



# OOFERS

AUSTRALIA INC.

## NEWSLETTER

*ISSUE NUMBER 20*

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### **JEFF GRIFFITHS BECOMES OOFERS AUSTRALIA CHAIRMAN**

Following the retirement of the Founder and Founding Chairman, Kevin Hughes, of Oofers Australia Inc, on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2022, Jeff Griffiths was appointed as Chairman by the Oofers Board of Directors. Kevin advised he was reluctantly retiring because of failing eyesight, but would continue as a member and active supporter of the Oofers.

Jeff Griffiths is certainly well qualified to undertake the Chairman's role and continue with the development and traditions of the 'Not for Profit' Fellowship group, which has been in existence since 2008. Jeff is a former executive of BP and has for a number of years been successfully developing his multi-retail site Endeavour Petroleum company, which now stretches over Victoria, and South East of South Australia and Jeff is a recipient of the Oofers Australia Award. He has also been a very successful multi-term National President of ACAPMA, formerly the National petroleum Distributor Association (APADA)

For those who may not be aware, Oofer membership is made up of current and retired petroleum Distributors/Wholesalers/ Multi Retail site operators and those closely associated with those sectors.

We wish Jeff and his Board every success.



## **A RETIREMENT REFLECTION ON 61 YEARS IN THE AUSTRALIAN OIL INDUSTRY**

**BY KEVIN HUGHES**

Following my retirement as the Chair of Oofers Australia, I have reflected on my 61 years in the oil industry and with the wonderful benefit of that marvellous thing called hindsight, I feel a little qualified to pass some informed commentary on the industry and its people that I have grown to love.

In my reflection it has prompted me to write about my career and to be honest, to help me understand some of it. In particular, I am well progressed in writing an essay on my twenty four years with Shell, which may require me to gather quite some courage if I decide to publish it. Be on the lookout for “**My Shell Experience.**”

I joined the Shell Co of Australia in Melbourne on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1961 as a trainee Country Sales Representative. My career treated me kindly and directed me to various executive positions including District Manager, NSW State Manager Shell Chemicals, South Australia and Northern Territory management roles.

Of great reflective interest, my time covered huge changes in the industry.

Service Stations with retail kiosks and workshops were built, with around twenty four thousand of them, seemingly on every corner.

The oil companies (majors), in the management of their retail networks progressed from Leasehold to Franchise arrangements, up until today, the oil majors driving their franchise networks to unviability, forcing them to company operation.

Regional fuel depots progressed from company operated to distributor operations, with thousands of drum agents being absorbed into the Distributor networks, or simply faded away. Distributors now are much larger in business size, but much smaller in number, – now around only 100.

Then came the regional tank wars, where based on false intelligence that Esso were about to give away on-loan farm storage tanks, Shell, with great gusto, spent millions on farm tanks to ensure they did not lose market share.

The Transport and Storeman & Packers Unions gradually increased their influence, and acquiesced to by the majors, imposing on Distributors rules and regulations that were way outside their ambit of pay, work conditions and safety. They became so damaging to Distributor businesses that the Australian Petroleum Agents and Distributors Association (APADA) was born in an effort to protect their livelihoods, not only from the Unions, but from the major oil companies that were acting in concert with them.

The escalating Union militancy was a bubble that had to burst.

That bubble was the Laidely Dispute.

The Laidely Dispute is now part of industrial relations 'case law' history. Leon Laidely a Sydney Western Suburbs Amoco Distributor, built a service station with his own funds, and of course, he planned to service the site himself. The TWU said they had to service the site, Laidely rightly said no way, as did APADA in backing him.

Thus occurred a national fuel strike, which caused my good friend and colleague, the late John Bowen and I, both NSW APADA Board members, to take the lead in the legal case that ensued, interacting in the courts and negotiating directly with the Prime Minister and his Ministers, with major pressure points in dealing with the media on a daily basis for more than six weeks.

The oil companies never stood up against the increasing anarchy, whereas the Distributors did, and won, which broke the nexus of TWU Union power that existed. During these turbulent times APADA launched the industry insurance scheme OAMPS, which was a catalyst in building the strength of APADA..

