



## QUEENSLAND BRANCH

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

November 2021

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#### OVERVIEW

2021 has been a year of increasingly confident renewal.

We were successful in holding a full suite of competitions and social and cultural events, in spite of the changing conditions and landscape of Covid 19 in Queensland. The Board and members have been steadfast in their support of these initiatives, and the numbers of those attending were typical of a pre-Covid year, and in some cases (for example the Short Story Competition), substantially more.

Membership numbers have grown slightly during the year. We warmly welcome the new members.

We very much hope that a more favourable Covid 19 landscape in 2022 will allow us not only to continue our regular program of events, but will allow us to plan and implement significant new initiatives.

#### FINANCIAL

The Treasurer's report shows a small loss for 2021, principally resulting from problems with investing in a difficult and volatile property market. I refer the meeting to her Report.

We have so far been frustrated in our attempts to secure an investment property (*see the Attachment "ESU Property Investment Report", report by Richard Macedo, Vice-President*). This item remains a top priority for the Board, in order to establish a secure earnings stream to support the work of the ESU (Q).

#### EVENTS

Unlike the other ESU branches in Australia (Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, ACT), we were able to mount a full program of activities during 2021. This was a very significant achievement in its own right, and bears witness to the determination and commitment of the Board and members to support the resumption of our annual program of events.

#### *Public Speaking Competition*

Under the leadership of Emeritus Professor Caroline Hatcher all three divisions of the 2021 competition (Junior, Intermediate and Senior) were held, using Newmarket Hall in Ashgrove Avenue. In 2020 we were not able to hold all the competitions, and the resumption of the full suite of competitions in 2021 was a major step towards a normalized year.

Covid-19 restrictions were less onerous than in 2020, and we were able to host family members and guests at the Newmarket Hall.

Thanks to the involvement of Joanne Keune, a North Queensland regional competition with heats was held in Townsville. ESU (Q) flew the winners to Brisbane to compete in the Grand Final. The Senior Grand Final was indeed won by the winner of the Townsville competition.

The running of the competition was actively supported by ESU (Q) members Majella Stevens, Robert Goes, and Roly Sussex. Numbers of entrants were:

	SE Queensland	FN Queensland
Senior	21	17
Intermediate	14	8

The results are available on the website:

<https://www.esu.org.au/2021-secondary-schools-public-speaking-grand-finals/>

Emeritus Professor Caroline Hatcher deserves our admiration and gratitude for her outstanding work in ensuring the continuation of the Public Speaking competition under such difficult circumstances; and our judges, Professor Caroline Hatcher, Lesley Irvine and Annette Stoddard.

With the disappearance of junior competitions under the Rostrum organization, the ESU (Q) competition has become the major public speaking competition for school students.

A working party of the Board is currently at work discussing the conduct and format of the competition in 2022 and beyond. Preliminary hall bookings and a schedule have already been made for the SE Queensland competitions. A major focus will be on Web-based software to handle and simplify enrolments and management of entrants.

### ***The Roly Sussex Short Story Competition***

The Roly Sussex Short Story Competition resumed in 2020, with a delayed launch and submission date. 40 entries were received (18 Open, 22 Student). The judges were Emeritus Professor Peter Little (Chief Judge), David Fagan and John Thompson-Gray. The winning stories were published on our website early in 2021:

<https://www.esu.org.au/2021-roly-sussex-short-story-competition/>

In the Open section the first and second prize winners were respectively from the ACT and Victoria. Covid-19 restrictions made it impossible for them to attend the prize-giving ceremony. In consultation with Government House we regretfully cancelled the ceremony, which the Governor has kindly hosted at Government House since the inception of the competition. Prizes and certificates were mailed to the winners.

On behalf of ESU(Q) I express our special thanks to His Excellency Paul de Jersey (AC) for his generous support of the competition. We hope that this tradition will continue under the new Governor, Her Excellency Jeannette Young.

The 2021 competition resumed with a wider publicity outreach in 2021, especially through the efforts of Ray Heffernan (Secretary) and Jan Heffernan (via Facebook). Entries closed at the end of September, with 84 in the Open and 68 in the Secondary Schools competitions, or about four times more than in 2020. The same judging panel has continued: Emeritus Professor Peter Little (Chief Judge), David Fagan and John Thompson-Gray. The judges have just announced their decision for the Secondary Schools competition, and the winners are being informed. Results for the Open competition are expected by the end of November. Stories will be published on the ESU(Q) website.

A working party of the Board will review the competition and how it is run, with a view to the 2022 competition. A particular emphasis will be a Web-based software package for the submission of entries and payment of entry fees.

