 12. Originally, my dream career was to become a doctor, preferably a bone surgeon. But that changed when I discovered the joy I received from creating stories. It took some years before I fully realised that I could change my dream and actually become an author instead of a doctor. When I did, there was no turning back. I was in love with writing and illustrating books, more specifically, *superhero* books for young teens.

I began writing the Origin of Sword Master book series a few years ago, and when I met up with children's author Michelle Worthington, she got me started on the amazing journey of getting my books published. Since then, I've met so many people who've helped me to bring my ideas to life. Some of those people have had to be quite patient with me on occasion. My ideas are very specific; I chose to self-publish for this very reason. That, and the fact that third-party publishers would struggle to find a proper category for my books. I've pretty

much created a category for where I saw bookstores and libraries were lacking: Superhero books for ages 11 and up, for those who would like to read something more mature than kids' superhero stories but without swear words, dark magic, occult, inappropriate sexual content and excessive gore that generally comes with adults' stories.

Phew, what a mouthful!



forum
BE CONFIDENT



Now, things have started to really get moving. Just recently, my ecommerce website was launched and is up and running. I've printed a couple of copies of my book. I'm learning a lot about marketing and set up Facebook and Instagram accounts for that purpose. I learnt how to write a pitch for my product thanks to Forum. Forum gave some handy hints and awesome advice about writing a pitch, and I gained a couple of new customers!

The Origin of Sword Master: Second Chances is the first book I have published. It tells the story of a young boy, named Rifle, whose life is turned upside down after a fire destroys his home and separates him from his family, leaving him only with his twin brother, Tyler.

The twins are adopted by a vigilante crime-fighter. One twin trains to become a superhero while the other chooses a path of crime.

This book is available for purchase on my website for \$27. It's a full-colour interior paperback, with 156 pages. You can visit the website at absuperheroes.com, where you can also find additional information about the characters, some blog posts and a couple of fun facts about me.

Bremer Forum – Leanne Walker

Bremer member Leanne Walker is involved in a program called Story Dogs. This is a volunteer organization whereby the owner of an approved 'Story Dog' goes into a school, and students selected by teachers read to the dog and its owner. Leanne spends time every second week down in South Golden Beach with her daughter, her grandson and their dog, Doogie, and takes him to school for this purpose. In a non-judgemental setting, the children's focus improves, their literacy skills increase and their confidence soars. The accepting, loving nature of dogs gives this program its magic and helps children relax, open up, try harder and have fun while reading to a friendly, calm dog. Leanne also loves to put her teaching skills and expertise in literacy to good use in this role. Currently 612 volunteer Dog Teams support 3090 students around Australia in 365 schools.



If you're interested in this program here's a link to their website: [Story Dogs](http://StoryDogs)

Bremer Forum – Toni Risson

Bremer member Dr Toni Risson is a published author and is also President of Women Writers Queensland. Toni recently interviewed Brisbane author Lauren Elise Daniels during a 'Literary Apres-Midi' which was held at the Lyceum Club in Brisbane.



*Pictured above - Toni & Lauren mid-interview.
Pictured left - author Lauren Elise Daniels.*

Bremer Forum – Andrew South

Bremer Forum member Andrew South was recently awarded the Rex Hills Memorial Trophy for his outstanding effort in promoting our Forum, his ability to always think 'outside the norm' and his presentation of some amazing speeches.

Rex Hills was a much loved member of Bremer Forum who always took the time to encourage and mentor others, and now we honour his memory by awarding this perpetual trophy to an outstanding member who has gone above and beyond to help our Forum shine.

Congratulations Andrew - you are a legend!



Forum Handy Hint

When you stand before an audience to deliver a speech – NEVER start off by apologising for anything or by saying "I'm very nervous, so please bear with me".

If you are nervous – keep that fact to yourself and smile.

Your smile conveys confidence – so remember to use it.

The audience will never know you are nervous if you don't tell them!!

