



FORUM LIFE

September-October 2026

Forum's biennial Summit was held in September at the Geebung RSL Club. This was a great opportunity for our members to gather together to meet friends old and new, learn from workshops, hear some of our best speakers in action, and 'drum roll' to celebrate Forum's 85th birthday. What an achievement!

What began in 1941 as a small dedicated group of women, is now an organisation of men and women with a wonderful sense of community, and a proven track record of supporting our members on their individual journeys to 'Stepping Up and Speaking Well – with Confidence and Poise'.

Our three founders, Marjorie Puregger, Ruth Don OAM and Lady Jessie Groom OBE, would be so proud knowing the organisation they founded in the midst of World War 2 is still empowering members to achieve their goals, 85 years later. Over the years, many Forum birthdays have been celebrated, each of them honouring the people who have gone before us and recognising the impact Forum has had on countless members who have gone on to stand at lecterns, meeting tables and community events across Queensland and beyond – all thanks to these three amazing women!



SUMMIT 2026

State Recognition

As well as celebrating the milestone of 85 years, we also recognised Forum's longest serving member, Joy, who has been an integral part of Chermside Forum since 1970. That's 56 years of speaking, mentoring, learning and passing on her own skills to others!!

Over the course of nearly 6 decades, Joy has touched the lives of countless members, and through her loyalty and generosity has developed a reputation as a much-loved team player, who willingly shares her time and experience with others.

Congratulations Joy, you embody the Spirit of Forum.

Joy is pictured below with the President of Chermside Forum, Margaret and State President, Rosie.



Congratulations on 56 years!!

SUMMIT 2026

Speaking Competition

A Forum tradition is to hold speaking competitions at our larger functions which allow our speakers to present to a different and wider audience.

These competitions enable all of our members to learn from other presenters' styles and skills, thereby helping us all improve on our presentations.

This year's speakers were outstanding and showcased what Forum is all about: self-confidence, great presentation skills and the ability to create an entertaining, informative speech.

Pictured below are Elaine from Bayside Forum, Sandra from Chermside Forum, Sue from Cleveland Forum and Andrea from Bremer Forum. All four of these ladies delivered awesome, entertaining speeches. Some elicited laughter, others brought tears, but they all brought joy.

As with all competitions there can be only one overall winner, and in this case Sandra was the chosen one. It was such a hard choice for our panel of assessors though and the final scoring was extremely close.

Congratulations to all of you 

You should be very proud of yourselves!!



CONGRATULATIONS

SUMMIT WORKSHOPS

Our skilled Forum presenters, Kate, Leanne, Toni and Rosie presented two workshops for our attendees. Kate, with her usual confidence and poise, showed us how to run an effective meeting; a vital skill for all of us who are active in other community associations. Leanne, Toni and Rosie demonstrated how to open a speech or presentation in such a way that you engage your audience from the moment you utter your first word.

Leanne also led a brilliant discussion about how we can use AI well when seeking assistance with speech writing. In this world of constantly evolving technology, we all need to focus on great presentation skills, human connection and social engagement – and that's exactly what Leanne enabled us to recognise we can do, if we use AI wisely – if we choose to use it at all!



Pictured top
left – right:
Rosie, Toni and
Leanne;
bottom left is
Kate.
Our four
fabulous
presenters on
the day!

SUMMIT PHOTOS



SUMMIT PHOTOS





FORUM NCWQ BURSARY

2026

The winner of the year's Forum Bursary, Charlotte, is a most worth recipient who exemplifies so much of what our association stands for.

After graduating as the 2025 Dux of her school, Charlotte is now in her first year of a Bachelor of Arts/Social Science degree at the University of Queensland, where she is majoring in Peace and Conflict Studies, English Literature, and Health & Social Policy.

Charlotte's passion for public speaking and debating has been evident from an early age. She competed in her school's debating teams from Year 6 through to Year 12 and, during her senior years, also took on the role of coaching a junior debating team. In 2023, she won the Queensland Girls' Debating Association Individual Case Competition - Intermediate Age Grand Final, and in 2024 and 2025 she served as her school's Debating Captain.

Beyond her academic and debating achievements, Charlotte is a passionate advocate for ensuring that women's voices are heard and valued in society, a cause that aligns with the values of Forum and the purpose of our Bursary.

Pictured below are members of the National Council of Women QLD, representatives from Affiliated Organisations, and 2026 Bursary Recipients at the NCWQ Bursary Presentation Day. Unfortunately Charlotte was unable to attend this event so we hope we will have the opportunity to meet Charlotte and welcome her to the Forum family very soon.



Forum NCWQ Bursary

Update from our 2025 Recipient

We hope to bring you some updates on the activities of our previous Bursary winners – the first one being our 2025 recipient, Jessica.

We're sure you will agree Jess is a great role model for young women!

Dear Forum Members,

My name is Jess and I am a clinical speech pathologist and PhD student at the University of Queensland (UQ). You may remember me as the 2025 Forum Communicators Bursary winner 😊

Since winning this bursary, my career has progressed hugely. I am now a 2nd year PhD student, approaching the halfway point of my research training program. I no longer work clinically in Kingaroy, but instead at the Wesley Hospital, where I have upskilled in areas such as cancer care, intensive care, palliative care and in-patient rehabilitation.

I now also supervise the training of speech pathology students, which I really enjoy. Winning the Forum bursary allowed me to fund my endoscopy training, a specialist skill for speech pathologists. Completing this training has established me as a clinician with instrumental assessment skills and has enabled me to complete further training in Videofluoroscopic Swallow Studies and Cervical Auscultation (see photo below).