### **CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES**

The following socio-cultural events were held in 2021:

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|----------|---|
| 5 March  | Shakespeare evening at South Bank TAFE, presented by Patsy McCarthy and Dr Jillian Clare  |
| 26 March | Madonna King presented a lecture at Miegunyah on "The language of politics"   |
| 30 April | Hugh O'Brien presented a talk at South Bank TAFE on "How to Write a Funny Play"   |
| 30 July  | Churchill Oration. The Churchill lecture resumed in 2021, and was held at a black-tie dinner at the Uniting Service Club. The invited speaker was Brian Lorrigan, President, Queensland chapter, French-Australian Chamber of Commerce & Industry. His topic was "Cool Britannia! Can the winds of change bring a welcome breath of fresh air, or a cool chill? Could the United Kingdom's first steps into standalone politics and trading relationships in decades provide a third way, strengthen multilateralism and rule of law, and reinvigorate its trading partners?" |

23 October Miegunyah, High Tea with presentations by the Public Speaking winners  
19 November Annual General Meeting, followed by the Christmas Party

### **MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD**

Ross Brodie stood down as Secretary at the 2020 AGM, and his place was taken by Ray Heffernan, who handed the Treasurer's role to Julia Ponder. Other members continued.

I warmly recognize and thank members of the Board for supporting ESU (Queensland Branch) through another difficult year in 2021, and especially the members of the executive:

Richard Macedo, Vice-President

Ray Heffernan, Secretary

Julia Ponder, Treasurer

Gary Gardiner has been invaluable in guiding the ESU's strategy to buy into the investment property market. And Jan Heffernan has played a major role in organizing events and promoting the ESU (Q) on Facebook.

During the year Robert Goes and Majella Stevens resigned from the Board. The two casual vacancies have been filled by Professor Vicky Browning and Robert Goes, who wishes to resume his role on the Board.

Three members have indicated that they wish to step down from their role on the Board shortly after the AGM:

Ray Heffernan, Secretary

Jan Heffernan

Gary Gardiner

Their positions will create casual vacancies, which the Board will fill by invitation in accordance with the Constitution. I am currently exploring possible replacements among people with the appropriate skillsets.

In thanking the three retiring members, I wish to express special thanks to Ray Heffernan. As Board member, Treasurer and then Secretary has devoted an enormous amount of time, energy and expertise to supporting the ESU(Q), and has been invaluable to me as President. His absence from the Board will be keenly felt.

### **OAM AWARD**

On behalf of the Board I warmly congratulate ESU member Desley Miller, who was awarded an OAM in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for her service to education and to community mental health.

### **CONSTITUTION**

Following approval at the 2020 AGM, the new Constitution of ESU Queensland was lodged with the ACNC (Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission) by Richard Macedo, Vice-President, on behalf of ESU (Q).

### **TECHNOLOGY AND NEW DIRECTIONS**

Since February 2020 the Board of ESU Queensland has been meeting by Zoom, and during the year ESU (Q) has bought a subscription to enable extended Zoom meetings with larger numbers of participants. The Board is looking at ways of extending the use of this and related technologies in 2022.

During 2021 the organizational operations of ESU(Q) have increasingly been coordinated through Google Drive.

### **AESU**

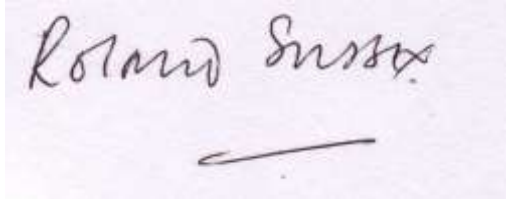
The AESU is the umbrella organizing spanning the various ESU branches in Australia (President: Robert Furlan, Melbourne; Vice-President: Chris Perriam, Adelaide). It is currently preparing to register as a not-for-profit organization. This issue will come before the new Board.

### **LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022**

Once again, the changing Covid-19 conditions of 2021 forced us to consider our current nature, activities and directions. Our success in re-establishing our regular pattern of activities is a tribute to the commitment of the Board and members.

To the new Board I commend the following considerations:

- a wider and younger membership
- the expansion of technology for outreach and activities
- the expansion of the footprint of ESU (Q), perhaps using the North Queensland chapter of the Public Speaking Competition as a model for development
- resolution of the investment/real estate issue
- adoption of an investment strategy to secure ESU (Q)'s future financial trajectory

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Roland Sussex" in a cursive script. Below the name is a horizontal line.

