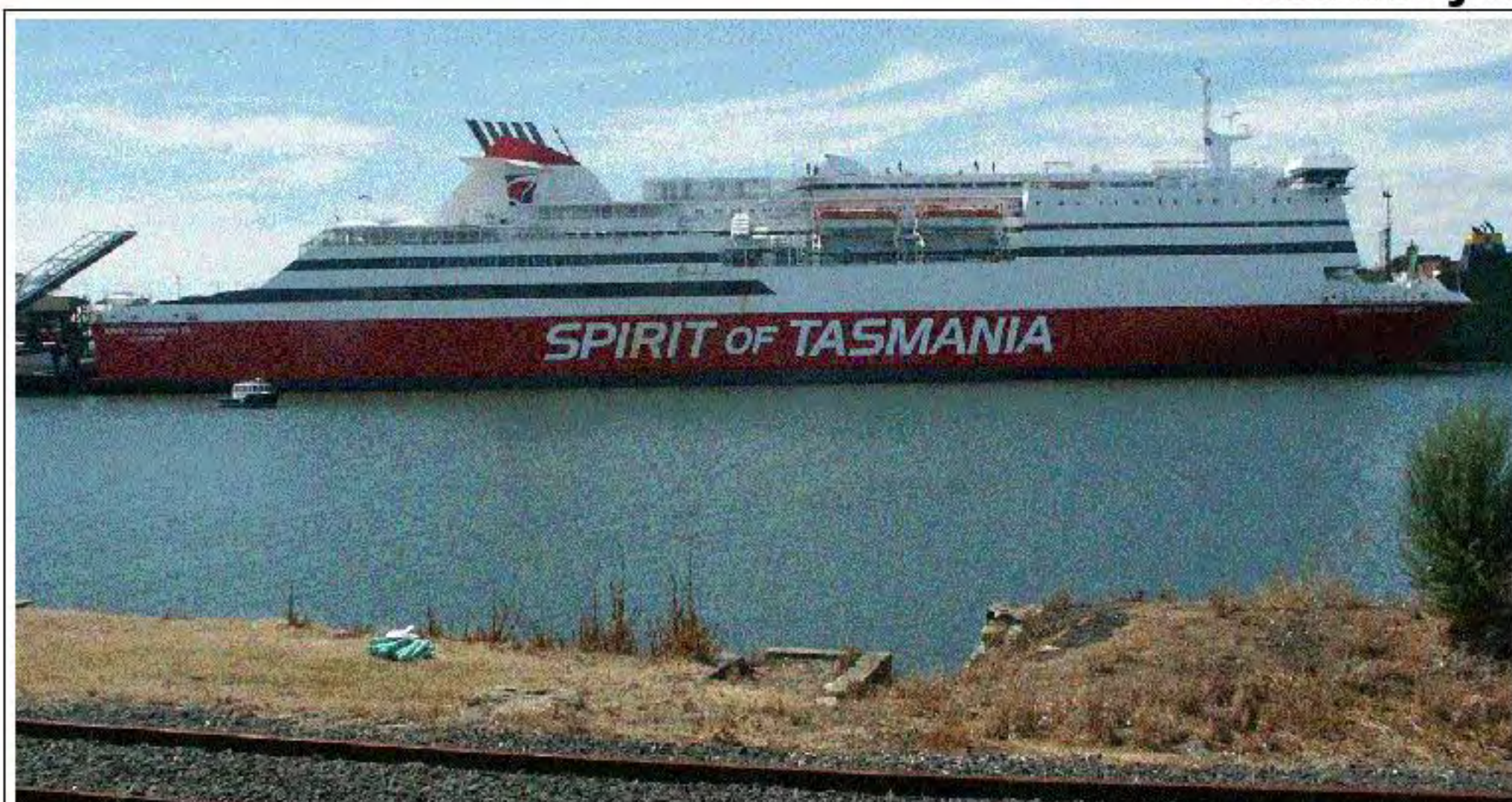


'Share the Spirit'

Naturally...



The Sydney Spirit at Devonport

THE theme for this year's national conference to be hosted by Devonport City Council from Sunday 12 to Wednesday 15 November is 'Share The Spirit' Naturally.

Devonport is already buzzing with ideas and planning is well underway with the finishing touches being put to an impressive program.

Everyone involved is very excited to have been chosen. It's such a great opportunity for Devonport and Tasmania.

There is so much to differentiate Tasmania from other destinations.

It's not just the compact nature of the State, our natural and built heritage, clean air, relaxed lifestyle, incredible scenery, great food and wines ... it is the hospitality and genuine warmth of welcome delegates will receive when they arrive in Tasmania.

Conferences in Tasmania traditionally attract a higher registration level, maybe because it is a destination which has not been frequently visited and offers a unique experience - delegates welcome a reason

to plan a visit to Tasmania. Tasmania offers delegates the opportunity to experience the heritage, natural beauty and wilderness which are unique to this State and to taste in abundance the magnificent food and wine for which Tasmania has become renowned.

Tasmania's superb food and wine is the product of the island's clean seas, pure water and rich soil.

Succulent seafood, game, ch-

Devonport is already buzzing with ideas and planning is well underway

eeses and berries mix with delicate cool climate wines and fine beers to present conference banquets of stunning impact.

Tasmanians enjoy sharing their island with visitors and the warmth of their welcome is legendary.

Indeed, Tasmania has forged a reputation as a first class destination.

The conference will focus on the cultural and economic ben-

efits that result from international exchange.

As with any conference it is about bringing information to ASCA members and any other interested individuals or organisations, to inform, educate and inspire them to undertake great things for their communities.

Conference coordinator Tricia Alford, is working with several State Government departments and local organisations to lift the profile of the conference and to ensure the conference content makes it a 'must-attend' event.

Council's staff really wants this to become a bigger part of our community and they're doing that by involving their youth leaders now.

They are taking every opportunity to promote public awareness of the Sister Cities movement, and the upcoming conference, at events being organised around the city.

The Harmony Day activities were titled 'Spirit of Harmony' to highlight the conference theme and the Sister Cities vision that is so much part of

the ideas behind Harmony Day as well.

Considerable effort is going

The conference will focus on cultural and economic benefits that result from international exchange.

into the youth program to provide key life skills and to inspire these possible leaders of tomorrow to be active participants in the future of the Sister City movement.

