



Sunseeker



Volume 37 Number 6 - The Friendship Force of the Sunshine Coast Inc. – June 2026.

A world of friends is a world of peace.

President: Jeff Gunns

Vice-President: Jim Catt

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Treasurer: John Paine

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www.thefriendshipforce.org

FF Sunshine Coast Website:
www.friendshipforcesunshinecoast.org.au

FF Australia Website:
friendshipforce-aussie.org

FF Sunshine Coast email:
info@ffsunshinecoast.org.au

The Friendship Force pledge

As a member of the Friendship Force,
I recognise that I can make a difference.

I recognise that I have a mission.

That mission is to be a friend to the people of the world.

As I embark on this adventure,

I know that others will be watching me.

I know that, through my example to my fellow citizens
and the people of other countries,
the cause of friendship, love and peace can be furthered.

I can make a difference

Meeting Dates

Board Meeting	General Meeting	Picnic Meet-up
13 th July, 17 th Aug, 14 th Sept, 12 th Oct and 9 th Nov.	26 th July, 27 th Sept and 22 nd Nov (+AGM).	23 rd Aug, 24 th Oct

Dates For Your Diary

30 th July (Thurs)	World Friendship Day
5 th Aug – 12 th Aug	Inbound Blue Mountains. Host Coordinator - Gillian Brown
11 th Sept – 17 th Sept	Inbound Shelby, North Carolina. Host Coordinator- Cherie Amos
19 th – 22 nd October	National Conference, Canberra.
8 th Dec (Tues)	FFSC Christmas Party @ Twin Waters Golf Club.

General Meetings 2026

26th July, 27th Sept and 22nd
Nov (+AGM).

Board Meetings 2026

13th July, 17th Aug, 14th Sept,
12th Oct and 9th Nov.

President's Musings

As I write this, our calendar is beginning to fill with exciting opportunities to showcase the very best of our club and the Friendship Force experience.

If you haven't already been approached, you soon will be asked to put your hand up for one of our next two incoming Journeys. We will be welcoming our friends from the Blue Mountains from 5–12 August, followed by a group of 14 single ladies from Shelby, USA, from 11–17 September.

To make these Journeys successful, we will need plenty of willing Hosts, Co-hosts and Dinner Hosts. For those of our newer members who have not yet experienced the joy of an inbound Journey, I strongly encourage you to consider becoming a Co-host. It is a wonderful way to become involved, gain confidence and experience the Friendship Force hosting experience without taking on the full responsibilities of hosting. Further on in this edition of *The Sunseeker* you will find information outlining what each of these roles involves.

I would also like to ask members to start thinking about the future leadership of our club. At our AGM in November, several committee positions will become vacant, including President, Vice President, Social Activities Coordinator and Dine Outs Coordinator.

These roles are not particularly onerous and, in fact, provide a rewarding way to become more involved, meet fellow members and help shape the future of our club. Fresh ideas and new perspectives are always valuable, and sharing the responsibilities ensures that no one person carries the load.

Our club thrives because members are willing to contribute their time, talents and enthusiasm. To continue enjoying the wonderful friendships, travel opportunities and experiences that Friendship Force offers, we need members to step forward and help fill these important positions.

Please give some thought to how you might contribute. Whether as a host, committee member, or volunteer in another capacity, every contribution helps keep our club strong, vibrant and welcoming.

Thank you for your continued support.

Jeff Gunns

President

Resolutions from the Board in 2026.

That Friendship Force Sunshine Coast (FFSC) does not participate in, endorse, or encourage the use of any "Ambassador Coordinator Earned Seat" arrangement for Journeys.

Further, any discounts, credits, rebates, complimentary places, or other financial benefits offered in connection with a Journey shall be applied for the benefit of, and shared equally among, all Ambassadors participating in that Journey.

EXTRA Bits & Bobs:

A successful Friendship Force Journey relies on the generosity and enthusiasm of our members. Whether you volunteer as a Host, Co-Host or Dinner Host, each role plays an important part in creating meaningful cultural exchanges and lasting friendships for our visiting ambassadors.

Host: Provides accommodation and shares their home and lifestyle with visiting ambassadors.

Co-Host: Supports Hosts and ambassadors through activities, outings and companionship.

Dinner Host: Welcomes ambassadors into their home for a shared meal and cultural exchange.