Emeritus Professor Roland (Roly) Sussex  
President, ESU (Queensland Branch)  
18 November, 2020

# ATTACHMENT

## ESU Property Investment Report

Over the past 6 months the ESU executive has been very active in its pursuit to acquire a suitable investment property. ESU funds of between \$1m and \$1.2m have been allocated for this purpose. We are looking for a return on funds of approximately 5% generating a minimum income of \$60,000. In addition to a Tenant with a satisfactory stable business (ie not a restaurant!) the tenancy needs to have an expiry date of not less than say 2 years remaining with preferably 2 option terms of 3 years duration. As to location we have been looking at properties within a radius of approximate 15 km of the Brisbane CBD although we did look at one property in Slacks Creek and another in Toowoomba.

One of our directors Gary Gardiner took on the quite heavy burden of liaising with a number of Agents who referred to him investment properties that may be of interest to us. Gary estimates that he has received upwards of 200 properties for his initial review! Whilst most of these did not fall within our investment guidelines we have given serious consideration to 17 (see below) of these. Our Vice President Richard Macedo reported in some detail on each of these properties – particularly in regard to the title and lease terms.

For a number of reasons we have not as yet been able to secure a suitable investment property. These include remaining lease term too short, option term too short, complicated title (Brisbane Airport properties are leasehold held under an initial 99 year lease with sub – sub leases involved), not having sufficient time to carry out preliminary due diligence before property sold, property situate in area where tenants are moving out with many vacancies in buildings (ie Wickham Terrace), uncertainty of tenant retail business viability, being out-bided at auction sale (Strathpine property) and missing out due to prior offer accepted by owner.

To comment generally on our efforts to date the current investment property market is running hot. Properties with a good return are being snapped up quickly. Being a not for profit organisation the Directors are conscious of our risk profile being different to a normal commercial entity. In some instances we have missed out on account of the property being sold before we have completed our due diligence – the buyer having accepted the commercial risk of proceeding with minimum prior investigation of the property.

The Board will nevertheless continue with its efforts to secure a suitable investment property so that a satisfactory return can be obtained on its funds/assets.

### Properties Reviewed

1. **\*408 Gympie Road, Strathpine** : Offices –Anglicare tenant. Attended auction but ESU outbid.

- 2        **\*3/3363-3365 Pacific Highway, Slacks Creek** : Warehouse - Short Tenancy (2 years + 3 year Option).
  
- 3        **Lots 21, 23 and 71 201 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill** : Medical Offices. Attractive return but query Owner/Tenant same person? A lot of vacancies in this building. Doctors moving out to be nearer hospitals to which they are attached.
  
- 4        **Unit 3 Grevillea Place Brisbane Airport** : Warehouse but long term Lease from Brisbane Airport Authority – complex title.
  
- 5        **\*366 Stenner Street Kearneys Spring (Toowoomba City)**. Occupied by Greencross Vets. Good tenant but rental income on the low side. Insufficient time to carry out due diligence before auction.
  
- 6        **2-6 Leonardo Drive Unit Brisbane Airport** : Warehouse but long term Lease from Brisbane Airport Authority – complex title.
  
- 7        **1 Leonardo Drive Unit Brisbane Airport** : Warehouse but long term Lease from Brisbane Airport Authority – complex title.
  
- 8        **\*Unit 2, 85 Industry Place Wynnum** : New Warehouse/Offices. Offer to Purchase lodged but Owner decided to proceed with Purchaser for all 4 units in the Development.
  
- 9        **6/ 2 Garret Street Brendale** : Office/Warehouse. Good prospect – new 3 year Lease plus options but insufficient time to carry out due diligence before auction sale.
  
- 10       **\*405/29 Station Street, Nundah** retail premises : Beauty and Wellness businesses. Uncertainty of this type of Tenant/franchise.
  
- 11       **6-12 Boronia Road, Brisbane Airport** : Warehouse but long term Lease from Brisbane Airport Authority – complex title. Also Tenant’s lease due to expire very shortly.
  
- 12       **22/14 Ashtan Place Banyo** : Offices. Lease to expire 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021. Premises appeared to be vacant.
  
- 13       **2/35 Manilla Street East Brisbane** : Offices. Rental income insufficient.
  
- 14       **\*9/6 Goodman Place Murarrie** : Warehouse: Tenant Brisbane Road Assistance. Offer to purchase lodged with Agent but Owner accepted earlier offer.
  
- 15       **Unit 11,1029 Manly Road Tingulpa** : Warehouse/office. Lease due to expire very shortly with only 1 year option.

- 16     **Unit 3, Level ,1 Building 107, 2-6 Leonardo Drive, Davinci Business Park, Brisbane Airport** : Offices -looked promising net income of \$125,000 but sold before our due diligence completed.
- 17     **\*9/210 Queensport Road Murarrie** : Offices. Tenant - Marine Surveyors. Contract signed and returned to Agent     but owner accepted another signed Contract received earlier that day.

\*properties physically inspected