In all of these issues I was proud to have been able to play a role as a Director and National President of APADA and served 14 years as a Director of OAMPS.

However, the defining moment came in 2007, when Jim Lamb and the late John Daley decided to call a reunion of all those Distributors of the 1970's and 80's, their reasoning being "we should do it before we die." The reunion, held in Melbourne was such a great success, I felt it was worth doing again on a more regular basis. Hence I conceived the concept of the Oofers (Old Oilies Fellowship) which has developed into the wonderful Oofer community and fellowship we have today.

For me, the Ooofers have been an absolute honour and privilege to have been a part of. The cherished friendships and wonderful times enjoyed over the 15 years of Oofers and the 61 years within the Australian oil industry, will always be a treasured part of our life.



## **OOFERS GRAND REUNION IS BACK MELBOURNE**

**22<sup>ND</sup> – 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023**

Like the rest of Australia, Oofers members too, have had to contend with Bushfires, Covid and Floods. Indeed, it has been regional petroleum marketers that have been one of the the back-bone of the essential services that have been keeping regional communities going throughout all of these emergencies.

As a consequence of these community traumas and disruptions, Oofer activities have been in hibernation for over two years.

However, that is all changed, and the Oofer Board is back into full swing, with the next Grand Reunion being planned by the Oofer Board to be held in Melbourne 22<sup>nd</sup>-24 May 2023 when Oofers business and fellowship activities are planned.

Make sure your Oofers membership detail is up to date to ensure you receive the Reunion information.

## **OOFERS WEBSITE HAS BEEN UPDATED**

**We are pleased to advise that the Oofers website has been up-dated and includes a whole range of information, not only about Oofer activities but, some history of Oofers, its member services and awards, all past copies of the Oofer’s newsletters, and a complete copy of the Oofer’s book publication – “Out of the Grip.”**

## **STAYING IN TOUCH**

It is important during these troubled times for our OOFER community for us to stay in touch. Please let us know of major happenings: an OOFER in business difficulties, serious illness and accidents, major success stories, business developments, sales and acquisitions within our communities and of course, sadly, if there is a death.

**We need to hear from you!**

# **OOFERS AUSTRALIA AN ADVERTISING/SPONSOR OPPORTUNITY**

**Do you have goods and services to sell to the service station/  
convenience and wholesale sectors of the oil industry?  
Why not consider our newsletter, which is distributed throughout the  
wholesale sector (which includes a large portion of retail) across  
Australia?  
Opportunities too, for promotional sponsorships.  
Why not contact us for a chat and Rate Card**

## **OOFERS DISTRESS GUIDANCE ASSISTANCE**

OOFER members will be aware that a Distress Guidance service was established at the OOFER AGM in 2018. Its purpose was to provide confidential assistance to any OOFER, or an OOFER Member's family, that may run into unexpected difficulties.

Our OOFER community has an extensive range of professional skills and business management experience within its membership that could be availed by any OOFER member and or their family.

Those distress positions could include, but not limited to:

- The sudden death or serious illness of the key stakeholder in a petroleum business.
- Financial stress, needing revised strategies to survive.
- Difficulties in obtaining competitive pricing.
- Difficulties with contractual negotiations with your supplier.
- Difficulties in negotiations with government.
- Needing help and guidance with operational issues.
- Independent advice on whether to buy or sell and an indication as to market price.
- Difficulties with legal issues.
- Difficulty in constructing an effective Business Plan.

All of these services are available to OOFER members and may be confidentially sourced by contacting the OOFER Chairman or any of its Directors.

**This is a free service to only OOFER members.**

## **OOFERS AUSTRALIA ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION HAVE YOU REGISTERED or PAID THE ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION?**

A membership fee of \$100 per annum is applicable covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> June and entitles all financial members being able to stand for any of the Board positions, vote at all Annual General Meetings and any other meetings called under the constitution. Membership also ensures you receive the OOFERS newsletters, invitations to all OOFERS events and of course, the OOFER Grand Reunion held every two years.