A link will be available in the July Sunseeker with more information on Journey Hosting Roles.

Member Anniversaries

For June – Jean Ledwidge – 28 years.
John and Gillian Gosney – 21 years.

#26397 BLUE MOUNTAINS JOURNEY REPORT (5/8/26 – 12/8/26) as at 9/3/26

Communications have commenced with Ambassador co-ordinator. I have confirmed we can host 4 couples and 1 single at the moment. The day in Brisbane is going ahead with a Fish Lane Brisbane Walkers Guide and the Gympie Day at the Gold mining museum is continuing due to popular response. I have booked Twin Waters Golf Club 11/8 for the farewell dinner.

We now have enough hosts however **we need more co-host support.**

OUR NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING IS WEDNESDAY 24TH JUNE at 1.30pm.

Looking forward to another great journey.

Gillian Brown
Ambassador Coordinator

Journey Mentor's Report

2026 INTERNATIONAL JOURNEYS

Note: Cherie is looking for more members to become Cohosts for one or two days during the Shelby FF journey in September. Please let her know if you can help.

26248 Shelby USA to Sunshine Coast and Perth: Host Coordinator Cherie Amos

Journey dates for Shelby to Sunshine Coast are from Friday 11th Sept to Sunday 17th (6 nights)

Number of Ambassadors:14

Shelby Ambassadors will travel to the Sunshine Coast by train.

26262 FF Sunshine Coast to FF Brasilia, Brazil and to Xalapa Mexico

Journey dates: Brasilia from Wednesday October 21st and end on Wednesday October 28th (7 nights).

Ambassador Coordinator for Brasilia: John Pane

Number of Ambassadors:10

Journey dates: Xalapa From Saturday October 31st to Saturday November 7th (6 nights)

Ambassador Coordinator: John Brown

Number of Ambassadors:10

2026 DOMESTIC JOURNEYS

#26397 Blue Mountains to Sunshine Coast: Host Coordinator Gillian Brown

Journey dates: Blue Mountains to the Sunshine Coast from 5th August to 12th August (7 nights).

Number of Ambassadors: 9

2027 INTERNATIONAL JOURNEYS

INBOUND JOURNEYS

Note: Planning to host an International journey can take from 10 to 15 months. It involves organising a program of activities, calculating costs, matching hosts and ambassadors, and keeping all members informed.

I am looking for two Host Coordinators for the 2027 Inbound clubs. You will form a committee so that the planning is shared. If you will take on this role, please let me know A.S.A.P.

#27184 Lake Simcoe, Canada to Mount Barker and Sunshine Coast – HOST COORDINATOR WANTED

Suggested month is April 2027

Contact has been made.

#27190 San Antonio, USA to Sunshine Coast and Newcastle - HOST COORDINATOR WANTED

Suggested month is September 2027

Contact has been made.

OUTBOUND JOURNEY

Note: I am looking for an Ambassador Coordinator for this two-phase Outbound Canadian journey. Please let me know if you would nominate to take on this role.

#27219 Sunshine Coast and Tweed Valley, Australia to Greater Hamilton and Burlington and Brandan, Canada – AMBASSADOR COORDINATOR WANTED

Suggested month is June 2027

Contact has been made.

2027 DOMESTIC JOURNEYS - inbound and outbound journeys will be organised at a later date.

David Allan
Journey Mentor

Social activities Report for JUNE 2026.



Hi Everyone

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

1. International Friendship Day

International Friendship Day is **THURSDAY 30th JULY @ 11am**. To be held at Double Bay Park.

Similar to 2025 Harmony Day Celebrations everyone will need to bring a plate of international food to share and we will play international games.

If you have any suggestions on how to make this a memorable day, please contact me. A chair or mat yoga session has been offered.

2. Picnic meet-ups

PLEASE CONTINUE TO POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND INVITE YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

Our third picnic meet-up will be held on 23/8 @ 10.00 am at Double Bay Park, Parrearra beside the Green Zebra and Vrina restaurants.

Final Picnic meet-up dates - 24/10.

SPECIAL EVENTS

1. The Afro Caribbean Collective party

Another event I found. This simply requires us to turn up. No pre-booking required. **the Afro Caribbean Collective party** event is on **Saturday 18th July at 7pm - cost \$20 @ Coolum- Peregrin RSL Sub Branch**. Please let me know if you are interested in attending by Wednesday 15th July.

