



PRESIDENTS REPORT

In reviewing the year of 2021, one cannot go far beyond the fact that around one third of the year was spent in “lockdown” due to COVID. The effect of this government intervention on the hospitality industry is still being realised, some four months after most restrictions were eased. We cannot escape the fact that our Club is part of an industry that has suffered unprecedented adversity over the last two years and can only acknowledge the success of Club management in keeping the Club open and viable.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to report that the Club posted a loss of \$109,950, largely due to depreciation expenses, which is an acceptable result given the circumstances. It should also be noted that there was a significant underlying cash profit, in excess of \$110,000, which enabled the Club to pay down some of its accumulated debts and reduce the ongoing liability associated with servicing these debts. Great credit must again go to Tony, Jackie and the hardworking staff of the Club for this result.

I would like to concentrate my report on the positives rather than the all-to-present negatives associated with COVID in 2021. The biggest positive was undoubtedly our hosting of the ANZAC Dawn Service on 25th April. It is well documented that Mortdale was due to host the combined event (with Penshurst RSL and Oatley RSL) in 2020 but that ANZAC Day was reduced to observances held in people’s driveways. Fortunately, our Sub-Branch was able to negotiate for Mortdale to transfer their hosting rights to 2021. It was a bumper day, commencing with a significant crowd assembling at the Memorial Park for the 6:00am service. Following the service some 700 people descended on the Club for breakfast. Although the official attendance at the service was capped at 500 due to COVID, it is estimated that well in excess of 1000 people attended when one counted those who were outside of the roped-off area. It was also extremely gratifying to see so many young families, and young people in general, both at the service and attending the Club during the day.

It is well documented that the Club has plans for a significant development on the current site, including a new, modern Club along with commercial and residential premises. Unfortunately, these plans, going back nearly six years, were hijacked by several candidates for election to the local council and used to advance their own political purposes. To this end, and to protect the good name of Mortdale RSL, I was forced to respond in kind by contacting local media to advance the truth of the matter. This was a very difficult time for all of the Board as we all serve in an honorary (unpaid) capacity to keep the Club solvent and to strengthen the Club for the future. We are not property developers, nor are we motivated by greed as seemed to be implied in much of the election material. Put simply, the full benefit of any development on the Club site will be with the Club, now and in the future. We look forward to working with the newly-elected Council and their Planning Department going forward to secure the future of Mortdale RSL.

Following on from this, I would like to convey my thanks to my fellow Board members who served diligently through the difficulties of 2021. Many meetings were forced online and the continual lack of certainty made any sort of forward planning very difficult. I, for one, thought that a “growler” was the neighbour’s dog until I sampled the Club’s new COVID-safe beverage option soon after the lockdown commenced.



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Unlike the situation in 2020, the Club catering was able to continue throughout the lockdown period, albeit in a takeaway or home delivery mode. For many members, this was a chance to enjoy a freshly-cooked meal to break the monotony of isolation. On the resumption of trading, Mort's Grill recovered quickly to regain the following from members and their guests that prevailed prior to lockdown. For this, AJ and his team are to be congratulated.

Finally, I would like to thank the members, without which we would have no Club. The manner in which our membership adapted to change and re-emerged in October as strong as ever has allowed the Club to contain the loss for the financial year, remain solvent, and plan for a better, brighter future in 2022. As a member, if you have not taken advantage of our generous Tuesday promotion yet, I can recommend that you book a table as the continued popularity regularly ensures a "packed house" in the dining area every week. Support *your* Club through *your* patronage and through bringing visitors to the Club and *your* Club will only grow stronger for *your* efforts.

Geoff Denyer,

President.