ASCA executive members visited Devonport in February to see how our plans were coming along and to see first hand the standard of facilities we could offer.

They were very impressed and we believe delegates will be as well.

When you are presented with such a great networking opportunity you never know where it can lead.

The committee hopes it will open doors to a vast array of

possibilities to develop new friendships, to gain a deeper understanding of other cultures, a chance for us to learn from them and in turn looking at our home and culture in a different light.

It could even lead to new markets for our products.

Whenever you get such a diverse audience sharing a common experience like this it can only lead to positive outcomes and that can filter throughout the community. It doesn't get much better than that.

The conference website is still under construction so if anyone wants more information please give Tricia Alford a call at Devonport City Council on 03 6424 0562 or send an email to taa@doc.tas.gov.au. Tricia would love to receive an email from you with an indication of your intention to attend. This assists the planning process.

We hope everyone will 'Share the Spirit', Naturally at Devonport in November 2006.

President's message

HERE we are only seven and a bit months away from the Devonport conference.

I hope you have the dates firmly fixed in your diaries, Sunday 12 November to Wednesday 15 November.

The executive members had their February board meeting in Devonport and apart from the usual agenda had the opportunity to meet with the committee and inspect the program.

I was extremely impressed with the ideas, speakers and sessions proposed by the committee and congratulated them for their efforts.

This is really shaping up as a great conference once again.

The contact details for the conference coordinator, Tricia Alford, are: Devonport City Council, Phone: 03 6424 0562. Email: taa@dcc.tas.gov.au

We have heard of some really inventive and exciting exchange programs being undertaken by member organizations for the Australia - Japan year of exchange and with nine months to go it is still not too late to become involved.

Your participation will not only broaden your communities' horizons and opportunities but will further spread the message of sister cities and their important role in fostering cultural understanding and world peace.

Please send in the stories with photos to Sister Cities News editor Jim Mynard.

Last month I attended a dinner hosted by Mr Yoshiyasu Hyotani, Director General of the Japan Local Government office in Sydney (CLAIR) for former recipients of CLAIR's local government exchange program.

We discussed the values of exchange programs and ideas for future opportunities as well as committing to work with CLAIR building better bridges between our two countries and our own communities.

Now is the time to be working on your ASCA award submission for this year.

It is time that you showcased that great program to fellow members with the added advantage of the prestige of a possible award win!

Activities eligible for submission in the 2006 awards are those occurring or conducted between 1 July 2005 and 30 June 2006.

For information visit our web site.

The 50th anniversary conference of Sister Cities International will be held in Washington, DC from 13 to 15 July 2006.

This historic event will celebrate the critical role that citizen diplomats perform in creating a more just and peaceful world and set forth a visionary agenda for the future.

It will build on, and greatly expand, the original concepts of people-to-people diplomacy that emerged from that 1956 White House summit.

I will see you and your youth delegates in Devonport

Councillor Kevin Hill JP
National President, ASCA



Cr Kevin Hill

Brisbane's new agreement with Chongqing, China

LORD Mayor Campbell Newman and Mayor Wang Hongju signed a new Brisbane Chongqing Sister City agreement at the 2005 Asia Pacific Cities Summit in China on Tuesday 11 October 2005.

Chongqing is the new gateway to Western China and is undergoing a massive urbanisation program.

It has a population of more than 31 million, the largest of China's centrally administered municipalities.

Cr Newman said this new Sister City agreement would increase the capacity of business and industry sectors to realise even greater business opportunities and market access.

"There are several similarities between Chongqing and Brisbane, especially in planning for, and meeting, the significant challenges we share as two of the fastest growing cities in the world," Cr Newman said.

The new Brisbane Chongqing Sister City agreement is based on equality and mutual benefit, to promote people-to-people friendly contacts and economic and trade interflow between the municipalities.

While Brisbane already has an active Sister City relationship with the Chinese city of Shenzhen, Cr Newman said a second agreement was possible because China was now pursuing stronger business partnerships with the western world.

"In signing this Sister City agreement, Mayor Hongju and I reinforce our commitment to promote and nurture the exchange of commercial, cultural, educational and other mutually beneficial activities and ideas between Brisbane and Chongqing," Cr Newman said.

Brisbane's Sister Cities program is a major element of the Living in Brisbane 2010 "Regional and World City" strategy. At its basic level, this strategy is about



Lord Mayor Campbell Newman and Mayor Wang Hongju signed a new Brisbane Chongqing Sister City agreement.

Brisbane being open to new ideas and generous with its own - building strong links around the world and sharing knowledge. At a more tactical level it is about positioning Brisbane as a regional gateway for business, education, health services and recreation.

Brisbane's Sister Cities program has an emphasis on the exchange of people, ideas and material in a wide variety of business, cultural, municipal, sport, community and educational projects.

Brisbane has active Sister City Relationships with Kobe, Japan from July 1985, Auckland, New Zealand, August 1988, Shenzhen, People's Republic of China, June 1992, Semarang, Indonesia, January 1993, Kaohsiung, Taiwan, September 1997, Daejeon, Korea, June 2002, and Chongqing, People's Republic of China, from October 2005.

Secretary's message

HOPEFULLY the Commonwealth Games fever has touched us all. I guess because it was in Melbourne and I was involved in the Baton Relay, that made it so much more special for me.

I must share with you my experience in being part of the relay because my nomination was based on my voluntary work with sister cities, so I was holding the baton not only for me but



Margaret Evans

for all those people who have been or are involved in sister cities. The fact that I ran with the baton in my home town was something I will never forget, the honour, glory and thrill was just so wonderful and I would just like to say this is just another experience I have been able to achieve through my involvement in sister cities.

Well, back on the home front the executive met with the Devonport Conference Organising Committee members recently to discuss their proposed program and as you will see in this edition there is certainly some really good things happening in Devonport.

So please diary note the conference dates, Sunday 12 November to Wednesday 15 November 2006 and start planning your trip.

Maybe think about putting in an award on something that has happened within your sister city program.

This is a great way of showcasing your city and sister city event.

The executive at its last meeting agreed to publish a profile in each edition of the Sister Cities News of someone who has contributed significantly to the sister city movement. This edition includes a profile of one of ASCA's early chairmen Bruce Brown who died on Wednesday 15 June 2005. (See page six).