Outside of my work, I am excited to share that I recently got engaged and am planning a wedding for 2028! I still love to sing with the Voices of Birralee and am also training for my first marathon next year. I am highly involved as a student representative, sitting on the UQ Academic Board this year and in my role as Secretary of the Australian Voice Association.

Moving forward, I am excited to continue my research and clinical work aiming to improve the lives of Australians with communication and swallowing deficits. I am grateful to have the support of Forum Communicators, and for the doors that this bursary has opened for me.

*Kind regards,
Jessica*



What's Happening at our Forums?

BREMER



YOU'VE HEARD OF
PUBCHOIR
WELL NOW
THERE'S
PUBTALK!

Brought to you by
Forum Communicators

Bremer Forum invites you to their
PUB TALK
at
IPSWICH JETS LEAGUES CLUB

 **TUESDAY 25 AUGUST** |  **6.30PM – 8PM**

 **MEAL ORDERS FROM 5.30PM – PROGRAM STARTS 6.30PM**

This free interactive event provides visitors the opportunity to enjoy dinner and drinks, and – as it's an 'open mic' – take the floor for up to three minutes speaking to the theme 'Laughter in the House'.

Support your local Jets Club by purchasing a meal and drink on the night and strap yourself in for an entertaining night of laughter and community connection!

Don't miss out on this great event which will also feature impromptu entertainment and public speaking tips from experienced speakers.

PUBTALK visitors will also receive pro-rata membership of the Jets valid to the end of 2026

Reserve your spot by emailing
forum@beconfident.org.au



Bremer members recently trialled their new concept "PUBTALK".

Members from other Forums and the wider community were invited to attend this event and practise their public speaking skills in a friendly hotel atmosphere.

Held at Bremer's regular venue, the Ipswich Jets Leagues Club, members and guests enjoyed an evening of speaking, jokes, telling tall stories, dining and hanging out with friends.

Two PUBTALKs have been held so far, each of them were quite different – with different attendees and a slightly altered format. Both were enjoyable and we look forward to our next exciting adventure – whether that's another PUBTALK, or something different – we will let you know.

Watch this space!!



What's Happening at our Forums?

BAYSIDE

Bayside Forum members are gearing up for an exciting debate with Cleveland Forum on Wednesday, 28 October at 7pm at the Wynnum Library.

Cleveland Forum has drawn the positive side of the topic '*Voting should remain compulsory*', so both teams will be working hard to put forward their arguments and win the debate!

The winner will be determined by an independent adjudicator from Chermside Forum, ensuring a fair and impartial decision.

The evening is open to members and visitors alike, so come along and enjoy an evening of lively discussion and passionate debating. We would love to see you there.



Looking Ahead to 2027

In the New Year, our members are working towards a combined event with the Wynnum Manly Historical Society and Ambulance Museum at the Old Wynnum Ambulance Station on **Saturday 27 February**.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to partner with local organisations and showcase our activities to the wider community, followed by a tour of the museum and a chance to engage with friends old and new.

More details will be shared in the coming months so please, save the date!



What's Happening at our Forums?

CLEVELAND

Cleveland Forum members have just wrapped up a fantastic six week public speaking course - with great praise from all who attended.



Our experienced trainers, Jan and Pam, have 55 years of combined expertise and were able to give their students the confidence and skills to step into the world as fearless public speakers.

Cleveland Forum's training programs grow stronger, sharper, and more impactful every year, and this year Jan and Pam have officially raised the bar yet again!

The take away message from everyone who attended the course:

***"DON'T JUST GIVE A SPEECH
COMMAND THE ROOM"***



Thankyou from Pam Cleveland Forum

It was the night before Forum and all through the house, not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse... or Pam!

As I lay there thinking of the fantastic Cleveland Forum meeting I was going to miss the next day, I felt sorry for myself big time.

But then I thought of the card I had received that day from my friends at Bremer Forum that had lifted my spirits and convinced me that the world was still out there and a sense of humour will help me to get over my fall.

The card said:

Dearest Pam,

All of the members of Bremer Forum are aghast at your confidence that you could fly down a set of stairs. What an adventurer you are!

Don't give up, but on your next attempt, please give us notice so that we may bring popcorn and deckchairs. And, for afterwards, flowers and chocolates.

Love, best wishes and prayers.

Toni, Bremer Forum.

"May the sunshine grow more golden"

A big thank you to all my Forum friends who sent me cards, emails, flowers, and phone calls.

Your support was very much appreciated.

With heartfelt thanks,
Pam



WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR 2027?

Set a goal that challenges you enough to grow, but inspires you enough to keep going. Then commit to it with steady effort, knowing that every small step forward brings you closer to something once imagined and now within reach.

OUR ONLINE FORUM IS ALSO AVAILABLE IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO TRAVEL TO ATTEND FACE TO FACE MEETINGS

- Do you need to present confidently at work?
- Do you get nervous when asked to stand up and speak in front of others?
- Do you need to deliver a speech at a wedding?
- Do you attend meetings and want your opinion to be heard?

If you answered YES to any of these questions – then
FORUM is for YOU!!

FORUM COMMUNICATORS
TAKING THE FEAR OUT OF
PUBLIC SPEAKING SINCE 1941



Forums meet regularly in the following areas:

[Chermside](#)
[Cleveland](#)
[Ipswich](#)
[Wynnum](#)
[Online](#)

Do You Need More Information?

If so - visit our website:

www.beconfident.org

or email:

forum@beconfident.org.au

