

## Organising a Reunion?

This document provides information to assist anyone to organise a reunion.

**Form an Organising Committee.** This helps share the workload and gives attendees someone they know to contact. Generally the committee has a great time at their meetings gathering information, reminiscing and enjoying each other's company. Try and have a range of people from different years on the committee.

**Date and Location for the Reunion.** This is the Committees' first priority. The following factors should be taken into account:

- Weather/Time of year
- Long Weekends and other public holidays
- School holidays
- Is there another event on in the area at the same time?
- Is the location convenient for people?
- Are there accommodation and transport options available?

### **Type of Reunion.**

- Milestone (e.g. 10<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> etc)
- Do you want a formal dinner?
- Will you have a mix of informal and casual activities?
- Do you want a full weekend or just a lunch/dinner?
- Do you want guest speakers?

**Mailings( Letters/emails).** There should be typically three mailings.

1. The first one should occur no less than six months from the date of the event. This advises of the reunion, a tentative program and costs and a call for interested people to make contact. The responses from this will give you an idea of numbers and this will assist with further planning.
2. The second mailing will ask for people to register and make full payment or a deposit. A deadline for payment should be set in this letter. This date is usually two weeks from the event.
3. The third mailing is one month out and provides a receipt to people and a request for final payments.

**Activities.** These will depend on the type of reunion.

- An early bird activity – e.g. a BBQ or cocktail function the night before the main event.
- Tour of attractions of the local area.
- Dedication to a past member of the group.
- A reunion booklet e.g. short history of the organisation/family.
- Tree planting
- Sporting game
- Dinner
- Lunch
- Memorabilia

**Venue.** This will depend on some of your activities. Things to take into account:

- Make sure that the venue will accommodate the numbers you anticipate attending. Check that you have a way of adding extra space closer to the event if numbers alter e.g. a marquee.
- Check to see if the whole group will fit in one room.
- Can you have a formal dinner or a BBQ depending on your event?
- Is there plenty of parking available at the venue or within walking distance?
- Is it close to sporting fields if required?
- Are disabled facilities available?
- If you plan an outdoor activity, make sure wet weather facilities are available.
- Check that the venue has heating and cooling if required.
- Check that the venue can provide microphones, lecterns, sound system, equipment for PowerPoint presentations, overhead projectors etc.
- Is the venue licensed or BYO?
- When getting quotes make sure all costs are included e.g. GST, staff costs.
- Is there accommodation close by for any concerns about drink driving?
- Can people get to the event by public transport?
- Can a bus be provided to pick people up from accommodation or public transport terminals?

**Accommodation.** It is often best to let people choose their own accommodation. You can provide a guide and suggest places close to the venue.

**Catering.** One of the big mistakes is that you can be too subjective about your choices.

- Remember that you are catering for a diverse group of individuals.
- Factor in the age range and ethnicity of your group.
- Decide which menu option suits your event.
  - Buffet
    - Offers a wide variety of choice
    - Allows opportunity for attendees to mingle and chat
    - Allows second serves
    - May take longer for everyone to get their meal.
  - Non-buffet options
    - Good for a more formal dinner and have the benefit of table service
    - Make sure you check for extra charges that may apply
    - Have the disadvantage of constraining people to their table
- Always make sure there is a vegetarian option
- On your registration form give people space to identify any special dietary requirements
- Try to avoid specialised gourmet meals. Lean towards uncomplicated well presented meals.
- Find out the date by which you need to advise the venue of numbers.
- If the event is a lunch – lighter meal is more suited. Remember to factor in the season.
- Do you want a cake?
- In terms of alcohol
  - Wine/beer/soft drink/water/orange juice on tables – make sure this is included in costs.
  - People buy their own drinks
  - A set amount of money at the bar
  - Table service?

### **Speakers/other program items**

- Decide early if you would like a special guest speaker as they will need to be booked.
- Decide what else you need to fit in e.g. toasts, remember when?, apologies,
- Decide on an MC early
- Programming can help to decide meal choice.
- Factor in any presentations, unveilings etc

- Music – background or dancing?
- If you're planning something unusual these will take time and have to be factored in.
- Organise someone to prepare souvenir programs or the like.

**Photographs.** You may like to book a photographer, appoint someone from the committee or second someone to attend to take table shots, session photos etc.

**Finding people.** This is a very time consuming job. Be prepared to make lots of phone calls. Avenues to help find people:

- Write down all the names you can think of.
- Check electronic white pages, electoral roles
- Word of mouth to people
- Minute books
- Internet sites such as club site, local community sites, peak bodies etc
- Advertise in local papers, associated magazines e.g. Netball Victoria, Education Department News, daily papers, Weekly Times
- Use community radio and television opportunities
- [www.peoplesearch.com.au](http://www.peoplesearch.com.au)

**Publicity.** How do people find out about the reunion?

- Appoint a publicity officer
- Newspaper articles
- Reunion sites in Weekly Times etc
- Internet sites
- Local Government events calendars
- Television/Radio

**Collection and payment of monies.** This can be done by the organising committee.

- Appoint a money collector
- When setting the costs of activities make sure to factor in the GST and any extra costs that will be added by the venue, caterers, music providers etc. As well as an amount to cover the expenditure such as postage, phone calls of the organising group.
- Make sure when booking the venue you discuss with the providers the preferred method of payment and when deposits are due and when full payment is required.
- Keep a spreadsheet or similar to record all expenditure and payments for activities that each person wishes to take part in. This can also be used to record apologies.
- It is advisable to open a bank account to deposit money into and pay accounts out of. You may be able to use an existing club account.

**Memorabilia.** You may wish to have a table display of items relating to your reunion.

- Contact people who may be willing to lend photographs etc for display.
- Retrieve minute books, year books and other records.
- Consider an item as a memento of the occasion – glass, hand towel, pen, polo shirt, place mat, drink bottle etc

Hopefully this document covers all aspects of running a reunion. There is a checklist attached to assist further.

Remember GippSport is available to assist at any time with advice. Please do not hesitate to contact us on:

Telephone: 51358335

Email: [cgsa@gippsport.com.au](mailto:cgsa@gippsport.com.au)

Good luck and happy reunion planning.

## Checklist of things to do

Activity	Details	By Whom/When	Done
Date and Location			
Type of Reunion			
Mailings 1 <sup>st</sup> 2 <sup>nd</sup> 3 <sup>rd</sup>			
Activities			
Venue			
Accommodation			
Catering			
Speakers/Programme			
Photographs			
Finding People			
Publicity			
Collection and payment of money			
Memorabilia			