President of Sister Cities New Zealand, Jeremy Dwyer, died on Saturday 10 December. Jeremy had a passion and commitment to sister cities and was renowned for his ability to motivate his fellow board members and make things happen. I had the pleasure of meeting Jeremy on a few occasions and am saddened by his loss.

Executive committee

National president

Cr Kevin Hill
C/- City of Bankstown
Box 8
BANKSTOWN NSW 2200

Home: 02 9642 3700
Mobile: 040 2130 000
Fax: 02 9642 2649
hillkev@ozemail.com.au

National vice-president

Ms Jan Teasdale
Box 968
CLOVERDALE WA 6985

Home: 08 9470 2664
Business: 08 9477 3567
Mobile 04 0744 2136
jetdale@inet.net.au

National secretary

Ms Margaret Evans
Box 368
ALTONA VIC 3018

Home: 03 9398 5443
Business: 03 9932 1043
Mobile: 041 9898 357
Fax: 03 9932 1039

mevans@hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au

National treasurer

Mr Caisley Graham
Box 142
caisley.graham@bigpond.com
NEW LAMPTON, NSW 2035.

Home: 02 4957 1041
Mobile: 041 2571 041

Committee members

Cr Raymond Kelly
Box 14
COOROY QL 4563

Home Fax: 07 5447 7314
Business: 07 5447 6306
Fax: 07 5447 1062
kellyray@optusnet.com.au

Mr Mark Brady
City of Frankston
Cnr Young and Davey Street,
Frankston, 3199

Business: 03 9784 1811
Mobile: 041 9116 863

Ald Bill Wilson
Box 1237
DEVONPORT,
TASMANIA. 7310

Home: 03 6424 5026
Business: 03 6424 4499
Fax: 03 6423 5977
bill@insuranceadvisor.biz

Newcastle and Ube celebrate 25 years of friendship

THE sister city link established on coal resources of the Hunter Valley exported through the Port City of Newcastle to Ube, Japan celebrated its 25th Anniversary in 2005.

Newcastle Lord Mayor John Tate and general manager Janet Dore led a small group of councillors and council officers on a visit to Ube in May of that year for the first of two gatherings to celebrate the anniversary.

The Ube mayor led a 26-member delegation on a return visit to Newcastle in November for the final celebrations of the anniversary.

The delegation members represented the Ube City Office and Ube City Assembly, the Sister City Friendship Society and the Ube Frontier University.

Accompanying them were members of the Ube Japanese Folk Dance Society, Ube Handicraft Society and the Ube Flower Arrangement Society.

The groups presented a cultural display and interactive demonstration day attended by many Newcastle citizens and school children. Members of the delegation also attended a

special meeting of the council held in the council chamber where they were able to meet with the elected members and senior staff.

A formal celebration dinner was held at the Newcastle City Hall attended by the deputy consul general of Japan, members of the Ube delegation, members of the NSW parliament, councillors, members of the former sister city committee and members of the community, many of whom had previously visited Ube.

The highlight of their visit was the opening of a Japanese ceramic exhibition at the Newcastle Regional Gallery where the Ube mayor presented a gift of a ceramic bowl to the city. The mayor, members of the assembly and city office were treated to an on set visit during filming of a segment of the blockbuster film 'The Return of Superman' that was taking place in the city.

While in Newcastle members of the delegation also visited points of interest including a nature reserve where they had the opportunity for a close up encounter with wild life.

Berwick upon Tweed visit to Casey, Victoria



Standing from left: River Gum ward councillor Wayne Smith, Berwick upon Tweed (BUT) councillor Anthony Hughes, BUT visitor Nora Watson, Edrington Ward councillor Mick Morland, Kay Morland, Springfield Ward councillor Lorraine Wreford, former councillors John Hastie, Brian Oates, and Syd Pargeter, BUT councillor Hazel Bettison, BUT visitor Frank Bettison, River Gum Ward councillor Janet Halsall, and Edrington Ward councillor Brian Hetherington. Seated: Four Oaks Ward councillor Rob Wilson, Heather Wilson, mayors Kevin Bradford and Richard Patterson, BUT mayoress Jane Patterson, BUT sheriff Alexander Ritchie, and the sheriff's lady Helena Palmer.

CASEY director of community services and former Australian Sister Cities Association (ASCA) committee member Jennie Lee welcomed a Berwick upon Tweed delegation to the City of Casey.

The eight-member delegation came to Casey as part of a sister cities good will visit.

Ms Lee also took the opportunity to commend the work of the Edwin Flack Games organising committee now preparing for the second Edwin Flack Games in late June and early July.

She confirmed the invitation for Berwick upon Tweed to be part of the games.

Casey mayor Kevin Bradford said Casey's connection with Berwick upon Tweed was strong and valued.

Cr Bradford said many of Casey's

early settlers came from the Berwick upon Tweed area.

"They brought their culture and the names of the places they once called home.

"Today we celebrate that history at our Pioneers Park in Berwick and in events such as those held recently across the city for Australia Day and the Berwick Highland Games.

"Our guests here tonight would be pleased to know that the City of Casey Pipe Band members wear the Hay tartan in recognition of our sister city relationship, and wear it proudly in many events across this district and interstate.

"Our communities can count on the support of each other when ever needed, and our Sister City relationship will continue to be one of mutual benefit.

"The visit has strengthened the link between our communities and formed strong personal friendships as well," he said.

Berwick upon Tweed mayor Richard Patterson said he was proud of the connection with Casey.

He said he would return home more enthused about having young Berwick upon Tweed athletes come to Casey for the Edwin Flack Games. He said, however, that one problem for them was a clash with study time. He warmly thanked Casey councillors for their hospitality saying he saw Casey as a young and vibrant community.

"I commend Casey on its forward planning," he said.



Visiting Newcastle

Tea ceremony tributes

THE City of Belmont and Adachi City in Tokyo, Japan established their sister city relationship in 1986.

During that time many exchanges have taken place, with both communities benefiting not only from the cultural exchange at a grassroots level, but also from tourism generated by the inter-cultural exchanges between the cities.

