

Hobart VIEW Club History

Chapter 1 The Early Years (2009-2011)

The Club would not have come into being without the efforts of many committed local ladies as well as strong support from the VIEW National Office. Many of the founding members of the Hobart VIEW Club are still active in the organisation. Here are some of their stories about what attracted them to pioneer and join the Hobart VIEW Club.

Bev: My introduction to the Hobart VIEW Club was through my friendship with Barb, a founding member of the club. I was very impressed when I attended my first meeting held at the Hobart Macquarie Hotel (now Travelodge). I decided to join and support children experiencing disadvantage with their education.

During my time with VIEW, I have enjoyed supporting one of our Club's *Learning for Life* students, from Primary School until Year 10. I have also enjoyed the fun and friendship of the Club members and hope to continue into the future.

Barb: My first awareness of the possibility of a Hobart View Club was a write up in The Mercury newspaper in 2012. I had lived in Melbourne and I was aware of the excellent work of the Smith Family, so I was interested in attending the upcoming meeting to be held at UTas where Larissa Bartlett was the guest speaker, along with speakers from The Smith Family.

The meeting was very well attended and I was inspired by the speakers and decided I'd like to become part of what was to become The Hobart View Club. I have made special friends within the Club and hope to always be part of such a worthy cause.

Meredith: My teaching career provided a pathway to understanding that for many people, life is difficult, and that while education is the great enabler, opportunity and circumstance and sometimes luck also count for a great deal.

Following my departure from school-based roles I came to Hobart and stumbled across the invitation for interested women to meet to develop a VIEW Club. I had no previous knowledge of The Smith Family but it seemed to connect with my ongoing interest in education.

It took several years to work out how we wanted our club to work. Workload had to be sustainable and achievable for the group plus there had to be a balance achieved between social club and fundraising club. This led eventually to where we are now with events that require far less 'set up' from us but still raise a healthy amount.

We've achieved a very strong 'tribal vibe' which bonds us and we understand why we do what we do. This vibe reaches beyond club members to a next generation of women - our daughters, nieces, daughters-in-law.

Clair: Through my work at the University of Tasmania I had met Yvonne who told me about the Hobart View Club. Over the years I had read many hardship cases from students seeking financial assistance through scholarships. I saw the work of the View Club and The Smith Family as a way to contribute to meeting this need!

Yvonne: I first heard about The Smith Family while living in Sydney in 1970-1971. My husband and I were living in Chatswood, NSW, and I would often walk up to the nearby shopping centre where I discovered The Smith family Op shop! However, it was not until 2009 that I heard about the existence of VIEW Clubs from my eldest daughter, Sarah. She was studying a unit in Marketing with The Smith Family as part of her MBA at Macquarie University. Her words were:

"Mum, you're always banging on about the value of education. You need to join a VIEW Club."

And...

"Mum, The Smith Family is the best value for your charity dollar!"

So, being newly retired from work at the University of Tasmania, I tried to join. Alas, there was no club in Hobart! I contacted the organisation online and was invited to attend a meeting on Thursday 19th of August 2010, to found a VIEW Club in Hobart. And thus the journey began for me.....

On **Thursday the 19th of August 2009**, a meeting was arranged in the office of Wanda Buza (Director of Women Tasmania at that time), to explore the possibility of establishing a VIEW Club in Hobart, Tasmania. Unfortunately a set of Minutes for that event has not been located, but personal records show that around 12 people attended. These included Wanda herself, Alison Standen (then General Manager of The Smith Family [TSF] in Tasmania), Wendy Hunter (VIEW National Office), Fiona Spottiswood (VIEW National Office), Meredith Phillips, Chris Standen, Yvonne Bottomley, Jannette Cameron, Mandy Johnson (*Violence Against women*), Amy Murphy (*Financial Literacy, Tas*), Wendy Armstrong (TSF), Michael Voumard (TSF Family Learning Clubs, Tas), Elizabeth Daly (TSF Project Manager).

During the meeting, an outline of the work of The Smith Family (TSF) in Tasmania and interstate VIEW Clubs was outlined. The decision was made to organise a big event in November of that year, to attract sufficient numbers of women to start a VIEW Club.

On **Tuesday 9th of November 2010**, a large number of interested people attended a reception held in the John Elliott Classics Museum at the University of Tasmania, Sandy Bay campus. The Guest Speaker was Mrs Larissa Bartlett. Several other speakers from TSF and VIEW also spoke.

As a result of the event, an **Information Meeting** was held on the Hobart waterfront at "The Atrium" at Catch Restaurant on Tuesday 7th December, 2010.

At this event a group of attendees agreed to help progress the formation of a VIEW Club in Hobart. Fiona Spottiswood outlined the options of what clubs could be, opportunities for members to extend their friendship groups and provide opportunities to improve the educational outcomes for disadvantaged Australian children. It was agreed that the official launch of the group would take place on International Women's Day, March 2011 and a Steering Committee should be formed to start the planning.