A Membership Certificate is issued to all those who register.

Due to the various interruptions to our activities, with many members not knowing when they are paid up to, Secretary Michael will be sending invoices to all those registered.

### **Have you received your membership certificate?**

If you haven't received your certificate your details may not have been properly recorded. Please give him a call to sort it out.

**Application for membership to become an OOFER will be, as it is now, open to all current and retired distributor/wholesalers, wives, family, distributor staff and those strongly associated with the wholesale sector of the oil industry.**

**Retail network operators are also wholesalers and are warmly invited to join us.**  
**IF YOU ARE ALREADY REGISTERED or NOT SURE WHEN YOU ARE PAID UP TO, GIVE Treasurer Ross Lake or Secretary Michael Houlihan a call, their contact details are below**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION IS ATTACHED**

**WHEN IS A WINE COLUMN  
NOT A WINE COLUMN?  
THIS ONE IS!**



**Max Crus** is a professional commercial photographer and journalist and syndicates his weekly column to a large number of regional Australian newspapers and journals. He is regularly engaged by wineries across Australia to undertake various wine related photographic and journalistic assignments.

#### **Grape Expectations by Max Crus (Column No.1493)**

### **‘Fries my bacon’ gives me the pip.**

Okay, we’re glad the election is over and we won’t have to go to church every Sunday or straight to the laptop after every news bulletin to pen another angry letter to the editor, after watching a hi-viz PM stuff another task, but the old expression ‘be careful what you wish for’ has come home to roost as the former PM has cooked his goose and now we’ve got to lie in it, to paraphrase another political figure who drove us to distraction and myriad books of quotes more than 25 years ago.

There’s no more yelling at the evening news, except perhaps Sky’s News After Dark, but along with others in the Murdoch fold, hasn’t that folded into obscurity or the dark web now?

And frankly we miss it terribly, already.

When do we let off steam now and practice our angry birds?

It’s no fun screaming at the telly that “so-and-so really fries my bacon”, when there’s no-one there to actually fry your bacon. Although maybe that’s a good thing because what sort of expression is that anyway? Surely someone who fries your bacon should be considered helpful, or a chef.

It’s somewhat more colourful than ‘hot under the collar’, and who gets hot there when they’re cranky anyway? Has someone measured this in peer-reviewed, double-blind studies like Dr Norman and Dr Karl recommend?

Ditto ‘makes my blood boil’. Sounds like a medieval torture.

Which brings to mind the expression 'ditto brother smut'. What's that all about Mum? Maybe don't answer that.

We all understand the expression "grinds my gears". That hurts when you do it, and your ears when someone else does, unless schadenfreude is your thing, which okay, is everyone except the Dalai Lama. But 'fries my bacon'?

What about good, old expressions from the good, old days like "gives me the pip"? In the days when the National Party was the Country Socialist Party people thought eating pips gave you the runs. Now they make smoothies from them in vegan cafes, but you still get the meaning.

Unlike "gets on my goat".

What's going on there? Is that another weird proclivity of National Party types? Or "gives me the irits". What's an 'irit'?

"Oh, lummy", Nana used to say. Still don't know what that means.

Anyway, we all must do without expressing ourselves like we have for the past three years, which really pops my cork...speaking of which.

**Tapanappa (Fleurieu Peninsula)'Definitus' (Brian Croser Winemaker) Foggy Hill Pinot Noir 2019, \$90.** You don't often see the winemaker mentioned on the front label, but with Brian in charge, why wouldn't you? It's astonishing two wines from the same vineyard could be so different, yet still so lovely. This is superior, bountiful pinot despite a 13 percent, with an amazingly alluring fragrance. 9.5/10.

**Tapanappa Fleurieu Peninsula Foggy Hill Vineyard Pinot Noir, 2021, \$55.**

This is quite possibly the most flagrantly fragrant red wine in Australia, you can smell it all night, or, at only 12.5 percent drink it too and still drive home. 9.4/10.