Bremer Forum – Happy 25th Birthday

Bremer members celebrated their Forum's 25th birthday in May, with much fanfare and frivolity. Not only did we acknowledge the first 25 years of a great club, we also paid homage to our founding member Lorraine Foran. In the style of "This is Your Life", members of the Forum and Foran families paid tribute to Lorraine and everything she has done for so many people and community organisations throughout her life. This was such a well deserved tribute, we were all honoured to take part in it. Now we're all looking forward to the next 25 years!!



Members of the Foran Family

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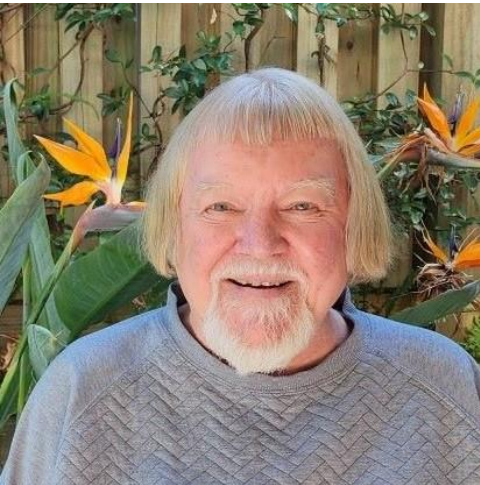
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Life Members Lorraine, Coral & Pam

Chermside Forum – Bruce Kent

Chermside Forum member Bruce Kent is currently Chermside's quiz master who vehemently carries a Plantagenet haircut. Bruce however has a very interesting background which is worth a mention. Bruce attended St Columban's Catholic College at Albion in the late 1960s before moving into his first job with the Commonwealth Bank. After three short months in that role Bruce moved to the Gold Coast and, looking for something a bit more exciting, he joined a local surf club and became a professional surfer. When the time came to move on Bruce relocated to Sydney where he qualified as a male nurse, after which he had a complete career change and joined the Army as an electrical technician with the signal corps. Barrack's life didn't appeal to Bruce at the time, so he contacted a local real estate agent who found him a five acre farm to rent, not far from the Army base. This farm included a broken down house and barn, which Bruce and his friends named 'The House of the Screaming Radish', and eventually housed Bruce plus 19 of his friends - all living the hippy lifestyle of that era. It was a life of bliss,



but like all good things, that time came to an end. Using the skills learnt in the army, Bruce went on to join Rank Xerox. This role eventually saw Bruce relocate to Tasmania, and it was here that he became interested in politics, joining the Australian Democrats and standing for election to parliament. Being passionate about democracy and environmental conservation, Bruce joined in the Franklin dam protests, camping out, parading with the floats and eventually getting himself arrested. After spending a

week in Risdon prison he negotiated with authorities and agreed to leave Tasmania to avoid further prosecution. From there Bruce moved to Melbourne where he became a swim instructor for a few months, until another opportunity came knocking and which saw him transfer to Adelaide for two years to help manage a friend's business. When that secondment came to an end Bruce ventured to Roxby Downs for a short time to protest against Uranium Mining, before returning to life in the familiar surrounds of Brisbane. This led to Bruce driving taxis to support himself whilst furthering his studies at the University of New England, having previously obtained an Arts degree and Bachelor of Education at the University of Tasmania. Bruce is a registered teacher and has taught in many schools, but his greatest love was tutoring English to Asian students at the Kangaroo Point campus of Shaftston International College. Since being back in Brisbane Bruce has stood as an independent candidate for the electorate of Aspley, is a long time member of the QLD Herb Society at Albion – which involves selling home grown herbs, and attends the Zillmere Library reading group. As you can see - there's never a dull moment in Bruce's life!

Bayside Forum welcomes baby Elyse

Does arriving three weeks early set you up for life? If so, then Megan and Richard's newest arrival has a great head start!

Elyse Margaret arrived on Saturday 9 April rather than the expected late April arrival, and she has been a calm and beautiful addition to the little family.

Jack (now 2) is excited by her arrival and keeps on telling everyone about his new little sister Elyse.