To celebrate the 30th year of exchange between Australia and Japan, both cities were proud to host events in their communities on Sunday 19 March 2006. The Belmont Sister City Association held its cultural celebration at the Redcliffe Community Centre in conjunction with the City of Belmont and the Consul General of Japan in Perth Mr Hiroyuki Arlyoshi.

VIPs attending were Belmont mayor Glenys Godfrey, deputy premier Eric Ripper, vice consul general Mr Inouye, Swan MP Kim Wilkie, and Belmont councillors. Invitations were extended to companies within the City of Belmont and East Metropolitan Regional Council (EMRC), that traded with Japan, and other community groups.

It afforded them the opportunity to network in

a relaxed environment, and enjoy Japanese culture.

Various demonstrations of Japanese culture were showcased on the day, commencing with the 15 member Nadeshiko Japanese Choir who created a tranquil aura to the morning.

The 90 member audience was intrigued by a demonstration of how to wear a Japanese kimono, three flower arrangements of ikebana, the mystique of the kendo demonstration, and the etiquette of a traditional tea ceremony.

Participants had the opportunity to take part in an authentic Japanese tea ceremony, at Adachi Park, Great Eastern Highway Belmont on Monday 20 March.

The four tea ceremonies were held in the Australian outdoor version of a Japanese tea-house.

The area is open and features a pitched roof with gabled ends depicting the history of the Belmont Adachi relationship; a screen adorned with a Japanese wall hanging and ikebana flower arrangement.

The low bench feature covered with a Tatami mat and red cloth was soon transformed for Ms Ueda to perform the four Tea Ceremonies.

Cr Godfrey was joined at the first tea ceremony along with vice-consul for cultural affairs Koji Koseki, and Mrs Tomomi. The picturesque Swan River created a peaceful backdrop to the traditional tea ceremony. Japanese ladies in the traditional summer kimono teamed with tea ceremony teacher Ms Ueda to ensure all participants enjoyed the 30 minute tea ceremonies.

The two day event was a magnificent tribute to the first relationship between Australia and Japan.

Manly celebrates Japan Australia exchange year

A DELEGATION from Manly Council, members of the Sister Cities Committee and Council representatives, will visit Japan in April to commemorate significant events that fall in this Year of Exchange between Australia and Japan.

Manly and Taito-ku, a ward of Tokyo, will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of their Sister City Relationship and a historic Wollemi Pine will be presented in recognition of this important milestone. The delegates will also visit Odawara, their Friendship City of 16 years, with whom they share a reciprocal student exchange Program, which has also run for 16 years.

The founder in Japan of this exchange and head of the Tokimeki International School, Mr Noriaki Osaka, was recently presented with a medal of commendation by Odawara City for his part in strengthening the ties of friendship between Manly and

Odawara and ultimately Australia and Japan.

Manly Council's own chairperson of the Sister Cities Committee, Mrs Joan Thorburn OAM, a former Manly mayor and alderman was awarded a Foreign Ministry Award a few years ago for her continued efforts to foster friendly ties between our two countries.

Manly will host cultural events and delegations visiting from Japan in the latter half of this year in celebration of the Year of Exchange.

Japanese culture will also be celebrated during Manly's Arts Festival and a history of the Sister Cities Committee will be exhibited at Manly's Art Gallery and Museum from 8 September to 5 November 2006.

For more information on Manly Council's Sister Cities Committee please visit

www.manly.nsw.gov.au and view the Sister City web page.

Sharing the Spirit of Harmony

A SPECIAL lunch and multi-cultural concert was held in Devonport on Sunday 26 March to celebrate cultural diversity.

The event title 'Spirit of Harmony', was chosen to link with 'Share the Spirit', Naturally, which is the theme of the Australian Sister Cities Association national conference to be held in Devonport this year.

The Spirit of Harmony event, held at the East Devonport Recreation and Function Centre, was presented by the Lions Club of Mersey Devonport in partnership with the Devonport City Council. A broad range of people from diverse backgrounds attended the fiesta-like gathering, adding to the cosmopolitan feel of the day. Lions Club members pre-

pared a tasty lunch, which included an Australian style barbecue and a variety of other foods. The Mersey Police Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC) brought its mobile activity centre trailer to the event and helped organise games and play equipment for the outdoor entertainment part of the program. Colourful and informative displays, together with banners and an image slideshow contributed to the festive atmosphere.

The Sister Cities display focussed on the benefits of cultural exchange at the people-to-people level. The lunch and outdoor activities enabled everyone to meet and socialise in a friendly, informal way before moving inside for the multi-cultural concert.

Devonport mayor Lynn Laycock said the event provided an opportunity for us to recognise the valuable contribution that people from culturally diverse backgrounds made to our community.

For most people present it was the first time they had experienced first-hand the dynamic rhythms and harmonies of western Africa.

The mayor made presentations to the performers and thanked them for their contribution to the event.

Besides promoting goodwill and mutual understanding, Spirit of Harmony was a chance for people to show their commitment to community harmony and learn about other cultures, in particular that of Minamata, their Sister City in Japan.

Friendship concerts at Devonport

DEVONPORT Sister Cities held a friendship concert to celebrate some significant milestones in the Australia - Japan relations.

The first of these was the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Sister City agreement between Minamata and Devonport.

The other was the 2006 Australia - Japan Year of Exchange. Devonport mayor Lynn Laycock was master of ceremonies for the free event presented to a packed audience at the Devonport Library.

In her welcome speech Alderman Laycock referred to the gathering as a celebration of the cultures of both countries. She said that more than anything else the concert was about communication, sharing, understanding and, of course, friendship.

The program started with a bracket of five songs by Nixon Street Primary School students. The group started with 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star', in Japanese and English followed by a traditional Japanese children's song called 'Peach Boy'.

After the old Aussie favourite 'Kookaburra Sits in the Old Gum Tree' and a Japanese tune called 'The Tulip Song', the group ended with 'The Japanese Greeting Song'.

When the students finished their performance they invited the audience to join them singing 'Kookaburra Sits in the Old Gum Tree' and 'The Japanese Greeting Song', which is a song that beginners studying the Japanese language often learn to help them remember greetings like 'hello' and 'goodbye' in Japanese. The audience was taught the simple words of 'The Japanese Greeting

Song' and after a few tries they were so proficient that they were able to sing the song several times.

