

Australian Trefoil Guild Adviser
Report 2006 – 2008

This report covers the past two years since the National Gathering 2006.

Tasmania (October 2006) provided Trefoil Guild with a friendly happy Gathering enjoyed by all who attended. A meeting of Advisers was held prior to this Gathering. Items discussed and agreed to at this meeting have been implemented as follows.

1. Publications. The “Hints for Trefoil Guild” booklet was launched at the Tasmanian Gathering.
2. The Administration Manual was up dated to include a chapter on “National Gathering Procedures”
3. A recommendation from the Baden-Powell Guild to the Australian Fellowship of Former Scouts and Guides, that the then National Joint Council term of 4 years be reduced to 3 years, was consequently agreed to by all Constituent Organisations.
4. That each State considers introducing a State Service project. This has been put into practice by a majority of States. The projects have been introduced on an annual basis with members deciding which charity they will support each year.
5. The category of “Associate member” was dispensed with. All who join Trefoil Guild are now “members” and entitled to assume all privileges and responsibilities of such membership.
6. Monies of \$7,000+ returned from AFOFSAG funds have, to date, covered the costs of printing an Australian Trefoil Guild leaflet, financed a National Advisers meeting in September 2007, launched the Dark Horse Venture scheme for Trefoil Guild members in Australia, and enabled Advisers to participate in a phone conference regarding the election of a new Australian Trefoil Guild Adviser.
7. Revisions of the Trefoil Guild Handbook included clarification of “Recess of a Guild” and “Closure of a Guild”. Clarifications of clauses in the Administration Manual were also made.
8. A set of challenges to be used by Trefoil Guilds during the celebration of the Brownsea Island camp were adapted and circulated to States.
9. Following agreement that Australian Trefoil Guild adopt the Dark Horse Venture scheme, contact was made with the UK office and with New Zealand Trefoil who already were running the scheme in a manner we believed suitable for Australia. We have copied and produced the booklets and forms and adopted certificates previously designed by a Trefoil Guild member. Patsy Hughes (past NSW Trefoil Guild Adviser) has accepted the job of Co-ordinator and is providing Australian members with information and support. *Patsy will be holding a meeting of Venturers and those interested in learning more at 4pm Saturday.*
10. Communication routes have been increased by utilising the Australian and State Guide websites. On the Australian Guide website is a Trefoil Guide page from where members can download the ATGA Australian Newsletter issued 2-3 times a year, and the Australian Fellowship News which has been published following each meeting of the National Joint Council. The latter allows everyone to know what is being discussed and decided by at this representative committee.

The next National Advisers meeting was held in September 2007. The venue chosen was Victoria as being the most central and economic as regards airfares.

From this meeting came further items and projects which have also been implemented.

1. Financial responsibility and management was a major topic. Trefoil Guild, as members of Girl Guide Australia, has obligations under the Charities Act to account for all monies collected and raised. This led to further revision of our Handbook, Administration Manual and the forms we use as well as to how we should manage the accounts of Guilds in recess and reporting procedures.
2. Membership subscriptions have, unfortunately, become more complex since dispensing with the Associate membership category and because of the variations between what is paid to States. The latter covers the Australian quota, public liability and personal insurance, and minimal administration costs. For members who are full adult members of their State this portion of our subscription has already been paid. We are still to evolve simple and universal terminology which our members will understand when referring to the different payments.
3. The 2007 edition of the Trefoil Guild Handbook was issued. It is frustrating for members to find that our Handbook has again been revised, but hopefully they can console themselves with the realisation that, whenever changes become necessary, they are put into the hands of our members.
4. Wording procedures is never easy. What is intended does not always match what has been said in the document. A current example has been the election of Advisers. It must be as fair and as transparent as possible. This will be a topic at the 2008 Advisers meeting.
5. Promotion of Trefoil Guild is an ongoing challenge. We have always tried to seek new members. By various changes to our administration and our attitude to what Guilds may do or be, we try to make it easier to encourage membership of current and younger women from Guiding.
 - There is no distinction between members. We welcome women who are still in a leadership or another Guiding role to join us for the fun and fellowship with like minded adults.
 - New Guilds may be formed if a group needs one which better suits their age; their interests; or the time at which is convenient to meet. It may be sad to see a former Guild close, but we cater for the present members, not create a monument for the past. This does not mean we cannot remember those who have done so much and be grateful for what they have given us.
 - Adapt our procedures and programs to the abilities of our members. It was decided to trial "Group Guilds". These were primarily designed for Guilds when age or physical limitations had made the finding of office bearers difficult. Application to transfer would be made through the State Adviser. The Guild would nominate a Contact Member who worked through a State Co-ordinator. This Co-ordinator supported and advised the group, sending up to date information. Financial management could be simplified. The members' subscriptions and other necessary detail would be sent by the Contact Member to the co-ordinator who then dealt with reporting census information. To date no Guild has entered this category, but it is a way we see of ensuring our older Guilds can stay viable.

- Membership of a Lone Guild is available to all. Even if a State does have their own Lone Guild a person from one State can be accepted as a Lone member in another State's Lone Guild.
- Being recognised gives everyone an opportunity for PR. While Trefoil Guild does not have a "uniform", all States have their own casual shirts and the right to wear our "dress" of white shirt and scarf. Some States have promoted their shirts and encouraged members to wear same at events. (Personally I have worn my shirt and scarf while travelling and always get the opportunity to explain about Trefoil Guild – so many other women passengers were Girl Guides!) Guild members also need to make it obvious just who we are when they help at various events.

ISGF

Prominent in the job description for the Australian Trefoil Guild Adviser is to represent Trefoil Guild on the National Joint Council of the Australian Fellowship of Former Scouts and Guides. In this the ATGA is helped by two Trefoil Guild members from the State in which the NJC is meeting.

For too long the International Fellowship has been left to the Baden-Powell Guild. They have been the ones who attend the World Conference and use the Fellowship badge as their uniform.

In fact, Trefoil Guild is the larger membership of the three Australian constituent organisations. By last years census we were 78.8% of Australia's membership. Our country belongs to WAGGGS, but we as individuals belong to the International Scout Guide Fellowship. Even if Trefoil Guild members do not participate at World Conferences, we do need to keep ourselves informed of what is happening at the International level. Trefoil Guilds need to have their computer 'savvy' members check the websites.

Personal comment

This will be my last attendance at a National Gathering as Australian Trefoil Adviser. It has been a challenging but pleasant three and a half years. Besides the four trips a year to Queensland to attend the meetings of the National Joint Council I have been invited to two weekend Gatherings in Queensland, two in New South Wales and two in Western Australia. I've been at three day Gatherings in South Australia and spent a day at Victoria's 24 Hour Gathering. At each event the welcome was wonderful and I thank you all for allowing me to expand the number of people I now call 'friend'. It is not hard to feel we are an "Australian" Trefoil Guild.

I will miss the day to day contact with the State Advisers and the less frequent, but helpful, contact with the Australian office and office bearers.

I thank the State Trefoil Guild Advisers for their support, co-operation, and understanding and prompt attention to requests, willingness to compromise, and ever present friendship.



Australian Trefoil Guild Adviser
1/6/2005 – 31/8/2008