**Calcannia SA Super Vine Dried Shiraz, 2018, \$39** Super vine dried, super fruit, super charged alcohol content (15.5per cent is positively super), if you like big, brash, fruity reds (who doesn't, sometimes?). Have this after the supermarket visit or you won't make it. 9.2/10.

**Calcannia Clare Valley Estate Grown Grenache 2021, \$28.** Uncanny how the reserve version of this grenache was a cracker...as is this, almost. Or is that canny? Whatever, crackers and hard cheese would be a canny accompaniment. 9.3/10.

**(Witches Falls) Bird Dog South Australia Rosé 2021, \$17.** The label looks like a dog sat for Anh Do...Brush With Fur, and the rosé itself would make as good a hair of the dog as any, with enough residual sugar to redress the imbalance. 8.9/10.

**Witches Falls Riverland Wild Ferment Arinto, 2021, \$38.** With the original witch-burner Peter Dutton in charge of the asylum now, grumpy types are still well catered for. Meanwhile, be the first witch in your street, or indeed city to try this Portuguese white grape from Australia's breadbasket of wine. Don't burn those steaks though. 9.4/10.

Max Crus is a Clarence Valley-based wine writer and Grape Expectations is now in its 26th year of publication. Find out more about Max or sign up for his weekly reviews and musings by visiting [maxcrus.com.au](http://maxcrus.com.au)



# CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING OOFER EVENTS

*PLEASE MARK YOUR DIARIES NOW*

***OOFERS GRAND REUNION***

***MELBOURNE***

***22<sup>ND</sup> TO 24<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023***

***Details out soon.***

## **NOMINATIONS BEING RECEIVED FOR THE OOFERS AUSTRALIA AWARD.**

**The Chairman is receiving nominations for the OOFER Australia Award (OAA) for presentation at the next Oofers Grand Reunion.**

If you are aware of someone who you feel deserves recognition for the award, please read the guidelines for consideration for the award below and submit your nomination to the Chairman.

All nominations and their nominators are kept strictly confidential until the award is presented. However, the nominator's name is generally never revealed.



### **OOFER AUSTRALIA AWARD Qualification Criteria**

**The Award Recognises:**

**“Exemplary and meritorious service to the community and wholesale sector of the petroleum industry in Australia.”**

**Eligibility:**

To have been nominated by any person from within or without the oil industry. The Nominator's name shall remain confidential. Each nomination will be considered and awarded by the OOFER Australia Award Council via its Chairman. A candidate for the award may come from any section of the community including – Petroleum

Distributors/Agents/Wholesalers/Resellers, major oil companies and people who have given significant service to the wholesale sector. As a guide only, the meritorious service by the nominee to the petroleum wholesale sector would generally have been provided over a minimum period of around twenty five years – plus. Each recipient must attend an OOFER Australia Reunion or other formal OOFER Australia function to receive their award, or in the case of illness or incapacitation, special presentation arrangements will be made. Each nominee or their nominator, will need to provide a brief – (one A-4 typed) of their history including community service and in particular, details and numbers of years of service to the wholesale sector and any service rendered to APADA or ACAPMA or other related industry body.

**The Award:**

The award is a necklet medallion and ribbon plus a Certificate for Meritorious Service to the Community and the Wholesale Sector of the Petroleum Industry. The recipient may wear the award at any OOFER Reunion Luncheon or function and any formal petroleum function including activities conducted by ACAPMA.

All nominations are to be forwarded to the OOFER Australia Chairman and will remain confidential. Once nominated, the Chairman will contact the candidate to advise them of their nomination/s, and if not already provided, request written detail of their service. Each nominee will be advised of the approval of their award which will remain confidential until the award's presentation at an OOFER Australia function – usually the OOFER Reunion Luncheon held every two years.

Further information may be obtained from the OOFERS Australia Chairman as detailed below.