Congratulations Megan, Richard, Jack AND of course, Grandma Joy – also of Bayside Forum.



Bayside Forum Session Activities

The main focus for the first half of this year was organising and celebrating 40 years of operations. Thanks to some forward thinking people like Fay Rodgers, who in 1983 saw a need for women in the Bayside area to have an outlet to express themselves, our Forum was established. Fay became the inaugural President of Bayside Forum and was our special guest on the night of our birthday celebration, along with Katie Flynn, an inaugural member who went on to become the Dais (State) President in 1993.

Pictured left to right: Bayside Forum President Elaine West, Life Member Lorraine Foran, Inaugural President Fay Rodgers, Past State President Katie Flynn and

Life Member, Pam Tranter



Bayside Forum continued

Bayside Forum's 40 birthday celebration's theme of 'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to 40' was well received. Members and guests came dressed in 80s outfits and costumes including Madonna, Hawkeye Pierce from MASH and Lucky Lips Mick Jagger (*pictured below L-R along with Fay Rodgers*). A great night of fun, frivolity, food and Forum fellowship ensued and the support from members of other Forums was much appreciated.



Also during this session, our member Ben delivered a couple of cracker tutorials, the first being "An Elevator Pitch for Forum" and the second, his interactive presentation of videos and pointers on "Using Humour Effectively". As our next session is themed "Laughter is the Best Medicine" we will be putting Ben's great information to good use.



Cleveland Forum Member – Glenda McAuslan



Current Cleveland Forum member Glenda McAuslan has played a very active role in Forum since she first joined Bayside Forum twenty six years ago.

After transferring to help the newly formed Springwood Forum as their inaugural President, Glenda took on numerous roles until this Forum went into recess some years later.

By then, Glenda was living in Victoria Point, so she transferred to Cleveland Forum. As well as filling many roles locally (although she is adamant she won't take on the role of Treasurer!), Glenda was State Secretary from 2005 to 2007 during Lorraine Foran's tenure as State President.

Always well prepared, Glenda's speeches are often very funny, once pretending to be increasingly intoxicated and slurring her words as she shared the bottle of rum she was using to mix her Christmas pudding. This was fondly repeated at recurring Cleveland Forum Christmas functions. Another of Glenda's speeches about the changes from old fashioned swimming costumes to the modern versions of swimmers won her an award at the 2009 Conference. The photo above shows her proudly receiving her award.

Glenda's elegant dressing would certainly have won approval from our three founders. She learned sewing and dress sense from her mother and went on to become a professional dressmaker. During her eight years living in Papua New Guinea with her husband and three children, Glenda was in charge of the Fashion Department at BPs which was Lae's largest department store at the time. During her own time, she created wedding gowns whenever needed.

Back in Australia, Glenda became an enthusiast and long-time President of the Victoria Point Garden Club. Many a Forum function or presentation featured Glenda's beautiful floral creations. She also decorated the floral float and many displays in the hall at the renowned Redlands Strawberry Festivals.

The Endeavour Foundation's Op Shop "Endos" was another of Glenda's passions for over fifteen years. During this period she volunteered weekly, turning the store into a place to find something to wear to that special occasion.

Even at Church Glenda uses her Forum skills when reading the Lesson of the Day or Chairing Church Council meetings – with confidence!



Cleveland Forum Member – Helen Kallio

Unfortunately homelessness and hardship is on the rise, even in the Redlands. Helen volunteers each week with Night Ninjas, which is a not for profit organisation that provides practical support to those who are experiencing tough times. Specifically, Helen supports the Day Call Out Team by delivering food hampers, warm clothing, blankets, nappies and other emergency supplies to people who are living rough, or those who are experiencing hardship. Helen also helps to collect donations and assist in the clothing shed where she sorts, classifies, labels and packages donations of clothing.