A dance group from the Don College senior secondary school came to the stage next and performed two lively Japanese festival dances. The dancers selected quite contrasting songs to dance to, the opening one a work tune called 'Fisherman's Song' and the other a social song titled 'Tokyo Chorus'.

A representative from the group explained the movements of each of the dances, such as the rowing of boats and pulling in of nets in the choreography of the 'Fisherman's Dance'.

Fired up from their earlier participation in the singing part of the program the audience did not need much encouragement to come out and join the performers in a communal dance. After a short on-the-spot dance lesson from Japanese singing and dance teacher, Rimiko Lee, everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves dancing to the music of the 'Fisherman's Song'. There was such enthusiasm that the dance was repeated several times. As an encore, the primary school singing group returned to the stage to perform some of their numbers again. As they had done earlier on in the program the audience joined in, this time doing the actions for the songs with the students while they sang.

Organiser Marcus Lee thanked all those individuals and organisations who had supported the event and Alderman Laycock presented certificates of appreciation to all the performers.

Rimiko Lee, who coordinated the program, taught the audience the 'sanbonjime',

a Japanese clapping ritual done to honour the close of an event.

The friendship concert was organised by volunteers and supported by the Devonport City Council, the Devonport Library and the Year of Exchange Steering Committee.

Opposite page

A quick glimpse of Devonport.

Top left: The Melbourne Spirit of Tasmania from one of the hotel rooms.

Devonport Town Hall where the bulk of conference activities will be hosted, and the Devonport Visitors Centre.

Top right: ASCA deputy president Jan Teasdale and conference coordinator Tricia Afford chat in the reception room.

Centre right: Members of the ASCA committee during a visit to the awards dinner venue. From left: ASCA president Cr Kevin Hill, conference coordinator Tricia Afford, ASCA secretary Margaret Evans, Devonport Alderman Bill Wilson, ASCA treasurer Caisley Graham, ASCA vice president Jan Teasdale, committee member Mark Brady, and Noosa councillor Ray Kelly.

A visit to Sheffield near Devonport reveals a township of beautiful murals.

Centre left: Just a peep through the port hole from the annual dinner conference centre.

Secretary Margaret Evans and conference coordinator Tricia Afford check out a Victorian Ash bearer in the Axeman's Hall of Fame.

Right below centre: ASCA president Cr Kevin Hill, and committee member Mark Brady chat with top Australian axeman David Foster.

Bottom left: The Australian Axeman's Hall of Fame.

Bottom right. From left: Conference coordinator Tricia Afford, Devonport mayor Lynn Laycock, and ASCA vice president Jan Teasdale.

Anniversary tree planting in Devonport

THE City of Devonport planted two weeping flowering cherry trees on the foreshore of the Mersey River on Monday 27 February.

The trees mark the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Sister City Agreement between Devonport and the City of Minamata in Japan. The flowering cherry is the city tree of Minamata and the two trees symbolise the bonds of friendship

between the citizens of both countries. It is planned that the trees will be dedicated by the mayors of both cities when a delegation from Minamata visits Devonport later in the year.

The council also plans to build a replica of the structure beside the Minamata Disease Institute (below) and is hopeful that this too will be dedicated on Sunday 12 November.

Axeman's Hall of Fame

ONE of Tasmania's newer attractions, the Axeman's Hall of Fame at LaTrobe honours the legendary axemen of the north who dominate wood-chopping competitions.

It is Tasmania's first hall of fame and Australia's only interpretive centre dedicated to the sport of competitive woodchopping.

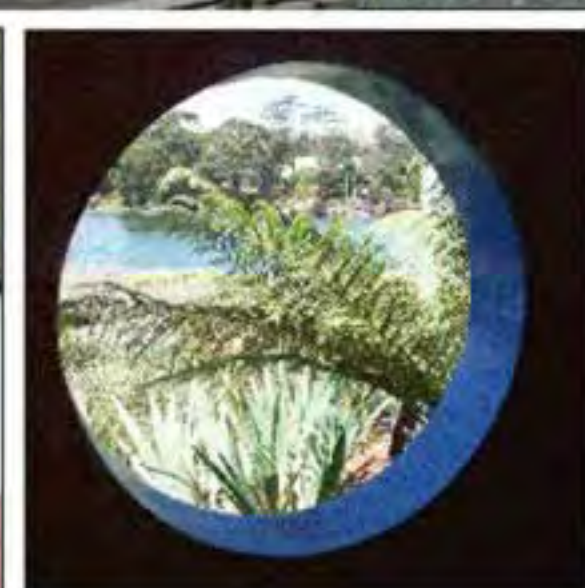
Exhibitions are held in an indoor arena which has 14 nine metre timber columns from all over Australia representing native timbers from each state, supporting the roof. The 'legendary Axeman's Wall' is a permanent exhibit featuring information and memorabilia about the 12 'legends' of Australian woodchopping who were inducted into the 'Hall of Fame' at its inauguration in December 2002.



Devonport mayor Lynn Laycock and Devonport Sister Cities Association chairman Alderman Bill Wilson plant the friendship cherry trees.

All eyes are on Devonport, Tasmania for the next ASCA conference from Sunday 12 to Wednesday 15 November.





Bruce Brown life hero

Gentleman

--

Leader

--

Legend

By George Stockton



Bruce Brown the war hero

THE Sister Cities News regrets reporting the passing of one of its earliest chairman, Bruce Brown.

Wing Commander (rtd) Bruce Edward 'Buster' Brown DFC and Bar, OAM, sadly passed away on Wednesday 15 June 2005.

He is survived by his wife Olga, daughters Elizabeth Pool and Margaret Hall, six grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

BRUCE Brown was born on 9 November 1919 to Daniel George and Cecilia Brown who lived in Parramatta where Daniel was a successful dentist.

Bruce was the eldest of the five Brown children and attended The Kings School.

Growing up in the Parramatta area the Brown family used to holiday in the Hawkesbury region and from the early age of five Bruce could remember travelling to Pitt Town by horse and sulky and had vivid memories of The City of Blacktown consisting of little more than one pub, two shops and about four houses.

As chance would have it, it was at one of these holidays at age 15 that Bruce met Olga and decided this was the girl for him.

These frequent visits to the Hawkesbury were to form an important ingredient for Bruce's life.

