

MELBOURNE
PRESS CLUB

ANNUAL REPORT

For the year ended
31 December 2010

MELBOURNE PRESS CLUB
President's Report 2010

The Melbourne Press Club increased its reach to members with another strong program of events and the introduction of a social media strategy in 2010.

For the fourth successive year, total attendance at the club's lunches and dinners topped 2000. This was a pleasing result amid soft economic conditions, shrinking newsrooms and restricted entertainment budgets.

The club started its Twitter account in May 2010 and in less than year it had gathered 1230 followers. The club's Facebook page also started in May and had more than 150 fans within a year. A You Tube channel was started in September and by June this year had featured 58 videos which attracted a total of 5000 views, many of them from the Quills dinner.

During 2010, the club's web site was overhauled and went live in April 2011. Boosted by a strong video presence of the Quills, the site attracted 10,000 visits by June 2011. The new web site was designed to allow members and visitors to use buttons to share content with their networks using Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn or email. For example, the Dalai Lama lunch in June 2011 was shared 158 times. This was the first time the club had used a new Livestream channel and at its peak attracted 100 viewers.

The web and social media strategy was implemented by Monash journalism graduate Craig Butt, a little wizard in the new media who will make a good catch for a media organisation looking for creative online production skills.

The club staged 12 corporate lunches, four Members Only lunches and the annual arts lunch in 2010. The luncheon highlight of the year was having the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and the then Premier John Brumby in the same week in May. Other significant guests were ABC chief Mark Scott, Victorian Supreme Court Chief Justice Marilyn Warren, Metro chief Andrew Lazala and Greens leader Bob Brown.

The big night of 2010, of course, was the Quills, with an attendance of 559. Coverage of the Black Saturday bushfires won nine Quills. It also won the \$20,000 Graham Perkin Australian Journalist of the Year Award for Gary Hughes, who wrote an outstanding eyewitness account of the fires hours after losing his house. Hughes became the third journalist to win the Perkin and the Gold Walkley in the same year.

The Monash University Gold Quill was won by Cameron Stewart of The Australian for his exclusive on Australia's second biggest anti-terrorism operation, Operation Neath. Drew Ambrose of the ABC won Young Journalist of the Year Award for a series of online features on the fires.

Sponsorship of the club strengthened even further in 2010. 3AW moved up from the Corporate category to the Major media category and Network Ten rejoined the club to once again ensure that the club has the sponsorship support of all major media organisations in Melbourne.

Our sponsors provide the club with great support and regular attendance at our functions. Our strong financial position, created by our sponsors, allowed the club to again keep down prices for events and membership subscriptions. It also allowed us to maintain a high standard of regular corporate lunches, which in the current conditions operate at a small loss for each event. Our financial strength also allowed us to invest in new media. The committee felt these were appropriate uses of our strong balance sheet, despite the club recording an overall operating loss in 2010. The underlying financial position remains sound and is described in more detail in the Treasurer's report.


The club is particularly grateful to the support from our principal sponsor, Monash University, and all the staff at Monash including Vice Chancellor Professor Ed Byrne.

Siemens once again sponsored the Student Journalism Award, won in 2010 by Jenny Denton from Monash. The Trawalla Foundation continues to fund the Annual Arts Journalism Scholarship, won last year by Katrina Strickland and Pamela Williams from the Australian Financial Review.

My presidency is ending after two years because of my appointment to an overseas job. I cannot overestimate the thanks and regard I have for my fellow committee members who worked so hard to deliver the results described in this Annual Report. Special thanks to my two vice presidents Peter Bartlett and Bob Kearsley and treasurer David Poulton. And a tribute to four committee members who are not standing for re-election – Sylvia Bradshaw, John Trevorrow, Eric Noel and Sushi Das.

And, of course, our general manager Sue Henderson and her assistant Kate Edwards make it all happen for the club after the committee does the easy bits.

This year's Annual General Meeting will bring committee renewal with four new members and a new president, Mark Baker of The Age. I wish them well. The club is in good hands.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Venus', with a large loop at the top and a wavy line at the bottom.

Michael Venus

MELBOURNE PRESS CLUB**Treasurer's Report 2010**

During the year ended 31 December 2010 our Club remained in solid financial shape but we continue to face challenges in a tight market. The global financial crisis and consequent restrictions on spending on discretionary activities such as functions have clearly affected this year's results.

Revenue decreased by just \$62,000 but by keeping expenses under control the Club restricted its net operating loss to \$31,856 for 2010 – compared with gains of \$68,938 for 2009, \$81,585 for 2008, \$60,346 for 2007 and \$6832 for 2006.

We have maintained control of our expenses, and presented a good variety of functions on a regular basis, assisted as in 2009 by presenting more low-cost functions. The challenging financial conditions did affect attendances at functions, with a greater proportion of sponsor attendances affecting revenue.

Having built up our financial position over the past few years, we are increasingly focused on finding ways to deliver more value to our members. We are increasing our involvement in social media and in 2011 propose to invest in continuing to improve our recently relaunched website.

The highlights of financial performance included:

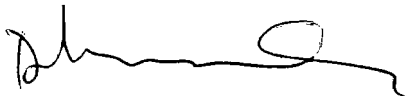
- Sponsorship receipts for the year declined to \$238,636, from the 2009 position of \$271,745;
- Membership revenue declined to \$14,592 from \$27,682 in 2009, partly due to timing issues – membership remained at a steady level;
- Revenue from functions declined slightly to just over \$112,000;
- Total revenue from operating activities decreased from \$427,560 in 2009 to \$365,347 in 2010;
- Total costs increased moderately, from \$358,622 in 2009 to \$397,203 in 2010;
- The bank balance at the end of 2010 was \$213,836 as against \$243,319 as at 31 December 2009.

