

N5 Convention 2014 Recap

Day Three

Day THREE was the final day of the N5 District Convention 2014. It started off with the traditional VDG1 Breakfast at the Sovereign Room of the Castle Hill RSL at 7:30 am. Despite a late night at the Convention Dinner the night before, some 90 conventioners turned up in support.



VDG1 Joanne Sim gave an interesting and enlightening presentation on her adventures to the Antarctica last Christmas and told us how her trip became an unscheduled, extended stay. She spoke fondly of the penguins and the pictures that she showed us had some resemblance to the cartoon "Happy Feet".

She also spoke of her rescue by a Chinese helicopter and was pretty animated about the difficulties that the Chinese crew faced when they were trying to winch her on board the helicopter. They prevailed, thank goodness.



Lion Joanne Sim Presenting at the VDG1 Breakfast

As the Remembrance Ceremony was to immediately follow the breakfast, I had to reluctantly excuse myself midway through the presentation to go to the Lyceum Auditorium to help out with last minute preparations.

The Remembrance Ceremony was scheduled to commence at 9:00 am. In order not to cause any disruptions during this very solemn service, it was well publicised beforehand that all participants should be seated by 8:55 am. By 8:45 am, almost everyone who wished to attend were all assembled inside the auditorium. To date, I have not heard of any report of late-comers trying to gain entry after 8:55 am on that day.



Attendees of the VDG1 Breakfast



The Lyceum set for the Remembrance Ceremony

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Candle Laying

To create a suitable ambience for the ceremony, from 8:45 am onwards, all the lights inside the Lyceum were turned off. Near the stage area, there was a shrine with a wreath as the centrepiece. The shrine was lit up by a single spot-light. Lions Bob and Helen Rose went to great pains to design a shrine with an east meets west flavour which was greatly appreciated by all. In the lead up to the ceremony, hymns from the Lest we Forget - the Music of Remembrance CD were played to augment the atmosphere.

At 9:00 am, the Remembrance Ceremony began. Lion Ron Gattone presented a formal introduction and led the Lord's Prayer. Then VDG Lion Dennis Halpin read out the names of Lions and Lions partners who had departed since the Bathurst Convention. When a name was read, the picture of the deceased in question was shown on the giant screens. Family



The Shrine designed by Lions Bob & Helen Rose



Lion Sheryl Buffett

members or representatives from his/her club would bring out a lit candle and insert it in the wreath to remember them. Sadly, we had 24 individuals whom we remembered at the ceremony. This segment was followed by Lion Ron presenting an elaboration of the poem of "The Dash" - the dash between one's years of birth and passing. In the midst of the "The Last Post", Council Chairman Warren and Marilyn, together with Emma and I laid the final candles and the ceremony concluded in a grave and solemn mood.

Part of the ceremony was captured in the Convention 2014 DVD pack which the Convention Committee is putting together. It is expected that the DVD packs will be released for distribution to clubs in March/April 2015, with compliments of the Convention 2014 Hosting Committee and Sydney Chinese Lions.



PDG Patrick McAppion

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VDG1E Dennis Halpin and VDG2E Ron Gattone

Following the conclusion of the Remembrance Ceremony, PDG Lion Patrick McAppion presented the Invocation while Lion Sheryl Buffet read the Lions Purposes. I am particularly grateful to Lion Patrick's being there that morning as he had suffered from a fall several days earlier. Despite having to wear an arm sling he still turned up promptly to perform the task.

Next up was the third business session. It was a pleasant segment for me as I got to announce the election results which were all popular ones. Congratulations to Lion Joanne Sim for being duly elected as District Governor for 2015-2016; to Lion Dennis Halpin as First Vice District Governor and to Lion Ron Gattone as Second Vice District Governor. Congratulations to Lion Ron also for being elected as a Director of the NSW-ACT Lions Save Sight and Public Health Foundations.

After making the announcements, I congratulated the successful candidates and invited them to deliver their acceptance speeches.



DGE Joanne Sim

The second Leo Presentation was next on the program. Leo Joel Pattinson-Cashman, Leo of the Year, flew from Queensland to share his experience with us. He was introduced by Lion Martin Peebles, Leo Chairman of the Multiple District.



Lion Martin Peebles & Leo Joel Pattinson-Cashman

Then it was time for Lion Chris Bowles, District Global Leadership Team (GLT) Coordinator and Lion Derek Margerison, District Public Relations (PR) Coordinator to provide their reports on the GLT and PR Forums respectively which were held the day before.

These were followed by brief presentations by Council Chairman Lion Warren Latham and the two visiting District Governors Lion Ian Warren (N4) and Lion Kevin Tait (V1-4).

After morning tea, Matt Dunning, a former Wallaby player, gave the third keynote speech. His humorous presentations brought about a light-hearted atmosphere and the audience were clearly amused.

Then it was my turn to thank a number of individuals, particularly members of the Hosting Committee who helped pull off a very successful convention.

With the commencement of the performance of the Friday Night LIVE Big Band, the closing segment of Convention 2014 began. The band stopped with just one more number to play. Two small teams of Lions were assembled on stage for the Handover Ceremony of flags. First on stage were five members of the Syd-



Matt Dunning & Lion Greg English

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The Friday Night LIVE Band



At the Closing Ceremony



Lion Pauline Henebery

ney Chinese Lions Club, the Hosting Club and Lion Ken Button representing the Lioness. The

second team comprised 2 members each from Beecroft-Cheltenham, Norfolk Island and Arthurs Vale Lions Clubs. They were the flag receivers.

When they were in position, the lights in the auditorium were dimmed. A single spot-light shone on the flag handlers. After Lion Ken and the Sydney Chinese Lions collected the six flags from the flag stands, they then turned around and passed them onto the receivers. The latter group accepted the flags and turned around and faced the audience whom were all standing by then, showing respect. The flag receivers then dipped their flags to salute the conventioners before solemnly



PDG Nigel Jeny

marching off stage. As the presiding officer of Convention 2014, I bid them to take good care of the flags until the next convention.



Lion Paul Doman

Then the band performed the finale with the lights back on. After they had finished playing their final number, they received a loud round of applause. PDG Lion Nigel Jeny next moved a formal Vote of Thanks. He did so brilliantly, particularly on a darkened stage with a bright spot-light shining on his eyes and face. Then Lion Paul Doman solemnly read the Lions Code of Ethics, again with a single spot-light shining on him. When he finished, he left the stage silently.

The spot-light moved slowly back to the centre of the stage where I was standing. I had the District gong and gavel in my hands. I struck the gong once and declared the convention over. Upon bidding the conventioners "Farewell and God Bless!", the spot-light went off. The whole auditorium remained in total darkness and complete silence for a while before the room lights came back on again. The darkness and silence following the sound of the gong signified the conclusion of a very memorable Convention 2014.

Well done, Lions!

By Lion Anthony Cheung