2. **BOOK NOW OR YOU WILL MISS OUT** on an excellent production.

Calamity Jane (Qld Theatre Co musical) – Caloundra Events Centre (Tickets now on sale).

Group of 6+ \$75 pp. **NOTE NEW TIME – EVENING Saturday 31st October @ 7pm.**

I went to this production in Brisbane last year. Thoroughly enjoyable entertainment with rave reviews. I'm happy to book a table for those attending at the theatre restaurant if you let me know that you are attending.

3. Christmas Party

Twin Waters Golf Club - 8th December @ 12 noon. \$55 for a 3-course lunch with welcome drink of beer, wine or soft drink.

Yours in friendship

Gillian Brown

Social Activities Coordinator

Adelaide Journey May 15-22 2026

Board Report – Adelaide Journey May 15-22 2026

The Adelaide Journey was an enjoyable and worthwhile experience for the small number of members who attended. Despite modest numbers, the Journey successfully delivered on the Friendship Force principles of friendship, cultural exchange, social interaction, and shared experiences.

There were a few hiccups at the beginning of the Journey, primarily relating to communication, which at times could have been clearer. However, once the program got underway, everything proceeded smoothly and efficiently, and the Journey quickly settled into an enjoyable rhythm.

One of the highlights was the opportunity to interact with the Adelaide members, who were consistently friendly, welcoming, and generous in sharing their local knowledge and hospitality. The Journey provided many opportunities for social engagement, meaningful conversations, and fun, ensuring the Friendship Force experience was very much achieved.

Several activities stood out as particular highlights. The visit to Hahndorf, including learning about the home and legacy of Hans Heysen, was especially memorable and provided an interesting insight into local history and culture. The visit to Urrbrae Agricultural High School was another standout experience. Seeing a fully functioning farm operating in the middle of suburbia was both fascinating and impressive, offering a unique educational and community perspective. The walk around Port Adelaide also proved to be highly enjoyable, with its rich character, history, and interesting atmosphere making it a memorable experience for participants.

Overall, the Adelaide Journey was highly enjoyable and successfully ticked all the Friendship Force boxes, with strong social interaction, cultural exchange, friendship, and plenty of fun throughout.

Wendy Gunns
Ambassador Coordinator.

Brasilia/ Xalapa journey June update.

With respect to the Mexican component of this journey, it is encouraging that as Ambassador Coordinator I am now having improved communication with the new president of the Xalapa FF club via email and WhatsApp.

The WhatsApp linkage is also connected with the Host Coordinator, previous President and with Hemily the Sth American journey coordinator.

New President Oscar Collins possesses good English and has been prompt in his responses which included a recent enquiry I made regarding transport between Veracruz and Xalapa. Not sure how many FF clubs they host annually but the last international journey was reportedly from Austria. Oscar has assured me that we are visiting Xalapa/ Mexico at a really good time given that it coincides with the Festival of the Dead. Ongoing planning meetings will occur with our 10 ambassadors prior to our departure in mid October.

In friendship,
John Brown (Xalapa Journey Coordinator)

FINAL REPORT – Journey #26245 – Hamburg / Varel to Sunshine Coast 1–8 May 2026

The Journey consisted of 12 Ambassadors:

- Wolfgang Dietz (Hamburg)
- Hiroko Dietz (Hamburg)
- Christina Hartwich-Kalkowsky (Hamburg)
- Wolfgang Kalkowsky (Hamburg)
- Stefan Kanngiesser (Varel)
- Barbara Kanngiesser (Varel)
- Eugen Sandner (Lübeck)
- Brigitta Rost (Lübeck)
- Marielle van Diepen (Hamburg)
- Helga Fox (Hamburg)
- Eveline Depping (Hamburg)
- Ulrike Schreiber (Hamburg)

The Journey commenced with a few showers, however for the remainder of the week we were fortunate to enjoy beautiful weather. This Journey included several new activities, all of which provided valuable experiences and feedback for future planning:

- **Fairhill Native Gardens, Yandina** – A lovely venue and enjoyable visit. If repeated in future, it was suggested that the presentation focus more on the native gardens themselves and highlight some of the more unusual plant species on display.
- **Activity Afternoon (Kayaking, Cooking and Craft)** – This was extremely well received by all Ambassadors and proved to be one of the highlights of the Journey.
- **Kawana Beach Day** – The beach activities and golf were thoroughly enjoyed. Feedback suggested that a greater variety of content on the burgers would enhance the lunch experience.
- **Bloomhill Cancer Care Centre** – Universally regarded as a very worthwhile and meaningful visit, with strong support for including it again in future Journeys.
- **Buderim Pioneer Cottage** – An excellent presentation by knowledgeable and enthusiastic guides, which was appreciated by everyone.
- **Group Dinner at the Hall** – A very enjoyable evening overall. Suggestions for improvement included better organisation of the table layout, with two tables joined together to create groups of approximately eight people. It was also suggested that some games or activities after dinner would add to the atmosphere and interaction.

By the end of the week, many Ambassadors were understandably feeling a little tired after travelling for almost three weeks, however they were extremely happy with the success of the Journey and the many friendships formed along the way.

In true Friendship Force style, there were tears all around as we farewelled our visitors on Friday morning — a reflection of the wonderful connections, hospitality and camaraderie shared throughout the week.

Jeff Gunns

Journey Coordinator

MERCHANDISE

I have 3 Club Shirts which have been passed back to the Club for sale.

2 Men's 1xM and 1xL. 1 Ladies size 12.

These are sold to members for \$35 which is 1/2 price of new shirts I will have them at the meeting so just see me there. If this would be suitable for you please see me at the meeting or email.

In Friendship, Judi Gordon

SUNSEEKER. sunseekerffsc@gmail.com

Do you have something that YOU would like to add to Sunseeker.

Please email it through to sunseekerffsc@gmail.com and it will be added to the next edition of the Sunseeker. I'm aiming to acknowledge everyone when I receive information for Sunseeker, if you haven't received a reply from me within a few days, please feel free to contact me.

Yours in Friendship, Sonia

Memories of Chris Harman

On reflection my wife Robyn is the only person that I have spent more of my lifetime with than I had spent with my mate and colleague Chris. For twenty-two years we had worked together closely, lunched daily, travelled internationally to create, develop, implement, and support educational initiatives in information technology undergraduate and post graduate programs, and creating partnerships with international colleges. We were the main drivers in establishing a School of Information Technology at UniSQ. Its success was its downfall. Chris was an ardent supporter of SimStat the successful consulting group that I and Ash Plank ran.

We supported each other in both success and failure in our imaginative ventures. Neither of us would ever yield to being intimidated. We were fans of Black Adder (TV) and Chris could always resolve disappointment by suggesting we follow Baldrick's strategy of coming up with 'a very cunning plan'.

Chris's leadership as head of the Mathematics and Computing Department created a workplace of friends. As the staffing levels increased, we had colleagues from many countries and of course international students. At one time staff in our faculty came from 36 countries, and on-campus students from 128 countries. The most successful strategy to develop friendships was by partying and sharing favourite foods, music, coloured lights, around a swimming pool with the staff's families and postgraduate students at Chris and Carol's place each semester.

We played tennis regularly – lunchtime 'hits', fixtures on Tuesday nights (team Sundowners), socially (fiercely competitive) on Fridays after work with the other team members followed by happy hour with our wives. In the twenty years that the Sundowners were together we had four 'Annual Tournaments' to settle the contentious issue of who was the best player – a complex affair given that we were doubles players – the draw designed by our statistician Ash and fought to the death. The last tournament after Chris and Carol had moved to Coolum Beach attracted a crowd at the Clive Palmer Golf Resort – to the surprise of our wives and indeed to the many subsequent drop-ins who had thought our wives having returned from their walk were the beginnings of a crowd!

Chris was never known to cheat at tennis, he was always a man of high moral substance who had the unique ability to interpret rules differently to anyone else and to see ball marks in favourable locations – not to mention his rationale for defending his three-metre foot faults. This ability ensured that the 'best player' was never accurately determined, and Chris's creativity added to the unforgettable fun of our 'Annual' contests.

With a group of close friends, we socialised on weekends, camped in national parks, travelled and camped through remote areas of Australia, enjoyed each other's fine-dining efforts amongst the sand dunes, saw our shadows in the starlight, and stripped the willow bush dancing in the swales.