In 2010 the Quill Awards were again held at the Palladium at Crown. Expenses for this event increased as the Club took on the full cost of running both the Quills and the Graham Perkin Award.

The Club continues to be well-supported by its loyal group of sponsors. In particular we were delighted to receive continued magnificent support from our principal sponsor, Monash University.

Our secretariat maintained its highly efficient service to the Club and its members during 2010. We were pleased to have additional support from Craig Butt, who has made an excellent contribution in enhancing the Club's on-line offering. I would like to thank our General Manager, Sue Henderson, and her Assistant Manager, Kate Edwards, for their work in again helping the Club to develop and expand its activities, and in providing excellent service to our members, sponsors, and stakeholders.

We have continued to observe the procedures required by our auditors to ensure that accounting and association standards are met. I would like to thank our auditors, Pitcher Partners, for their efficient and timely service.



David Poulton
Treasurer
Melbourne Press Club
14 June 2011

FUNCTIONS CALENDAR FOR 2010

	CORPORATE LUNCHES	MEMBERS ONLY LUNCHES	OTHER EVENTS
February	Mark Scott River Room at Crown 11.2.2010		
March			Quill Awards Dinner Palladium at Crown 19.3.10
April	Chief Justice Marilyn Warren River Room at Crown 16.4.2010		
May	Premier John Brumby River Room @ Crown 5.5.2010 Prime Minister Kevin Rudd River Room at Crown 6.5.2010		
June	Angelos Frangopoulos River Room at Crown 1.6.2010		AGM Minter Ellison 16.6.10
July	Julian Fellowes The Windsor 22.7.2010	HWT Online Editors The Metropolitan 28.7.2010	
August	Philip Cummins Windsor Hotel 17.8.2010	Steve Price The Metropolitan 26.8.2010	Bob Rose Lecture with Leigh Matthews RACV Centre 11.8.2010
September	AFL Finals Lunch Medallion Club 2.9.2010		
October	Andrew Lezala River Room at Crown 5.10.2010	Barrie Cassidy Waterside Hotel 26.10.2010	Annual Arts Lunch Papa Goose 21.10.2010
November	Senator Bob Brown The Windsor 11.11.2010 Premier John Brumby River Room at Crown 19.11.2010		
December	Nick Reece River Room at Crown 15.12.2010	Phil Gardner The Metropolitan 1.12.2010	

**MELBOURNE PRESS CLUB
COMMITTEE 2010**

President:	Michael Venus
Vice Presidents:	Peter Bartlett, Minter Ellison Bob Kearsley, Business Essentials
Treasurer:	David Poulton, Minter Ellison
Secretariat:	Sue Henderson Kate Edwards
Committee:	Mark Baker, The Age Bill Birnbauer, Monash University Sylvia Bradshaw Genevieve Brammall, Herald Sun Rob Curtain, 3AW Sushi Das, The Age Michele Fonseca Richard Leder, Corrs Chambers Westgarth Rebecca Matthews, ABC TV Eric Noel Nu Energy Kate Osborn, Seven News Justin Quill, Kelly Hazell Quill John Rees, Metropolitan Fire Brigade Mike Smith, Inside PR John Trevorrow, Leader Community Newspapers

MELBOURNE PRESS CLUB***Melbourne Press Club Quill Awards 2010***

The Monash University Gold Quill

Jill Baker Herald Sun

The Graham Perkin Award for the Australian Journalist of the Year

Laurie Oakes, Nine Network, Herald Sun & Daily Telegraph

Lifetime Achievement Award

Geoff Wilkinson

Young Journalist of the Year Award

Henrietta Cook Fairfax Community Network

RACV Transport Quill

Reid Sexton The Sunday Age

Grant Hattam Quill Award for Investigative Journalism in any Medium

James Campbell, Sunday Herald Sun

Best Columnist/Blogger

John Silvester and Andrew Rule The Age

Best Sports Story in any Medium

Alex Coppel Herald Sun

Best Business Story in any Medium

Richard Gluyas The Australian

Best TV Camerawork in News and Current Affairs

Will Pristel Seven News

Best News Photograph

Michael Dodge Herald Sun

Best Sports Photograph

Alex Coppel Herald Sun

Best Features Photograph

David Caird Herald Sun

Best Three Headlines in any Medium

Warwick Green Herald Sun

Best Illustration in any Medium

Frank Maiorana The Age

Best Graphics in any Medium

Travis Kennedy Sunday Herald Sun

Best Coverage of an issue or Event

Philip Dorling, Nick McKenzie & Richard Baker The Age

Best Cartoon**Ron Tandberg** The Age**Best Deadline Report in any Medium****Paul Austin & David Rood** The Age**Best Use of the On-line Medium****Finn Bradshaw** heraldsun.com.au**Best Suburban Report in any Print**Goya Dmytryshchak **Fairfax Community Network****Best Regional or Rural Affairs Report in any Medium****Andrew Mole**, The Weekly Times**Best TV News Report****Tim McMillan** Nine News**Best Radio News Report****Heidi Murphy** 3AW**Best TV Current Affairs/Feature Under 10 Minutes****Jill Singer & Lisa Whitehead** 7.30 Report ABC TV**Best TV Current Affairs/Feature Over 10 Minutes****Belinda Hawkins & Elena Christie** Australian Story ABC TV**Best Radio Current Affairs/Feature****Neil Mitchell** 3AW**Best News Report in Print****Philip Dorling** The Age**Best Feature in Print****Jill Baker** Herald Sun