Bruce described himself as an average student even though his father was disappointed that his poor command of Latin prevented him from carrying on in his father's footsteps of dentistry.

But Bruce already had his sights set on the wide blue yonder.

As a schoolboy he excelled at sport, in particular athletics, rowing, football, cricket and boxing.

He could punch like hell, schoolmates recalled, obviously the essential ingredient that helped him become the schoolboys boxing champion for his

A level licence.

Soon after, he was engaged to the other great love of his life Olga May Smith and with the outbreak of war he joined the RAAF, trained at Tamworth and was shipped off to England where his 91st Spitfire Squadron was based in Hawkinge Kent.

The main objective of the 91st was strafing enemy shipping and land installations such as trains, distilleries and enemy troop movements.

With danger a constant companion, Bruce's luck almost ran out on one mission when his plane suffered severe damage forcing him to belly land his craft, which had 32 bullet holes and a hole the size of a small plate in each side of his cockpit canopy where cannon fire struck the left side passed his face and exited through the right side.

But on the home front the war was getting closer and many of our troops were called home to defend our north.

Bruce was among the first to arrive home, but after re-fresher training in Queensland he was taken to Fall River, code for Milne Bay.

Almost immediately his squadron was embroiled in the fiercest of fighting. At the peak of the battle

Australian soldiers.

The battle lasted 12 days and cost the lives of 550 allied troops and 1000 Japanese.

But more importantly for Australia, the battle marked the first defeat of the Japanese land forces. As pressures eased, his 75th squadron returned to Australia in September 1942 and he was able to catch enough leave to marry Olga in Sydney. Bruce resigned from the RAAF in 1948 and returned to civic street working for AMP as a sales representative.

He then moved into the oil industry by joining Caltex, working his way up from representative and merchandiser, to area manager, marketing manager and finally the senior executive position of assistant manager for Queensland, held until he retired in 1971.

That year he returned with his family to his childhood playground the Hawkesbury and settled in Wilberforce. It wasn't long, however, before the village elders recognized his leadership skills and he was persuaded to nominate for the up-coming council election.

He was elected to Colo Shire Council in 1975 and became president the next year. Colo Shire and neighbouring Windsor Council amalgamated in 1981 and within a year Bruce was elected president of the new Hawkesbury Shire Council

With danger a constant companion, Bruce's luck almost ran out on one mission when cannon fire struck the left side of his canopy, passed his face and exited through the right side.

for Milne Bay Kittyhawks often had their guns blazing before they had their undercarriage retracted. Firing up to 50,000 rounds of ammunition a day the squadron worked in perfect co-ordination with the Army, often strafing enemy ground troops so close to Australian forces that their spent ammunition cases fell on

until his retirement in 1984.

Over the three-year period 1979 to 1982 intense work went into bringing together the sister city organizations spread across Australia.

In 1982 a conference was held in Alice Springs where the name of Australian Sister City Association was adopted,



Bruce and Olga Brown - a time to remember

formed its first constitution, and elected its first executive committee.

Because the 1983 conference was to be held in Townsville,

Queensland delegates voted for the roll of ASCA chairman to be filled by the Townsville mayor who then nominated deputy mayor Ald Ken McEllig to be ASCA's first chairman and

at the same conference Ald Bruce Brown was elected ASCA's first vice chairman.

At the 1983 conference held in Townsville Bruce was re-elected vice chairman and during his report, the national treasurer conveyed his sincere thanks to his fellow director Ald Bruce Brown for his assistance and sound advice.

At the 1984 conference held in Bega, Ald Brown was elected chairman of ASCA. He was re-elected chairman in 1985 at the Albany conference and did not stand for the ASCA executive in 1986.

At the 1986 conference held in Hobart, ASCA's first life membership was awarded to Bruce Brown in recognition of his dedication and hard work throughout ASCA's formative years.

Bruce was a proud man with a classic 'dry' sense

of humour, which often surfaced after his son in law, became a Country Liberal Party member in The Northern Territory.

In particular, Bruce delighted in showing him a photograph of the then Prime Minister Paul Keating, standing between he and Olga.

The photo was taken on the day his plane was unveiled at The Canberra War Memorial.

His Kittyhawk called 'Polly', after Olga's nickname, has pride of place within The War Memorial, along with photographs of Bruce.

Some of his colleagues can be heard recounting their exploits at Milne Bay and other locations.

Research for this article also brought to light a degree of Bruce's visionary skills.

Bruce preached caution in a 1984 Hawkesbury Council oral history recording, in the face of mass development in the Hawkesbury, believing the rural area must be maintained as an attraction and always be a place that has the best of both worlds. He believed for example that owners of historical homes should be paid a subsidy to help preserve the area's unique history.

He saw a need to improve tourism using the Hawkesbury River and at the same time voiced concern over pollution to the same river from industrial sources, effluent discharges and run off from farm fertiliz-

ing.

During his time in the Hawkesbury Bruce was a Rotarian, worked for The Salvos, was a three times president of Hawkesbury Legacy, on the Hawkesbury Race Club committee for 17 years and 14 years president, of The Provincial Racing Association.

Bruce believed the one thing lacking at all levels of government was a bit of compassion and always tried to adhere to his father's creed of helping others.

Towards the end he used to say how much he hated growing old.

He disliked intensely having to rely on others for help and even in his last days was reluctant to ask for assistance.

On the contrary, much to Olga's surprise a few weeks after his funeral one of his day care assistants told her how one day she casually mentioned to Bruce a problem she was having and within a week the government authority in question, acting on Bruce's referral called the woman to sort out the problem.

A community servant to the end. In the words of his daughter Elizabeth Pool: "Bruce never bragged about his successes.

"He never asked for help, but never said 'no' if he was asked.

"He gave unconditional love."

Strengthening educational and cultur-

TEACHERS, artists, indigenous musicians, key business people and several Maroochy Shire councillors were part of the team that travelled to Japan last year to strengthen sister city ties with Tatebayashi.

The recent trip follows a series of visits to the beautiful town to secure significant educational, cultural and economic interactions.

According to Maroochy Shire councillor Jenny McKay this trip was extremely successful in strengthening the historical relationship between both cities.

"We were fortunate to be able to take some key artists and educators over with us so that they could also make some valuable connections with our sister city," Mrs McKay said.

