

Dear Members,

## **52nd Annual General Assembly (AGA): The WACA Africana Festival 2019 *City of Gold***

Johannesburg, the site of the 52nd AGA, is the second largest city in Africa. Joburg, or Jozi as some prefer to call it, offers visitors an experience as unique and diverse as the city itself. The metropolis with the country's tallest skyscrapers, was once just veld (bush), dotted with rocky outcrops, scrubby bush and a network of streams. Today it is a cosmopolitan city of more than four million people, one of the few of its size in the world that is not located on a river or at the sea. It is located in Gauteng, the smallest of the country's nine provinces, which contributes around 40% to South Africa's GDP.

Gold was the backbone of Johannesburg's rapid growth. In time, industries were established, and more and more people came seeking jobs and a slice of its wealth. Buildings soared upwards and suburbs stretched in all directions, today covering an area of some 1,700km<sup>2</sup>. The Sachsenwald Forest that was planted in the first decade of the city's life has today become an urban forest of 10 million trees.

The city became the microcosm of the country's fight against race discrimination. It was here that two giants of the anti-apartheid struggle, Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu, learnt the ropes of resistance. It was in Joburg that Mandela lived after his release from prison in 1990 and it was there that he died. Today Johannesburg still struggles to undo apartheid's segregation, but the city hardly stops to take a breath, such is the drive of its residents to explore, make money, be better, have fun. Some of that fun happens in its many parks, some of it in its many excellent restaurants, pubs and shebeens, usually with residents basking in its beautiful sunsets. Whether you are in search of a cultural encounter, an adrenaline rush or simply want to relax and unwind for a few days, the city of Johannesburg has everything you're looking for and more! *Don't delay, register today!*

### ***South Africa Tourism***

A short promotional video issued by South African Tourism can be viewed on the WACA Facebook site: [www.facebook.com/waca.hq?hc\\_location=timeline](http://www.facebook.com/waca.hq?hc_location=timeline).

### ***Visas***

Participants are responsible for obtaining their visa if required to enter the Republic of South Africa. A list countries whose citizens require a visa can be found on the Republic of South Africa, Department of Home Affairs, website: [www.dha.gov.za/index.php/immigration-services/apply-for-a-south-african-visa](http://www.dha.gov.za/index.php/immigration-services/apply-for-a-south-african-visa).

### ***Post-AGA Tour: Sun City and Pilanesberg National Park***

The post-AGA tour to Sun City and Pilanesberg National park from 31 October–3 November is for a three night package not a two night package as published in Membership Message 9/2019. The brochure and registration form have now been produced and are attached.

### **Deadline Extension**

Please note that registration deadlines for the AGA as well as the pre-AGA and post-AGA tours have been extended to 30 June with the exception of the just issued post-AGA Tour to Sun City and Pilanesberg National Park which has a registration deadline of 15 August.

### **Flight Arrivals and Departures**

Participants are requested to advise Lucie Forget ([Lucie.forget1@gmail.com](mailto:Lucie.forget1@gmail.com)) with their intended flight arrival/departure times to/from the pre-AGA tour, AGA and post-AGA tours so that transfer times to/from the hotels can be arranged.

### **Additional Night(s)**

The organising committee of the Africa, Indian Ocean Islands and Middle East (AIM) Region is arranging with the Birchwood Hotel and Oliver Tambo Conference Centre a preferential rate for additional night(s) which will be issued in due course.

### **WACA Change Can Help**

This is the first reminder that we will continue with our successful initiative: WACA Change Can Help at the 52nd AGA. In the registration room on 27 October it is intended to have a team that will collect any unused foreign coins and banknotes that you would like to donate to raise money for the WACA Relief Fund. The unused coins and banknotes that are collected are sorted into different currencies and then resold to participants from those countries in exchange for United States dollars. Part of the Fund goes towards WACA's five year programme supporting, through the Blue Dragon Children's Foundation, three children (Tuyen, Van and Kiet) in Vietnam up to the time they reach the age to attend university.

Brochures about the 52nd AGA, the pre-AGA tour to Victoria Falls, the post-AGA tours to the Kruger National Park and Cape Town, as well as the relevant registration forms, can be found in the Event Calendar section of the WACA website: [www.waca.org/events](http://www.waca.org/events).

### **Obituary**

The following message has been received from the Far East and Australasia Regional Coordinator, *Margaret Lee*. It is with much sadness that we inform you of the death of one of the Sydney Interline Club's long standing members, Ann Smythe. Ann was a very loyal and supportive member of the Club attending many functions and was held in high esteem by her many friends and colleagues. She attended many of the packages organised by overseas Interline Clubs along with various WACA Annual General Assemblies making many friends within our family of overseas interliners. For many years Ann hosted lunches at her home raising considerable money for cancer research. A funeral service for Ann was held on 7 June.

### **Membership Messages**

**Communicate**

“Membership Messages” are sent out on a regular basis to WACA Member Clubs, Members-at-Large and other individuals closely connected to WACA. Recipients in Member Clubs are requested to forward these messages to all members of their respective Club or direct their members to the News and Press Releases section of WACA's website where the messages are posted: [www.waca.org/news/Pages/index.aspx](http://www.waca.org/news/Pages/index.aspx).

**Contribute**

If any WACA member has anything they would like to contribute to the next “Membership Message” please send the information to the attention of the WACA Administration Manager at WACA Headquarters.

Yours in interlining,

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