



Friday the 12<sup>th</sup> of December saw us at our 2025 Christmas Party held at our usual venue of the Carrara Community

Centre. 93 of the 99 who booked made it on the day – a good result for a club with just 119 members. In fact, one of the best proportional turnouts for years! Thanks to all those who did make it – with those who added their own festive decorations to ours on each table adding that extra touch.



Thanks to some donations (such as the Japanese lantern at left from John Williams) we were able to offer a free entry ticket to our Lucky Door Prize – won by Ian Lee. After an initial welcome from President Denise the party began with a belated **LONG SERVICE BADGE** Award to Wendy Bruce (at right). Wendy received our first ever 30 years of membership badge having joined just a couple of months into 1995 after our initial founding in 1994. Congratulations to Wendy.



The reasoning behind our self-catering this Christmas Party has been mentioned before – namely, the very average (including one very poor) \$40/\$45 meals we had at commercial venues the last three Christmases. The Executive believed that we could provide a better meal with more courses and a better variety of food for \$30. It seems the queue (or not queue!) at the main table as shown left indicates this proved to be the case.



We secured salads from 'Salad Sensations' here on the coast with the consensus that they were fresh, tasty and a good variety of types. (inc. l. – r. below – Sweet Potato, feta and pine nuts; Greek salad and Sweet Rice.) By not having to pay for serving staff we were able to provide a nibbles course on arrival (left) and fruit platters (below right).



In addition Pam Wood was able to organise a cheese platter to end the day with a cup of tea or coffee. That platter soon went!





As well as hoping to offer a cheaper/better meal, the purpose of the party is of course to conclude the year on a 'happy note'. In addition, there is the opportunity to return to members the \$1301.65 raised by our Cuttings Table and our Sales Table in 2025. This is done first by a free \$10 gift per attendee – with garden products, a plant, red and white wines, a box of biscuits, a box of lollies and two \$10 Bunnings Vouchers per table of eight. As well each table had a 'lucky seat' draw with four prizes – one \$20 Bunnings Voucher and three \$10 Vouchers per table. Commiserations to those who sat in the wrong seat and missed out on winning one of those prizes.



Elsewhere those who attended were generous in buying \$2 places on our two 'numbers' boards and a total of \$715 on our Cent Auction (which had \$550 of value in prizes). In fact, Cent Auction prize organizer Mandy Hicks was able to secure some excellent bargains this year (stalking several different Bunnings on sale day helps!) so the actual value of the prizes was much closer to \$750! Congratulations to winners Di Englefield (twice), Melva Morrison (twice), Tony Sharry, Catherine Brazier, Karen Hayes, Wayne Stratton and Maureen Clarence.



As suggested earlier self-catering was a risk but most feedback already received was that the event was a better \$30 meal than we have had for three years at \$40-\$45 each.



How it looked an hour before people arrived!

As the photo at left shows we did seem to over-estimate the members love for **green salads** and we completely over-estimated the "**I don't eat sweets**" numbers compared to the "**sweet tooths**" so have already taken notes for 2026 (should we do it again) – **BUY MORE CAKES!!!** Apologies to those who missed out on the full range of dessert options we'd organized.

Finally, some **THANKS**. First to Lloy Bayliss, Carmel Illings, Gayle Ryan and Gay Bavinton who, despite offers of compensation, donated desserts they'd made. Also, to those who helped tidy up at the end when the organisers were getting a bit tired. (Looking at you, George.) (PS – for those worried the Executive didn't get to really enjoy the day – don't worry. It was all done voluntarily and with pleasure!), Most importantly to **PRESIDENT DENISE** for being able to pull it all together. **A JOB WELL DONE.**