"The trip was a tremendous success and a huge boost for both cities.

"The relationships and connections made were incredibly enriching for the Maroochy Shire and will provide benefits for years to come."

Mrs McKay said the focus of the trip was establishing exchange programs for students, artists and for people who work in the agricultural fields including sustainable and renewable energy.

"While we had the good fortune to discuss in great length further exchange programs for our youth and aspiring artists we

were also able to look at enhancing our already popular stall at the International Festival held at Tatebayashi each year," Mrs McKay said.

"The value placed on this promotional stall is extremely high."

Burnside State High School principal Iqbal Singh was among the group that spent 10 days in Tatebayashi, and was instrumental in providing advice on educational issues and opportunities for links between the areas in the field of education.

"I thought the delegation was a tremendously valuable initiative that should become part of a regular local government program," Mr Iqbal said.

"Thought needs to be given as to how education and cultural exchanges can lead to increased community understanding of cross cultural and other global issues.

"Not only will these contribute to international peace and understanding, but the economic benefits can be substantial.

"Increased knowledge of other cultures and countries enables us to better understand their markets and may provide openings for future economic projects.

"The way in which these programs link back to the community and facilitate cultural and educational exchanges will be of

great benefit to them in the future global community."

During the trip, the Sunshine Coast team visited schools, art clubs, local communities and the Tatebayashi City Hall. Maroochy Shire team members also participated in several workshops, which helped develop a great understanding of the Tatebayashi historical culture and heritage.



The Maroochy delegation in Japan.

Burwood formalises ties with Lebanon

BURWOOD Council has formalised its first links in the Middle East by proclaiming a Friendship City Relationship with the town of Imar in Lebanon.

Burwood mayor John Faker signed a proclamation with his Imar counterpart Cr Ghassan Mouawad, at a function in honour of five visiting Imar councillors who had spent a week in Burwood on a fact-finding visit.

Located about 80 kilometres north of the Lebanon capital of Beirut, Imar has a population of approximately 1000 citizens and Cr Mouawad heads its first local government authority.

During their week-long stay in Sydney, Cr Mouawad and his fellow Imar councillors studied government processes at local and state level to learn administrative models suitable for their newly formed council.

Cr Faker said Burwood had close ties with Imar as many people had emigrated from towns and villages near Imar and had settled in Sydney's inner-west suburbs.

"In formalising our ties with our Lebanese counterparts in Imar we aim to work together towards retaining and strengthening both our communities' bonds," Cr Faker said.

and Lebanon is one of our closest in the Middle East. Our fundamental connection is based on the strength of Australian-Lebanese community ties, stemming directly from the large numbers of Lebanese who migrated to Australia over the last 150 years. "Nearly six per cent of Burwood's population speaks Arabic, making it the fourth most common language spoken at home (after English)."

The Friendship City Proclamation

reads, in part: "The citizens of both municipalities will endeavour to promote goodwill and understanding and to develop beneficial social, cultural and commercial exchanges for our mutual prosperity."

"It is our firm belief that this affiliation between Imar and Burwood will contribute towards strengthening the friendship between Australia and Lebanon."



Uniting the flags

New agreement with old friend



Redcliffe Mayor Allan Sutherland and Cr Elaine Dobra, Chair of the Community and Sister City Advisory Committee.

REDCLIFFE in Queensland has entered into a new sister city arrangement with a city - even though both partners actually have an association dating back 14 years. Redcliffe mayor Allan Sutherland recently signed a new sister city agreement with Sanyo Onoda to mark the one year anniversary of the new Japanese city. Spokesperson for the Redcliffe Community and Sister City Advisory Committee, Cr Elaine Dobra, said the signing marked the start of a new era given that Redcliffe had already enjoyed a long-term sister city link with Onoda.

"In 1992 Redcliffe and Onoda commenced a sister city rela-

tionship which has produced many cultural, educational and sporting exchanges," she said. "Twelve months ago the new city of Sanyo Onoda was created. The new agreement confirms our commitment to the ongoing relationship between Redcliffe and its expanded sister city partner."

The establishment of Sanyo Onoda has resulted in the area's population increasing by 50% to around 75,000. Redcliffe's signing of the new agreement coincided with the video recording of a celebratory message which has been forwarded to the Mayor of Sanyo Onoda, Mr Hirofumi Shirai.

Death of Jeremy Dwyer

Shattering blow to New Zealand sister cities movement

ONE of the greatest and most respected

leaders in the Sister Cities movement, Sister Cities New Zealand president Jeremy Dwyer died on Saturday 10 December 2006. Mr Dwyer was farewelled at Hastings on Wednesday 14 December.

man of the Parks and Recreation Committee. Incidentally, he was the top polling councillor at

So Jeremy's mayoralty started with economic shocks from freezing work closures, but when

1991 as chief executive. Having never before been involved in local government, I was not sure what to expect. However, I soon found that working for the council was a stimulating and fascinating experience and that in Jeremy, I had a mayor who was not only an intelligent and shrewd politician, but also a person who was always open to new ideas and fully understood the separation of the roles of mayor and chief executive.

When old business friends asked me about working in local government, my response was that my mayor chaired meetings with more authority and skill than most of the private sector chairmen I had expe-

He understood that as he was only one vote around the council table, it was important to foster an atmosphere in which people would focus their thoughts on the issues important to the community, rather than on petty personality squabbles. Jeremy was a great orator and debater. He put in a considerable amount of time thoroughly researching the subject and topics to be covered and when speaking, he had a marvelous way of relaxing his audience with a funny story or anecdote before moving on to the main content of his speech.

He always spoke with clarity and precision and never made a poor speech.

the mayor's room until the early hours of the morning. It was quite late when Jeremy finally kicked them out, but the two councillors continued to debate in the car park.

After a while, they started to feel the cold as frost descended on their heads and before they could drive off they had to scrape the frost off their windscreens. Meantime Jeremy had arrived home to an even more frosty reception from Marilyn, as one of the boys had been ill that night.

This became known as the famous 'Frost Incident'.

