



FORUM LIFE

July 2020

Life is returning to Normal

After months of restrictions, life is finally returning to the 'new normal'. Forum members have done an awesome job of adapting to life in lockdown, with many staying in touch and successfully running their Forum meetings online using ZOOM.



Now that our Forums are returning to Face to Face meetings, we are very excited to advise that our ZOOM meetings will be continuing on a monthly basis, and everyone is invited to attend.

The first of these meetings will be held on Monday August 3, from 7pm. This will be a great opportunity for all of our Forum members, past and present, to connect with others without having to leave the comfort of your own home! Non-Forum members are also welcome to join in and see for themselves what Forum has to offer.

Please contact forum@beconfident.org.au to be added to the invitation list for our first meeting.

Did You Know?

Forum is a Queensland-wide organization of local, friendly groups that meet regularly to help each other be confident and effective communicators for their professional and personal lives.

We provide essential personal and professional development for people who want the 'communication edge' no matter what your stage of life or career.

The Objects of Forum

- 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

Forums meet regularly in the following areas:

[Ashgrove](#)

[Chermside](#)

[Cleveland](#)

[Dalby](#)

[Ipswich](#)

[Palm Beach-Currumbin](#)

[Wynnum](#)

Do You Need More Information?

www.beconfident.org

or email:

forum@beconfident.org.au

Featured Member

Toni Risson is a very accomplished woman. With a background in Fine Arts, teaching and motherhood, Toni returned to university, published the first of her children's novels, graduated as Valedictorian with First Class Honours and the University of Queensland Gold Medal, and then embarked upon a doctorate. Entitled *A Magic Bag*, her PhD mapped the role of lollies in Australian childhood. Toni published *Aphrodite and the Mixed Grill: Greek Cafes in Twentieth-Century Australia* in 2007.



In 2016, Toni was awarded the Queensland Business Leaders Hall of Fame Fellowship for a project that would research Greek shopkeeping in the Brisbane CBD. Using materials in the John Oxley Library, Toni produced the book 'Brisbane's Greek Cafes – a million malted milks' in 2019. She then went on to curate an exhibition about Greek cafes in Queensland at the State Library. *Meet Me at the Paragon* was open from September 2019 until March 2020. Television and radio interviews became commonplace for Toni as she promoted these projects, and, with her Forum

training, she had no problems presenting confidently and engagingly to questions. However, she notes there are still reasons to be in Forum – apart from the friendships – and below is a little story that highlights how the best speakers still have something to learn.

Maybe we never stop needing Forum. No matter how far we've come. An ABC radio presenter contacted me recently wanting to chat live on air about togs. Apparently some pool in Perth had banned too-brief bikinis. My expertise in lollies and Greek cafes makes me the go-to girl for radio presenters across the country so I'm used to this. But togs? It's not my field. My brain scrabbled for connections—'budgie-smugglers', Paula Stafford, Gold Coast meter maids, two-piece swimmers in Roman mosaics... There was no time for research or brainstorming because the chat was 10 minutes hence. One doesn't like to sound like a dill on national radio so I ducked the stress and turned the guy down. Anyway, wasn't learning to say 'no' one of my New Year resolutions? Within five minutes I felt like a complete failure. At our latest Forum meeting, experienced member Leanne Walker had facilitated a conversation about ethical dilemmas. Her parting words rang in my ears: 'If you have the opportunity during the next fortnight to discuss one of these issues you'll already be prepared.' One of the dilemmas Leanne had presented concerned the case of a Muslim woman in France who was told her too-voluminous burkini made others on the beach feel uncomfortable. She had to dress 'down' or leave. I WAS prepared to chat about togs. This was the same situation in reverse. But I'd had my blinkers on and didn't recognise an opportunity that was staring me in the face. After 12 years in Forum I'm still learning.

HAPPY 58TH BIRTHDAY IPSWICH FORUM

Ipswich Forum members celebrated their Forum's 58th birthday in March, just before Covid-19 restrictions were imposed and face to face meetings were suspended. Luckily – meetings have resumed as per normal and you are welcome to join in! Ipswich Forum meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month, 10.30am – 12 noon. Details: [Ipswich Forum](#)



forum
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LOOKING BACK

Mrs Flo Bjelke-Petersen was a member of Kingaroy Forum. She was elected as a Federal Senator in 1980 and served until 1993. She became Lady Flo Bjelke-Petersen when her husband Sir Joh was knighted in 1984.

In May 1972, Mrs Russell from Dalby Forum visited Mitchell Forum and reported that "their enthusiasm is inspirational. Some members drive 100 miles at night to attend the meeting, travelling over gravel roads where kangaroo and wild pigs abound".

In November 1972, a combined meeting was held at Longreach while the temperature was recorded at 110 degrees – that's just over 43 degrees Celsius. Even in that heat – members travelled as far as 600 kms to attend – now that's dedication!

In February 1978, St Lucia Forum was visited by Mrs Kazuko Minami, a lecturer in electrical engineering at Tokyo University, who had asked that a visit to a Forum Club be included in her programme. She was so interested in the proceedings of the meeting that she asked for a copy of the Constitution. Mrs Minami remarked that Japan had nothing like Forum as women there were not as liberated as they would like to be. Japanese women were expected to stay home once they marry and this means when they are about 35 their children are all at school and time is heavy on their hands, leading to frustration and dissatisfaction.

April 1970 – Because the Commonwealth Bank would not allow bank charges exemption to Forum as an educational body, the bank account was transferred to the Brisbane Permanent Bank.

BAYSIDE'S BIRTHDAY BASH

Bayside Forum also celebrated a big birthday recently, marking 37 years of public speaking – congratulation Bayside!! This included an ad-hoc online Bingo, a virtual visit from the State President, a lot of laughs and of course, great speaking opportunities for all.



CONGRATULATIONS ADELIA BERRIDGE

In our January newsletter we featured Forum member Adelia Berridge. At the time of publication, Adelia was running as an independent candidate for the Redland City Council – and now we are very happy to report that Adelia was successful and is now Councillor for Division 9 in Redland City. Well done!!



Congratulations Adelia, we are all very proud of you and know that you will excel in your new role.

TURKISH DELIGHT



Flashback to 2005 – Palm Beach-Currumbin members Chris, Merryl and Coral. These girls are still having fun! If you live on the Gold Coast and are interested in visiting your local Forum, you can find all the details here: [Palm Beach-Currumbin Forum](#)

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

**Rosslyn Knight
Irene Henley
Sarah Scarffe
Taylor Birtchnell**

We all look forward to meeting you soon at one of our combined events !!