Thus on Monday 31st January 2011, a dedicated group of women (a Steering Committee), comprising Fiona Spottiswood (National Vice President), Gemma Black, Sarah Boulous, Yvonne Bottomley, Jannette Cameron, Sue Larsen, Chris Standen met at the AWOL Café, for the first time, to start the ball rolling for the launch. Further meetings of the Steering Committee were held regularly alongside general meetings that we held at The Leisure Inn Hotel and these later become Dinner meetings.

A name for the new Club was canvassed and suggestions of Hobart Evening Club, Hobart and Derwent Club, and more. Finally we decided to support the name Hobart VIEW Club, as we felt that it would allow us to have either or both evening and day meetings.

As part of the planning for the International Womens' Day event, it was agreed that the Steering Committee members would wear purple ribbons at the launch and would be ready to answer questions from attendees about the Club. And were we busy!

Plans were made to staff an information booth at Centrepoint Shopping Centre in Hobart city, a prominent guest speaker was recruited – a lady from Sudan called Ayom Mario-Ring, politicians were invited, Clair Andersen (Director of Indigenous Education, Riawunna, University of Tasmania) would deliver the "Welcome to Country", local radio and television media were

contacted to publicise the event to be held at The Leisure Inn, Macquarie Street, Hobart, for a cost of \$25 per person.

Tuesday 8th March 2011 – Launch at The Leisure Inn, Macquarie Street, Hobart. The event actually took place on the 100th Anniversary of International Women’s Day!



From left: Ayom Mario-ring, Sue Larsen Steering Committee



Standing: Jannette Cameron, seated - Andrea Garland (TSF).

The event, hosted by Fiona Spottiswood, was attended by 40+ women who listened to an inspiring address by Ayom Mario-ring, a Sudanese refugee who had just graduated from the University of Tasmania. A delicious meal was served with lucky door and raffle prizes awarded during the evening.

Meanwhile the Steering Committee was industriously arranging future events such as our first **Fashion Parade**, in co-operation with Blue Illusion. The first event was held on the **30th of March** 2011, and was a great success, thanks to the generous catering by the store manager, Tammy, and the wonderful inexperienced models from among the Club members.



Fashion Parade guests and store Manager



Parade setting

By the time of our May meeting, serious planning for our Club’s Inauguration was underway and a venue proposed – The Tasmania Club, Macquarie Street, Hobart. Speakers from The Smith

Family and VIEW encouraged our planning and development at our regular meetings during these months of preparation. We learnt about supporting families and students through homework clubs, breakfast programs, student scholarships, while conducting trade tables, information days at local shopping centres, canvassing the media, raffles, and canvassing membership amongst our friends and the wider community.



We celebrated Christmas in July with much hilarity, thanks to our wonderful Santa.

Meanwhile we were also discussing how we would raise sufficient funds to provide a scholarship for one student in our first year. We had cake stalls, educational toys were displayed and sold, invitations for our Inauguration designed and sent out, membership badges were ordered.

Committee teams had been formed:

Administration: Christine Howard, Sue Larsen, Yvonne Bottomley

Finance: Joan Richards, Jannette Cameron

Publicity and Promotions: Chris Standen, Meredith Phillips

In no time at all it seemed, August Inauguration was upon us...

Chapter 2 Inauguration

After nearly 18 months of preparation, the Hobart VIEW Club was inaugurated on the 2nd of August 2011 as an evening/dinner group with close to 40 members.

A tasty menu was served at the Tasmania Club: split pea and ham soup, followed by Beef Fillet or Blue Eye, finishing with poached strawberries and Chantilly cream.

Some of our New members and supporter



From Left to right: Christine Howard, Di Carter, Meredith Phillips, Yvonne Bottomley, Heather Isemonger (National President, VIEW), Sue Larsen (Inaugural President Hobart VIEW Club), Joan Richards, Jannette Cameron, Chris Standen.



From left to right: Mavis Field, Andrea Garland, Lorraine Walker, Maureen Wallace, Clair Andersen, Barb Hayes, Unknown, Kathy Gates, Suzy Torok, Gaye Thomson.

Good wishes flowed in from all over Australia! Our local members were joined by many of the National VIEW Clubs team.



From left to right: Fiona Spottiswood (VIEW National Vice President), Unknown, The Honourable Cassy O'Connor (then MLA), Maryanne Manager, National Manager VIEW, Wendy Hunter (VIEW Vice President), Yvonne Bottomley (Hobart VIEW Club member).



From left to right: Unknown, Unknown, Maryanne Maher, (National Manager, VIEW)



From left to right: Heather Isemonger (National President, VIEW), Sue Larsen (Inaugural President, Hobart VIEW Club, Wendy Hunter (National Vice President)

For the remainder of 2011, our Inaugural President was Sue Larsen, Vice President – Yvonne Bottomley, supported by a team of members filling roles in finance, publicity and administration.

Dinner meetings were being held at what was the Leisure Inn on Macquarie Street. We had social events incorporating our families, we had contact with the Waverly Day VIEW Club that became our Sister Club, and our second fashion parade raised over \$400! Meanwhile our relationship with The Smith Family organisation in the state through the General Manager, Alison Standen was strengthening, as we investigated ways to make ourselves better known in the community.