Jeremy believed strongly in the unity of town and country and had a very high regard for the rural representatives on

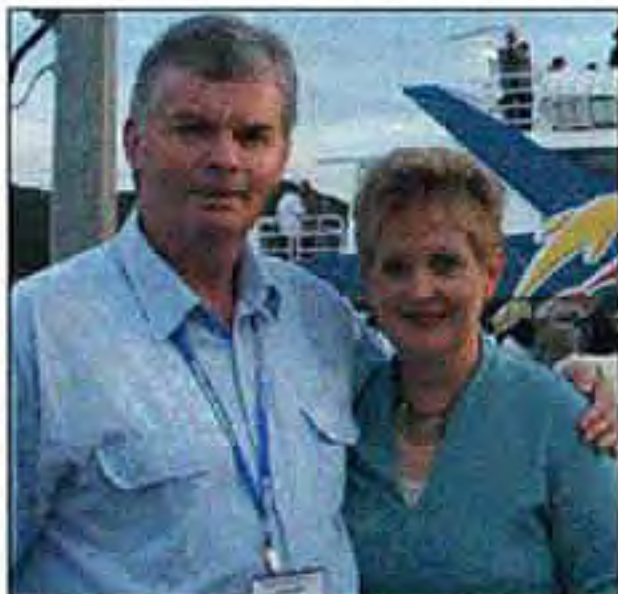
cooled on all sides and discussions proceeded on how to find a way forward that all could accept, a new understanding and trust developed in which people who could hardly bear to speak to each other, ended up agreeing on the way forward. A Rural Community Board was formed which was able to address all rural issues. It was the only one of its kind in New Zealand. Jeremy was a key player throughout this process and was a strong supporter of rural issues throughout his mayoralty.

Jeremy loved having ceremonies to celebrate achievements and milestones.

I particularly recall the Civic Award Ceremonies where the mayor presented awards to a number of marvellous people who had devoted many years doing voluntary work. The Citizenship ceremonies were another joyous occasion and Jeremy always liked to have one of the many wonderful school or community choir performances at the end of the proceedings.

It would have been very easy for Jeremy to get stale after years as mayor, but he had an amazing ability to re-energise himself with a new project.

But above all, Jeremy was a people person. He had great style, was a great team player. He could mix equally well with people from all walks of life, and successfully observe protocol, be it with diplomats and dignitaries, business people, Maori on a Marae, or with Pacific Islanders, to mention just a few, - he always had the right touch."



Jeremy and Marilyn Dwyer during the Sister Cities New Zealand 2005 conference at The Bay of Islands.

that election.

This was followed by a five year break from local government, when he undertook a stint of country teaching.

In October 1986, aged only 38, he successfully contested the mayoralty of Hastings City promising to be a full time Mayor - in those days a rare occurrence outside the main cities. At the same time, he was also elected to the Hawke's Bay United Council, forerunner to the Regional Council.

Shortly after becoming Mayor, the Whakatu Freezing Works closed. There were major job losses and it was a severe economic blow to the community.

Jeremy provided the inspirational leadership which was so vital through those difficult times.

A few years later, Tomoana also closed and I was personally able to admire his skill and leadership as he took initiatives and chaired meetings of various groups to ensure that everything possible was done to lessen the hardship to people.

he stepped down 15 years later, the district was booming with a revitalized farming economy's, new vineyards, new business investment in the old freezing work sites and in the city, and a strong growth in residential property development.

1989 saw major changes to the structures of Local Government throughout the country, and as a result, most of the Hawke's Bay County, together with the City of Hastings and the Borough of Havelock North were amalgamated into the new Hastings District.

Jeremy was chairman of the Transitional Committee overseeing this amalgamation.

In October 1989, Jeremy was elected mayor of the new council and was also elected to the new Hawke's Bay Regional Council.

He then served a remarkable 12 years as mayor of the Hastings District Council. In all, he had a total of 19 years serving in local government.

I joined the Hastings District Council in June



From left: ASCA committee member Mark Brady, Monash University Professor Ronald Francis, and Jeremy Dwyer chat during the Sister Cities New Zealand conference at the Bay of Islands, Sister Cities New Zealand 2005 conference.

rienced.

His way of conducting meetings was to let all those who wished to contribute to a debate have their say, and then with his great skill and aplomb he drew the key points together, putting forward his own thoughts and then achieving a consensus. He was a great team player, and a real people person.

He also enjoyed having a quiet drink after meetings, talking things over with any councillors who were able to stay. I am told of one occasion some years ago, after a Hastings City Council meeting, (which were held in the evening in those days), when Jeremy and a couple of 'hard case' councillors continued to conduct a very serious debate in

the Council.

When the so called 'Rural Revolt' occurred in 1991, he was disappointed and upset as he believed the formation of the new council, spanning a wide territory of rural and urban communities, was the best way to move ahead in the new environment of fewer and larger local authorities.

However, as emotions

Chinese New Year a first for Bundaberg

A nice gesture

THE Bundaberg Sister City Committee in association with representatives of Bundaberg's Chinese community held Bundaberg's first New Year celebrations on Sunday 29 January this year.

Staged in the Central Business District, which looked like a little piece of China, the event attracted 2000 people, 30 stalls, several displays and a great variety of entertainment involving many community groups.

The day got off to a wonderful start with the entrance and dance of the 30 metre long dragon, manned by volunteers who had

been practising the routine for several weeks.

In the hands of a brilliant Australian born Chinese MC, the entertainment continued with dancing, singing, Chinese folk music and martial arts displays.

The highlight of the entertainment was the lion dance.

Hao Yun and Xing Fu, danced again by community members, and accompanied by the Shaolin drum, gong and cymbal, stole the show with their intricate manoeuvres.

Bundaberg had never seen anything like this before.

At the end of the lion dances, the

audience flocked forward to place lucky money into the lion's mouth to ensure their share of good luck and happiness for 2006.

The Sister City Committee enjoyed great support from Bundaberg business people, a Rotary club, the media, the Chinese community, community groups, the City Council and the State Office of Multicultural Affairs.

The result was a new cultural experience for Bundaberg and a greater awareness of the Sister City program.

People came from everywhere to see the Queen's baton carried through the City of Hobsons Bay as they did when it went through other centres. But it was a special day for ASCA secretary Margaret Evans who was chosen to carry the baton along Civic Parade.

Marg spotted one onlooker, Reg Spong, 87, who was seated in Maidstone Street to watch the relay and gave him a special thank you for being there.