**Some of his other notable community service works have included serving as Deputy Chair of the Marcus Oldham College Council and extensive service with the Geelong and Regional Water Board.**

**Congratulations Rob, well deserved recognition for your extensive community service.**

**PEOPLE PROFILES:**

**Please let us know of important people movements and appointments, not only within the OOFER community but throughout the Australian oil industry.**

*LETTERS TO THE EDITOR*

*PLEASE LET US HAVE YOUR LETTERS, PHOTOS, NOT ONLY ABOUT INDUSTRY ISSUES, BUT ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR BUSINESS, EXPANSIONS AND ACQUISITIONS, MAJOR STAFF CHANGES AND EVENTS, FAMILY MOMENTS, NEWS ABOUT PEOPLE. WOULD ALL BE WELCOMED FOR OUR OOFERS NEWSLETTER.*

*We also recommend that you pass this newsletter to other prospective OOFERS or any other interested party.*

*There is no newsletter subscription fee.*

**PLEASE NOTE: The opinion pieces expressed within this segment are not necessarily the views of OOFERS Australia or its Editor and all contributions must contain the name and address of the contributor.**

This newsletter is published by OOFERS AUSTRALIA INC A 'NOT FOR PROFIT' PETROLEUM FELLOWSHIP GROUP OF CURRENT AND RETIRED PETROLEUM WHOLESALERS and THOSE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE SECTOR AND IS EDITED BY Kevin Hughes, Chairman of OOFERS Australia, who may be contacted at:

[jeff@endeavourpetroleum.com.au](mailto:jeff@endeavourpetroleum.com.au)

Phone: 0418 339 993

ACN AO 102627

Web: [www.oofers.com.au](http://www.oofers.com.au)

**PLEASE NOTE:** The OOFERS Australia Newsletter is published on an irregular basis, probably around quarterly, is distributed per email and is protected by copyright. The re-publication of any article within this newsletter is strictly prohibited without the written permission of the editor.

**The OOFERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

**Jeff Griffiths: Chairman**

0418339993; [jeff@endeavourpetroleum.com.au](mailto:jeff@endeavourpetroleum.com.au)

**Ben Guzzardi: Deputy Chairman**

0419 505 600; [ben@guzzardi7.com](mailto:ben@guzzardi7.com)

**Ross Lake: Treasurer**

0418 502 551; [Ross.lake@tascopepetroleum.com.au](mailto:Ross.lake@tascopepetroleum.com.au)

**Michael Houlihan; Secretary**

0418 572 355; [michael@jaycoaw.com.au](mailto:michael@jaycoaw.com.au)

**Roy Cottrell** 0417 219 355; [roy@risingphoenix.com.au](mailto:roy@risingphoenix.com.au)

**Allan McWhirter** 08 9865 1221; [allan.mcwhirter@gfs.com.au](mailto:allan.mcwhirter@gfs.com.au)

**Dean Pradal** 0418 772 153; [dean@dapinvestments.com.au](mailto:dean@dapinvestments.com.au)

***If you have not yet completed your membership registration  
OOFERS REGISTRATION FORM BELOW***



# **OOFERS**

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## AUSTRALIA INC.

ACN AO1026271

A NOT FOR PROFIT PETROLEUM FELLOWSHIP GROUP  
OF CURRENT AND RETIRED WHOLESALERS and THOSE CLOSELY ASSOCIATED  
WITH THE SECTOR

PHONE:- 0418 339 993

Email:- [jeff@endeavourpetroleum.com.au](mailto:jeff@endeavourpetroleum.com.au)

Web: [www.oofers.com.au](http://www.oofers.com.au)

### **MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postal Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:-** \_\_\_\_\_ **Fax:-** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Distributorship/s Operated: - (Current or Previous) or  
Other Association with industry.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Major Suppliers:-** \_\_\_\_\_

### **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE:**

**An annual Membership Fee of \$100 is due with this registration.**

**Registered OOFER Australia members are entitled to attend all OOFER functions and vote at OOFER Annual General Meetings and any other meetings called by the executive and or OOFER Board of Directors.**

**OOFER Australia membership fees may be paid by direct bank credit to:**

**OOFERS Australia Ltd**

**NAB Mildura: BSB: 083 764 A/c No: 87689 6868**