It wasn't 'all fun and games' – there were tense and stressful moments. Some that were resolved within the rules – Chris's **Casserole la Rock** meal, a competition entry that scored highly for flavour, but which had 0.58 marks deducted for unspecified hazards resulting from his dropping the raw mince in the gravel followed by the knee-jerk coverup denial reactions to quickly mix it all in. However, it earned a bonus score of 1.64 marks for novelty and the opportunity for eaters to perhaps spit out a gemstone.

Others like the **Surprise at Clayton's Bore**⁷ off the Birdsville Track haunted Chris forever – while the mere thought of that night set his friends giggling uncontrollably. New rules were invented and applied to future expeditions. No bonus points could ever convince Chris to return to that magically haunted spot. (1 TV series in the making.)

When we retired to the Sunshine Coast Chris and Carol were quick to invite us into Friendship Force and we enjoyed many Journeys with them and the pre and post touring adventures that ensued – all with memorable episodes. Chris being a mathematician could decipher the Russian alphabet, so he insisted on being the official translator in Moscow. But despite his skill in coming up with the equivalent English characters, and his dubious efforts at vocalising his 'translation' with a fake Russian accent, none of us had any idea of what the words meant. Thank goodness for sign language and the friendliness of the locals who were able to point us to the correct train platforms.

With Bernie Nichols and Jim Macready, we cycled twice weekly competing with each other and others with our Strava segments. Chris had experimented with different GPS systems and noted variations in their measurements, so Chris used a variety but only uploaded the fastest segment times – even though we crossed a boundary ahead of Chris he always posted the quickest time (evidence based of course).

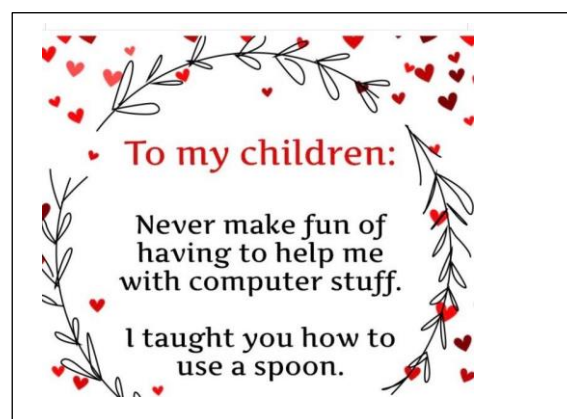
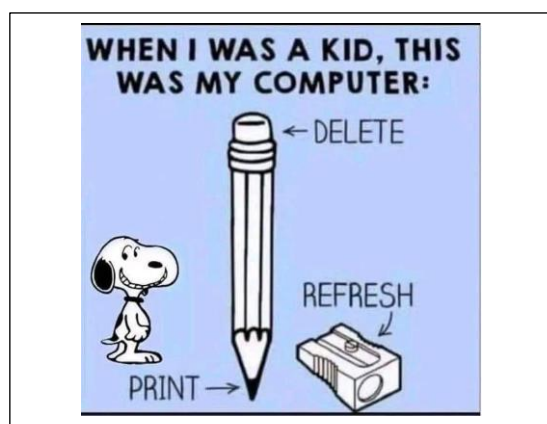
We celebrated our retirement rides with lengthy coffee stops where at first crack there were no limits on the nature of world problems that we could not solve and if any doubts arose, we simply got back on our bikes.

It was very sad when such a friendly intelligent quick-witted creative and caring person was reduced to silence by dementia.

It is uplifting however to remember the life, times, and achievements we shared. It certainly was a full life and not for the faint hearted. Well done Chris 15+/10.

Mike

P.S. I'll bet (responsibly) he has modified his angel wings to be the fastest little Cherub flapping around a baseball diamond.



Dine Outs 2026

Our Monthly Dine Out

Each month we organise a **"Dine Out"** as a relaxed social activity for members. After all, we all need to eat—so why not enjoy a good meal while catching up with friends and getting to know other members a little better?

Our Dine Outs are a wonderful way to spend lunch together in a casual setting. There's no obligation to attend, and each month we try somewhere different—sometimes exploring a new café or restaurant, and other times returning to one of our favourites.

Usually, around 15–20 members come along. Everyone simply orders what they would like from the menu and pays for their own meal, which keeps things easy and relaxed for everyone.

The lunches are always great fun and very enjoyable, with plenty of good conversation and laughter.

