

## Business Manager's Report 2010 AGM.

2009 was a year of change within our organisation. However 2009 was also a year in which overall income generated left BAA in a healthy state at the end of the financial year. The dedicated work of both the office staff and a core of board members as well as the support from the general membership have created this positive outcome for BAA.

With the departure of the CEO the office was restructured and we have worked well as a team to realise the following outcomes:

- The office is working productively and many things that had been neglected over the past years have been addressed so that the office is now establishing a solid base to work from.
- A new lease is in place to secure our future operations.
- O H & S policies have been extended and policies and procedures for areas of activity written up.
- Bulk email program installed
- Web site being updated
- *Resource Manual* new edition has been completed.
- Membership application updated
- Membership numbers up slightly.
- Exceptional outcome from the 2009 raffle.
- Preparation sales continued to keep us busy in 2009
- Extensions to infrastructure with a skillion roof built onto the preparations shed to provide shelter for equipment, and preparation storage being transferred to clay pots in a purpose built storage area.
- Preparation production in hand with regular monitoring, maintenance and production of products.
- Advertisements are now run on a regular basis in a number of publications
- A regular industry column is now written for *Acre's Australia* and BAA has been promoted in interviews for magazines and pod-casts.
- *News Leaf* continues to go out within expected time frames, is building up regular contributors and is showing a healthier income stream with an increase in advertising. We continue to get positive feedback from members in regard to our journal. For some members this is their connection to our organisation.
- Three very successful workshops were held: National workshop in 2009 with a record number of attendees; Vinyerons workshop October 2009 and Train the Trainer workshop in 2010.
- BAA has supported the Bush Fire Project in Victoria, coordinated by Rosie Gegenhuber, by donating preparations and providing funds for Shane Martin to spray preparations and compile data on outcomes.
- A dedicated staff made up of permanent employees, casual employees and contractors. Leonie Milne, Glenys Watt, Joan Chapman, Alan Johnstone, Jo Porter, John Hodgkinson, Anne Tillett and others who help out at peak times.

With the support of the board the following have also been initiated:

- Strategic planning meeting held and goals set
- Train the trainer workshop completed as a basis for developing the workshop program
- Year long in-depth Victorian biodynamic course started in February 2010 with 38 students from the initiative of Celia Cornick, Rosie Gegenhuber and Ian Cumming.
- New constitution developed and ratified by a constitutional lawyer.

Over recent months the office staff and some current board members have come under fire from a group of unhappy members. It is neither my place or my desire to enter into an argument with these

people. However, it is hard for the dedicated office staff, many of whom have been with the organisation for years and invested large amounts of their time and lives in its development and health, to be degraded in such a public way as has occurred through this group.

I would like to thank the staff for their resilience during this time and relate to the membership that the office is now a very different place to work. This extends from the physical environment we work in to the emotional interaction between staff. The gardens and grounds are well maintained and we can walk into an office that is organised and smells of the citrus oil our cleaner has used to wash the floor. This organisation extends to the preparations shed where things are also accessible and ordered. We all care about BAA and its future health and this would be apparent to anyone who respectfully visited the office and its staff.

I would also like to thank those board members who have supported the office through their roles on the board; Ulli Spranz in her position as Chair, Ross McDonald in his position as Treasurer and Anton Van Klopper as a member of the *News Leaf* reference group. Julian Castagna has opened his property to host a very successful BAA workshop for vinyerons. As well as these particular roles these board members have been actively engaged in developing other areas of BAA. They all have businesses and families to attend to but give of their time and expertise to promote BAA and support its development.

I would also like to say thank you to all of those members who generously give of their time to facilitate activities we undertake, such as Margaret Bruvel and Maaïke Steiner on the *News Leaf* reference group and those who donate their time to give workshops and attend promotional events on behalf of BAA. Added to this are those who gave generous donations toward the 2009 National Conference with Dr Manfred Klett and others who donated prizes for our annual raffle.

In short, the organisation is on a sound footing thanks to a network of people who support our work, a dedicated core group of board members and a committed staff. In a climate where there is much information being circulated that calls into question the performance of office staff and board members, it is heartening to see this continued dedication.

Unfortunately, over the last many months office staff and a core group of board members have spent large amounts of their time dealing with damage control. The increased workload generated by the communications of a group of unhappy members in the way of phone calls, emails and letters is at the expense of other productive activities we could be actively pursuing, and has left members confused and disenchanted. Some disenchanted members are deciding that they no longer wish to be a part of our organisation. In the interests of the continued health of BAA it is important for this to be resolved.

Over this period of time we have achieved much in the way of productive outcomes and completion of projects. This has been achieved with a smaller staff base despite the ongoing pressure of dealing with the ramifications of extra workload spoken of above.

I look forward to continuing stability in the workplace for office staff as we develop and serve the organisation and its membership.

Kind regards,  
Anne Tillett, Manager BAA .