Helen feels that volunteering with Night Ninjas definitely makes her appreciate what she has. She also finds that getting a big smile or a 'thankyou' from the people she meets is a beautiful reward. If you are interested in finding out more about this organisation here is a link to their website: [Night Ninjas](#)



Bayside Forum Member – Elaine West

Every year, Lions Club hosts the Youth of the Year competition for students in their final years of secondary school. Each area holds their local competition with the winner progressing to next level - Regional, State and National titles. The competition is designed to give students a favourable experience with interviews and speaking in front of an audience. The interview process with three adjudicators looks at the students' scholastic achievements, their sport or community involvement, general knowledge and goals for the future. For the speaking segments, students prepare a five minute speech on any topic as well as addressing two impromptu questions for two minutes each. Points are allocated in all sections.

Elaine has been an adjudicator with Lions for more than 10 years and find this a very worthwhile project. Note Forum's 2022 Forum Bursary winner Olivia Chissell was a previous winner of this prestigious award.



Pictured Left are adjudicators Elaine, Trischa and Chris, with participating students Talia and Riley.

Farewell & Final Review

from outgoing Cleveland Member – Helen Hinwood



While individual circumstances vary, generally it is accepted that it takes a newborn baby approximately 18 years to reach adulthood. 18 years may not seem a long time in Forum terms, but to the parents of a newborn it is a very long time and during that journey it is usually difficult, if not impossible, to imagine a successful conclusion... that of a mature adult who can forge their path to independence. Reviewing the intense parenting years x 2 and comparing it to my 18 year journey as a Forum member, I can see where similarities lie.

As with parenting, it is really hard to imagine when you start out in Forum all you will learn and the confidence you will develop over time with practice,

perseverance, maturity and experience, as well as the support of others.

In parenting, milestones are important! I have been to more Forum birthday functions than I have had birthdays – always well organized, entertaining and consistently inspiring! I am sure I could turn this analogy into a main speech, but as the kids would say, “get on with it Mum...”

Forum has afforded me so many interesting experiences and opportunities to make meaningful connections and contributions, both within the organization and outside it. So many Forum members, past and present, have inspired me with their stories and deeds, courage, enthusiasm, commitment, creativity and generosity.

I have visited more places in Queensland than I might otherwise have done because of Forum – Dalby and the Bunya Mountains, Yeppoon and the Capricorn Coast, Bargara and Childers, Mitchell, Emerald, Clermont and Gympie.

Without further ado, my final summary in [REVIEW](#) of Forum:

R: Rich and Rewarding
E: Educational and Entertaining
V: Valuable, Vibrant and Vocal
I: Inspiring and Intellectually Stimulating
E: Empowering, Embracing and Encouraging
W: Weird Occasionally, Wonderful Always

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



MEMBERS' TESTIMONIALS

*Forum came into my life nearly 20 years ago when I needed to learn to run residents' meetings effectively and speak confidently in front of senior staff and committees. That's when I was invited to come to a Forum meeting – how opportune! The rest is history, so the saying goes. It wasn't long before I realised how much I could learn through Forum, as it is a multi-faceted organisation with so many opportunities to grasp. Being encouraged to step up to the State Committee and then into the President's role was a steep learning curve for me - but the support was fantastic. That support was also there for me when I became an accredited assessor of speech and procedure, and I have enjoyed being able to assist and mentor new members throughout the last 20 years. **Elaine West***

I have been an active member of Chermside Forum for over 20 years and have held all positions on the committee during that time. From being on the committee to chairing meetings and making speeches, my Forum membership has assisted me in my everyday life. Exploring material for speeches has expanded my knowledge greatly, and for me, reading about the marvellous history of yesteryear highlights how very similar we are to the historical figures on the page. Doing this research keeps my mind active and stimulated.

Francine Field



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The Objects and Values of Forum

OBJECTS

- 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

VALUES

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’t communicate and talk to other people and get across your ideas, you’re giving up your potential”. Warren Buffet

- 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](#)

[Ipswich](#)

[Gold Coast](#)

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

[Wynnum](#)

Forum Communicators Established 1941
Celebrating 82 years of *Speaking with Confidence* in 2023