As the current Dine Out Coordinator, I'll be announcing the location of each month's Dine Out at our Meetings, where you can add your name to the list if you'd like to join us. I'll also send out reminder emails so everyone stays informed, even if you're unable to attend the meeting. Just let me know if you'd like to come along so I can make sure we book enough seats.

I hope to see you at our next Dine Out!

Wendy Gunns
Dine Out Coordinator

Here are the dates for 2026:

- *None in August due to incoming journey
- *Wednesday, 9th September
- *Thursday, 8th October
- *Thursday 12th November due to Remembrance Day
- *December, none

Looking forward to seeing as many as possible members throughout the year.
Please wear your Club shirts when attending.

"We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." – Winston Churchill

"Every person can make a difference, and every person should try." – John F. Kennedy

Membership Report June 2026

The Recruitment program during April and May has given great results.

The club has inducted four new members with another three to join this week. All new members are community minded, interested in travel and very willing to become involved in the journeys and social activities of the club. They will bring a wide range of interests and experiences to share with members and that is the best basis for growing friendships.

The seven new members live in Mapleton, Mudjimba, Yaroomba, Alexandra Headlands, Paradise Point and Twin Waters so there has been quite an increase in numbers from the northern part of the coast.

I know that all members will ensure that they introduce themselves to these new members, welcome them at meetings, dine-outs and picnics and make sure they are included in any future planning committees.

To keep the momentum, I have plenty of club brochures for members to give to anyone who is interested in finding out more about the club. I will have them at the next General Meeting.

Jenny Allan
Membership Officer





Canberra 19th -22nd October 2026

Just as those who attended the Norfolk Island National Conference in 2024 had a very enjoyable time interacting with members from other Cubs around Australia and New Zealand this conference promises similar opportunities. It will be a mix of envisioning Friendship Force in Australia and enjoying social activities in Canberra. It will charge up the batteries through presentations by keynote speakers and well led discussion workshops conducted by members from each of the Australian clubs – the emphasis being on opportunities for all to listen, learn, discuss and be enthused.

The conference will also include a **revamped 'Council of Leaders'** session that will be inclusive of all attendees, rather than comprising 'observers' and Club delegates who vote on formal motions. Instead, the focus will be more inclusive and collegiate – more like a plenary session focussing on a national perspective and maybe/hopefully arriving at resolutions that are inspirational for the next 50 years.

So please be excited and if you can attend, register to assist the planners. One registration of interest for each person please. Register through <https://friendshipforce-aussie.org> The detailed program will be available in April.

Flyer supplied by Mike McFarlane.

Cleaning of the Hall.

It is mandatory that each hirer vacuums and mops after their hire. Thus, it is our responsibility to ensure we adhere to the "leave it as you find it" policy. We have made a commitment to follow the process of 'leave it as you find it'. **This means we must, after every meeting:**

- Vacuum the floor paying particular attention to the entrance/ exit areas
 - Use spray mop in kitchen area
 - Use broom to access all other areas and use vacuum to clear
 - Men to clean Male toilets
 - Women to clean Female toilets
 - Ensure all windows are closed and blinds drawn
- Ensure all tables and chairs are tidily put away.

TO AVOID DAMAGE DO NOT DRAG CHAIRS OR TABLES ACROSS FLOOR

This task of cleaning up is not onerous at all, especially if everyone pitches in. However, it is acknowledged there will be absences from some meetings.



President Jeff



Vice President Jim



Secretary Liz



Treasurer John P

**FFSC BOARD
2026**



Journey Mentor David

The Army of Helpers who keep the club running in 2026

Function	Coordinator	Team
Dine-outs	Wendy Gunns	
Facebook	Liz Brown	Jenny Allan
Flags and Banners	Glen Gordon	
Greeters	John & Gillian Gosney	Helga Drescy, Jo Mutz
Lucky Door	Cherie Amos	Jane Paine
Membership	Jenny Allan & Gillian Gosney	
Merchandise	Judy Gordon	
Morning Teas	Cherie Amos	Elayne Martin, Kerry Cooke
Publicity	Merrilyn Rundle	Claude Boulenaz
Social Activities & lunches after general meetings	Gillian Brown	Coral & Ron Usher
Sunseeker Editor	Sonia Mellors	Jim Catt
Web updates & Database	Mike McFarlane	Sonia Mellors
Multicultural Coordinator	Claude Boulenaz	
Grants	Jeff Gunns	

June Dine-Out at Kenilworth Dairy:

