

As summer draws to a close it is time to look to coming months

As the summer holidays draw to a close, welcome back to the daily routine everyone. I trust you all had a good break whether you spent the summer in Vienna or managed to get away to the mountains or the sea or parts further afield.

This month's newsletter covers the past two months so there is plenty of content. Firstly, we welcome our new ambassador, Mr Michael Potts, and I'm sure I speak for all of us when I say we look forward to a continuing friendly and close relationship with the Embassy.

There have had two bar nights and a most successful summer barbecue on the Alte Donau when the weather was good to us. We are also looking for a new secretary to join our little 'board' due to the imminent departure of Amanda Grant and family. You can find details on page 3. We have a light-hearted contribution from member Sonja Shuttleworth on the perils of shopping in a local supermarket and details of an Australian company operating a fleet of luxury ships on European waterways.

Tourism in Vienna fell by some 6.6 per cent this summer – not so good for the economy but I don't think the locals are complaining. After a not-so-good July, it has been a good summer but now it is time to turn to autumn and, dare I mention it, the coming winter.

I have said before and I will say it again. OzCon is only as good as its members and so as we look to a program for the coming months we do like to hear what people would like to do. If we can put something together, we will. It is time once again to turn our attention to the UN Women's Guild annual fund raising bazaar in November and we will launch into that project in the next newsletter. But if you have come across something during the

summer that you think might interest others, feel free to write about it for the information of members or let a board member know about it if you think a group activity is possible.

While we have experienced a regular supply of rain mixed with pleasant warm spells here in Vienna and across the rest of the country, it is difficult to imagine that the drought that has ravaged parts of Australia for so long might actually continue into yet another summer.

The news back in Australia is not good. Some states are already talking about the possibility of another summer of devastating bushfires and at the time of writing the Bureau of Meteorology is saying Australia is on track for a record hot August and the hottest winter on record.

So let us count our blessings for such ample and clean water, and try not to get angry when we see it being wasted as I sometimes do. -- *Brett*



Sunset over Izola on the Slovenian coast

Michael Potts is Australia's Ambassador to Austria



OzCon welcomes Australia's new Ambassador to Austria, Mr. Michael Potts, who arrived in Vienna with his wife Lynda on 14 August.

Peter and Reina Shannon were farewelled by the Australian community at the Australian Embassy on 7 July before returning to Canberra a few days later.



Gabrielle Costigan, Vice President of OzCon, told the Shannons that their friendship and cooperation with the friendship organisations in Vienna was deeply appreciated and it was interesting to note that Peter had such good acquaintances who had been living in Vienna for a long time. Gabrielle presented Peter with a gift on behalf of OzCon members.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs Stephen Smith announced Mr. Pott's appointment as Australia's

Ambassador to the Republic of Austria and Permanent Representative to International Organisations with headquarters in Vienna on 20 July.

In his press release, Mr. Smith said Vienna was the centre for multilateral activity in nuclear non-proliferation and the safe and secure application of civil nuclear technology. Mr. Potts would be Australia's Governor on the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Permanent Representative to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) Preparatory Commission.

"Australia is a strong supporter of the efforts of the IAEA to strengthen the international nuclear safeguards system and an active promoter of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty," Mr. Smith said. "Mr. Potts will advance Australia's interests in a number of other multilateral bodies based in Vienna including export control regimes for sensitive technologies.

"Mr. Potts will be accredited to the United Nations Office in Vienna which includes the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and the International Narcotics Control Board. Australia supports the efforts of both offices to reduce the production, trafficking and consumption of illicit narcotics."

Mr. Potts was most recently First Assistant Secretary in the International Organisations and Legal Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and part time Ambassador for People Smuggling Issues, a position he held from January 2007 until June 2009.

He served as High Commissioner in Port Moresby (2003-06) and prior to that held the position of First Assistant Secretary, International Division of the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet from 2001 to 2002.

Mr. Potts has served as Ambassador in Hanoi (1991-94); Counsellor, Australian Mission to the United Nations in New York (1985-88) and Acting High Commissioner in Lusaka (1980-83). He also had postings in Madrid (1973-76), Vientiane (1977-79) and Dar es Salaam (1980).

Mr. Potts holds a Bachelor of Arts degree with First Class Honours in History from the University of Sydney. He speaks Spanish and has an understanding of French, Lao and Vietnamese.

Looking for a new OzCon Secretary

Amanda Grant and family are returning to Australia shortly and so we are looking for someone to take up the job of Secretary.

Amanda joined our little 'board' of five in November 2007 but now it is time for her, Austrian husband Michael Altenburger and three daughters Annika, Isabella and Julia to return to Sydney.

We wish them well in their new endeavours and thank Amanda most sincerely for her contribution to OzCon.

I know that Amanda will not mind me saying that being Secretary is not an arduous task. Our informality makes it that way. There are no meetings to record or regular duties to perform. The board makes collective decisions, mostly via email, and members step in whenever required to organize events, come up with ideas, check out venues or be the point of contact for getting groups together. It really is as simple as that.

So who among us is willing to put their hand up? It would be nice to have greater gender balance on the board so please give it some thought and let any board member know if you are interested. – *Brett*



A popular launching point for paragliders is at the top of Krippenstein 2109m overlooking Hallstatt and HallstätterSee in Upper Austria. Get ready, run and lift off.....photo Brett Bayly

Members and friends enjoy summer barbecue on Alte Donau

The weather could not have been better and so after a false start early in the summer the annual OzCon barbecue on the Alte Donau finally happened.

About 30 members and friends ate and drank beneath the shady trees in Club Naturfreunde on Sunday 16 August after which some of the adults joined the kids in the water out the front of the club. But not before a group photo recorded the event for the newsletter.



A happy group

A few who said they would attend couldn't make it while some others came along at the last moment.

Darsha Masin, who heads what we like to call our Bratislava Chapter, brought two friends Aneta and Dallas Hamilton. We hope they can join our group sometime in the near future.

Susanna and Paul Martin brought along Tricia Frake, a visitor from Canberra who is touring Europe.



Chefs Paul Martin and Michael Frank get on with the cooking watched by Susanna Martin and Peter Korcsek

Karen Brenner and son Dominic, friends of Suzanne Prissmann and Brett Bayly who now live in Frankfurt and were holidaying in Vienna, also joined us.

It was a good day for a cool drink with the temperature above 30 and so the beer was first to go. But so too did a good portion of the OzCon white wine.

This was the third successive year that we have held our barbecue at Club Naturfreunde and we hope to do so again next summer.



Beneath the trees and umbrellas



Who will end up in the water, Ivan Stoyanov or Brett Bayly? It was Brett



Darsha Masin with friends Aneta and Dallas Hamilton

HoferPanic raises the heart rate: a shopper's guide

OzCon member Sonja Shuttleworth has her own blog at <http://megaschweiz.wordpress.com>
This is one of her light-hearted looks at living in Austria.



HoferPanic™ (also known as AldiPanic outside Austria) is a phenomenon that refers to the elevated heart rate and adrenalin kick generated by the head-to-head battle between customer and checkout operator at Hofer (in Austria) and Aldi (everywhere else).

As the customer, the aim of the competition is to use wit, cunning and skill to get your prospective purchases from the conveyor belt to your trolley at a speed equal to or surpassing that of the checkout operator.

Said checkout operator, on the other hand, will try to use their months of specialised training to make your purchases build up at the end of the counter, destroying your dignity and, in some cases, occasioning meltdown.

Beginners may feel overwhelmed at many of the elements of this competition, including – but not limited to - the speed of the conveyer belt and the David Copperfield-esque motor skills of the checkout operator. Fear not, gentle fan base! I present to you:

Your failsafe preparation and competition guide

On your marks!

1. Always, ALWAYS use a trolley. It is the perfect receptacle into which you can scoop your purchases as your opposition hurls them past the scanner.

Get set!

2. Have your wallet somewhere accessible. You DO NOT want to be fumbling in the final, delicate stages of the challenge.

Even better, have your keycard ready to swipe, or the approximate value in notes in your pocket. You want to be able to FLOURISH your chosen payment method at your opposition, not crouch in your corner counting your Euro-cents.

3. Have both hands free. Another benefit of the trolley is that nuisance items such as handbags and children can be safely stowed, leaving you maximum range.

Go!

4. Catch your opponent off guard! Greet the checkout operator before he/she greets you! Getting this out of the way will give you the psychological upper hand.

5. Position the trolley at the end of the counter. This is often hindered by the previous mature-age shopper who thinks that their clogged arteries and anno 1998 haircut gives them the right to dilly-dally at putting their change away. Don't get mad, get even! The front of the trolley is custom made for nudging theirs away, giving you free access to the right of the scanner.

6. Be alert! The checkout operator will start scanning madly. Using both hands, use a smooth, gliding motion to scoop the scanned goods into your trolley. ACHTUNG! A practiced eye will be able to separate the breakable items from the non-breakable items. Remember, a smashed 10-pack of eggs will spell a premature end to your dreams of victory.

7. The checkout operator will be racing to hit the 'enter' button once the last product is scanned. Once you see that this is about to happen, unsheath your method of payment and BRANDISH IT, even if there are still products on the counter.

Whilst he/she is dealing with the payment processing, you can place the final items in your trolley and move it away from the scanner, allowing the next person in the queue to begin prepping. This shows your professionalism.

8. YOU'RE DONE! Pocket your change and/or receipt(s), and don't forget the nod of acknowledgement at a game well played. This is extremely similar to when Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal shake hands at the end of a grueling Australian Open final.



New law for residence card holders

Earlier this summer a notice was circulated within Vienna International School about a recent change to the law that might affect non EU citizens who hold a residence card.

From July 1 you are not allowed to apply for a residence permit extension if your current card has already expired. Legally, you lose your right of residence once your card has expired.

To renew you would need to travel to non-Schengen country (eg Croatia), stay overnight, and apply for an initial residence permit when you come back to Austria.

You should make sure to get an entry stamp in your passport when crossing the border to the non-Schengen country. This works for citizens from countries like the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. For some countries (eg India) you would even need to travel to your home country and apply from there for an initial residence permit for Austria.

Holders of residence cards are advised to check the expiry and apply in time for an extension. Applications for extensions can be filed three months ahead of the expiry date.

Aussie slang on endangered list

This is a column written by Rex Jory in *The Advertiser*, Adelaide. Rex is a friend of Brett Bayly who thought it might be of interest to members.



IT'S a bloody shame. Australia's rich and unique colloquial language - Aussie slang - is slowly vanishing.

Words and phrases, many of them crafted a century or more ago in hardship and humour, are in danger of disappearing from our written and spoken communications.

Already Aussie slang is a lost art among the young and people settling in Australia from overseas. Its use is diminishing in everyday conversation in Adelaide, particularly in business circles, although it remains a healthy part of regional and rural life.

Young city people rarely greet each other in the time-honoured Australia way: "G'day mate." These days it is likely to be: "Hi guys" or "Hey dude", grating imports from the United States. The overuse of Australian slang can be tiresome, repetitive and boring. Yet anyone with a sense of history should be alarmed at the slow demise of a unique and universally recognised feature of our culture.

In Britain and the U.S., Australia is widely referred to as Down Under, a part of Australian slang. The words and phrases are used in music, theatre, film and literature. But for how long?

Australian slang is on the cultural endangered list in the same way animal, bird, fish and plant species are facing

possible extinction. If we're not careful it will survive in theory only, a dead language preserved in books like a stuffed Tasmanian Devil in a glass museum display.

It is easy to say that the richness of Australian language is being compromised by the influences of the global society, the shrinking world or that American films and television programs have infiltrated our culture to an unprecedented and unwanted degree.

That is a product of poor regulation and an under-funded arts sector. But it is more than that. Multiculturalism, particularly since World War II, has played a part. Australia is a young country. Traditions and conventions within our language and broader culture, like paint, have not had time to dry before they are questioned, amended and covered over.

As a nation we haven't stood still long enough and our population has not been large enough to bed down the glories of the Aussie vernacular. Australia was only 168-years-old when television - and the communications age - was launched.

Since then, almost subconsciously, biscuits have become cookies - is that the fault of Sesame Street and the Cookie Monster - the pictures or the flicks have become the movies and the footpath has become the sidewalk?

How often, these days, do we hear words like barlies, bludger, drongo, blue, sheila, bloke, cove, jiffy, strewth, fair dinkum, arvo and Buckley's? Most people in the older generations know what they mean, but already they are lost among the young. How sad.

Ironically the language in decline is still growing and emerging. It is relatively recent, for example, for city folk in particular to call a four-wheel drive vehicle a Burnside tractor. But these green sprouts are illusionary. They are adding to a language first crafted in part by cockneys and the Irish a century ago - a language which the modern Australian culture is slowly dismantling and destroying.

We all have a responsibility to keep it alive and relevant. The alternative is to simply have a Bex and a good lie down.

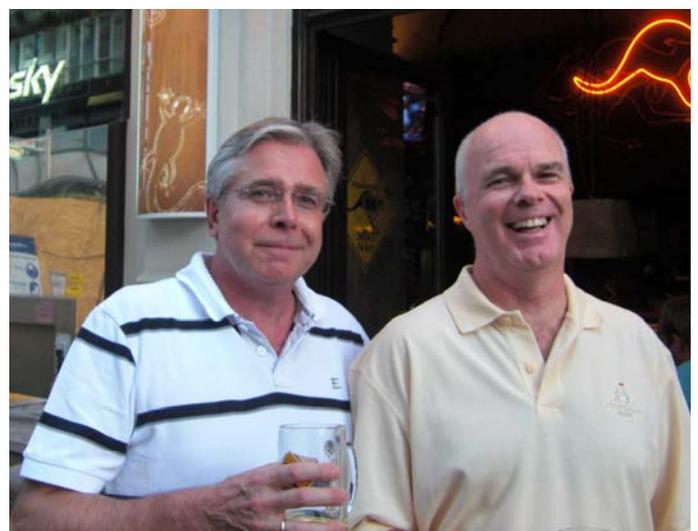
SENIOR DRIVING

As a senior citizen was driving down the freeway, his car phone rang. Answering, he heard his wife's voice urgently warning him, "Herman, I just heard on the news that there's a car going the wrong way on Interstate 77. Please be careful!" "Hell," said Herman, "It's not just one car. It's hundreds of them!"

Bar night at Flanagan's July



.....and at Crossfields August



September Bar Night

This month's bar night will be on Friday 18 September at Flanagan's, Schwarzenbergstr. 1-3, 1010 Vienna from 5.30pm



Luxury Aussie river ships are cruising European waterways

It only takes one look at the cruise ships berthed in Vienna or passing beneath the bridges to know that there are many ship companies operating in European waters in the summer.

But did you know that one of them is an Australian company equipped with four new ships that claims to offer unique 5-star holidays?

Based in Switzerland, the company is Scenic Tours and it describes their European holidays as a collection of “a fantastic mix of people, culture and history wrapped in a five star package. When you sail Europe’s waterways with us, you’ll feel like you’re the centre of attention. Our brand new river cruise ships have state-of-the-art facilities and the service on board is beyond compare.”

One of the last official duties of Reina Shannon, the wife of former Ambassador Peter Shannon, was to christen the fourth of the new ships, the Scenic Diamond, here in Vienna.

The company says the ships were designed specifically for the company and each guest has their own private balcony suite. “We teamed up with Europe’s leading naval architects and ship designers to create the highest standard river cruise ships ever built in Europe,” the company says on its website. “Our ships are 135 yards long, while standard European river cruise ships are just 110 yards. That gives our ships 25 pc more space in public areas and staterooms, so we’ve called them our Scenic Space-Ships”.

Apparently up to 90 pc of the passengers can be Australians who have booked their European cruise from Australia. And so if you see a cruise ship pass by with Australian flags on the upper decks it is a safe bet that it is an Aussie ship.

While it may be too late to take a cruise this summer, the remaining 2009 schedule and the schedule for 2010 are available on the company website at www.scenictours.com

CORRECTION

In the July-August newsletter I said that the cog train from Puchberg up Schneeberg went as far as 800m and the summit was at 2075m. That left quite a walk. But it’s not so bad. I should have said the train goes to 1800m. -- Brett



The Scenic Diamond, christened by Reina Shannon

CLASSIFIEDS

English Native Speaker Wanted

The Kindergarten Neue Donau is looking for an English native speaker to work at their kindergarten in the 22nd District starting in September.

Details: Kindergarten Neue Donau, Rudolf Nurejew Promenade 7, A-1220, Wien.

Telephone: 0664 858 2705

Contact: Karin Hartmann

<http://kindergaerten.diakonie.at>

then click on Kindergarten Neue Donau.

Complete Socceros Outfit

For someone who is into football, here's a good offer. An 'official' green and gold Socceros top, pants and socks with an extra green and gold 'Soccer Australia' top. Worn during the last World Cup and ready for the next one in South Africa next year. Good for a laugh with the Brazilians who think you're one of them. For a boy or girl between ages 8 and 10. Euro20. Call Brett on 264.5813 or 06991 264.5813.

A man was sitting on the settee watching TV when he heard his wife’s voice from the kitchen.

“What would you like for dinner Love ?
Chicken, beef or lamb ?”

He said, “Thank you, I’ll have chicken.”

“Shut up. You’re having soup. I was talking to the cat.”

Aussie News Briefs

27 August - **AUSTRALIA is on track for a record hot August**, and this winter is likely to be the hottest on record as well. The Bureau of Meteorology yesterday issued a special climate statement in which it said this month was set to be the warmest August on record "by a substantial margin". Blair Trewin, from the National Climate Centre, said "it will almost certainly be the warmest winter on record for South Australia and NSW and a reasonable chance for Victoria and Tasmania". (Australian)

20 August - **AUSTRALIA's ambassador to China has rushed back to Canberra** for high-level meetings about reviving the ailing relationship, as Beijing stepped up its anti-Canberra rhetoric. Chinese state-owned media largely ignored the \$50 billion liquefied natural gas deal trumpeted by the Rudd Government as a sign of a strong relationship, instead calling for sanctions against Australian tourism, education and iron ore. (Age)

17 August - **VICTORIANS will be warned for the first time that they risk their lives by staying to defend their homes in a bushfire.** The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission has recommended an overhaul of the contentious stay or go policy that includes telling residents death is a possible consequence of not evacuating early. They would be told that getting out early is their safest option and that some, including children, the elderly and infirm, have no place in the path of a bushfire. (AAP)

15 August - **KEVIN RUDD has pulled his threat of an early election on climate change** and will next week seek to appease green groups and investors by allowing legislation for the increased use of renewable energy through the Senate. With the emissions trading scheme defeated on Thursday and not likely to be reintroduced until November, the Government will next week split the renewable energy bill away and allow the Senate to debate it. (Sydney Morning Herald)

4 August - **POLICE say they foiled a mission by Islamic terrorists to launch a suicide shoot-out on Holsworthy Barracks** in what they say would have been the worst terrorist attack on Australian soil. In seven months of surveillance and a series of raids in Melbourne early today, code-named operation Neath, about 400 officers from the Australian Federal Police, Victoria Police and NSW Police made four arrests and are questioning several other people. Holsworthy Barracks on Sydney's outskirts, the alleged target of a suspected terrorist suicide attack, is home to thousands of troops and a major anti-terrorist unit. (Sydney Morning Herald)



Locals inspect a croc pulled from the area near the causeway.

3 August - **PLANS are in place to build a \$1.5 million bridge at Palumpa so children don't have to walk through crocodile-infested water to get to school.** The Territory community, near Wadeye, shot to prominence this year when it was revealed adults and kids were forced to wade waist-deep across a flooded causeway to get to the shop, health clinic and school. The area was being stalked by a number of salties, including a 5m monster. (NT News)

1 August - **THE Rudd government is refusing to budge on gay marriage** or civil unions but a senior minister believes the momentum for change is "unstoppable". Gay rights advocates lost a backroom battle at the ALP National Conference to advance the recognition of same-sex couples. Instead Labor agreed to a compromise removing the explicit definition of marriage being between a man and a woman from its national platform. (Sydney Morning Herald)

28 July - **MIGRATION accounts for 60 per cent of Australia's population growth** with the United Kingdom remaining the greatest source of new arrivals from overseas. The latest immigration snapshot from the Australian Bureau of Statistics shows 5.5 million Australians, or about a quarter of the population, were born overseas. About 213,000 people migrated to Australia in 2007/08, accounting for 60 per cent of the nation's population growth, with the bulk of new arrivals (60 per cent) aged between 15 and 34. (AAP)

28 July - **MEDICARE could be transformed** into a more market-driven system, in which everyone chooses between competing health service providers, as part of an overhaul to be considered by the Rudd Government. Dubbed Medicare Select, the new scheme would require every Australian to join a "health and hospitals plan" offered by government or public or private organisations, with each plan providing a broad range of taxpayer-funded services. The proposal is a key part of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission's final report on the health system, released yesterday by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. The report proposes a partial Commonwealth takeover of

health services from the states, with Canberra to assume control of all primary health care services outside hospitals, including out-patient services, community health centres, as well as basic dental care and aged care. (Age)

27 July - **SIXTEEN and 17-year-olds could be given a voluntary right to vote in federal elections**, under changes to be canvassed by the Rudd government later this year. Special Minister of State Joe Ludwig said the government would raise the issue in its second electoral green paper later this year. The move, which comes more than 35 years after the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18, will spark strong views from all sides of politics. (Australian)

25 July - **IN the Simpson, Gibson and Tanami deserts, more than a million camels are roaming wild** across three million square kilometres, and their numbers are expected to double with each coming decade. They are the enemy of conservationists and threaten to overrun several of the nation's most remote Aboriginal communities. But as plans gather pace for a mass camel cull, there are those who spy a burgeoning commercial opportunity. "The way I see it, there is a billion dollars in camel meat wandering around the central desert," says Harvey Douglas, who owns a mobile abattoir and wants to kick-start a remote-based industry he says would provide up to 400 jobs a year, mostly to indigenous people. (Australian)

23 July - **AUSTRALIA'S inflation rate has collapsed from 5 per cent to just 1.5 per cent** in less than a year - the most dramatic slide on record. But far from celebrating felling what he had dubbed the "inflation genie" and what the Prime Minister called the "inflation monster", the Treasurer, Wayne Swan, sees it as a sign of weakness, of an economy under siege. (Brisbane Times)

18 July - **TWO Australians are dead** and grave fears are held for one other after deadly twin hotel bombings killed nine people and left 42 injured in Jakarta, signalling the re-emergence of terrorism four years after the last bombing attack in Bali. The blasts erupted at the luxury Marriott and Ritz-Carlton hotels in Jakarta's central business and embassy district as foreign nationals and Indonesians gathered for the busy breakfast period. (Australian)

14 July - **MARK Webber, Australia's newest grand prix winner**, has the taste for success after claiming his first Formula One race in Germany. Webber became only the third Australian to win in F1 when he romped to victory at the classic Nurburgring circuit on Sunday night, joining Sir Jack Brabham and Alan Jones on the winners' list. (Herald Sun)



President Obama congratulates Prime Minister Rudd for his brief on Australia's carbon capture and storage institute. (photograph: Australian)

10 July - **KEVIN Rudd shared centre stage with Barack Obama overnight** and Australia's carbon capture and storage institute was lauded by world leaders, turning the major economies forum meeting on climate change into a diplomatic triumph for Australia. Mr Rudd and President Obama stood at adjoining podiums after the summit in the earthquake ravaged town of L'Aquila, north of Rome, the President to brief the world leaders and media on the limited progress made in the talks and Mr Rudd to brief on Australia's global carbon capture and storage institute. (Australian)

GREAT TRUTHS ABOUT GROWING OLD

- 1) Growing old is mandatory; growing up is optional.
- 2) Forget the health food. I need all the preservatives I can get.
- 3) When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do while you're down there.
- 4) You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.
- 5) It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the questions.
- 6) Time may be a great healer, but it's a lousy beautician
- 7) Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone.

Unless otherwise specified, all telephone numbers are in Vienna

Australian Connection (OzCon)

Website: www.ozcon.at

Email: ozcon_board@yahoo.com

President: Brett Bayly

Tel: 06991 264 5813

Home: 264 5813

brett_bayly@yahoo.com.au

Vice President: Gabrielle Costigan

Phone: 0664 61 22522

gabrielle.costigan@gmx.at

Secretary: Amanda Grant

Phone: 2711027

amandagrants65@gmail.com

Treasurer and Membership Coordinator

Susanna Martin-Murtinger

Tel: H: 944 0353

paul.martin@chello.at

Newsletter Editor: Liz Crawford

Mobile: 0699 1268 1023

Home: 02252 252 638

LizziECrawf@yahoo.co.uk

Bank Account Details:

Susanna Martin-Murtinger

OZCON Account

Raiffeisenlandesbank Niederösterreich – Wien

BLZ 32000

Kontonummer (Account Number): 12.097.176

Membership Fee: €20

Australian Embassy

Mattiellstrasse 2-4, 1040 Vienna

Tel: 506740

www.australian-embassy.at

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www.virtualvienna.net

www.ninems.com.au

www.kids-days.com/Wien/index_wien.html

www.expats.com

www.homesick.com.au

www.viennababiesclub.com

www.abc.net.au/vod/news/

www.australianaonline.com.au

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www.expatriates.com

www.australia.gov.au

www.amadeus.net/home/dialing_codes/en/top.htm

www.austrain.vc

www.vienna-expats.at

Austrian media in English:

Austrian Times, daily English news

www.austriantimes.at

The Vienna Review, monthly produced by Webster

University www.viennareview.net

Ether magazine, monthly www.ethermagazine.at

Worldwide media guide www.mondotimes.com

Guided Walks

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Schonberg and Freud Roman Findings in

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The Old City of Vienna

The Third Man

More information visit: www.wienguide.at

Other Associations

Austrian-Australian Society (OAG)

Hubert Heine, General Secretary

Tel: 0676 5003058; 9847328

Heine69at@yahoo.de

www.australia-austria.at

Women's Career Network (WCN)

Tel: 9662925

wcnvienna@yahoo.com

www.wcnvienna.com