

Is the Volunteer Model Sustainable?

Presenter: Les Stewart
Session Secretary: Keith Kings

Session illustrated with overhead projection slides.

Is the volunteer model sustainable?

Pressures on membership from all fronts

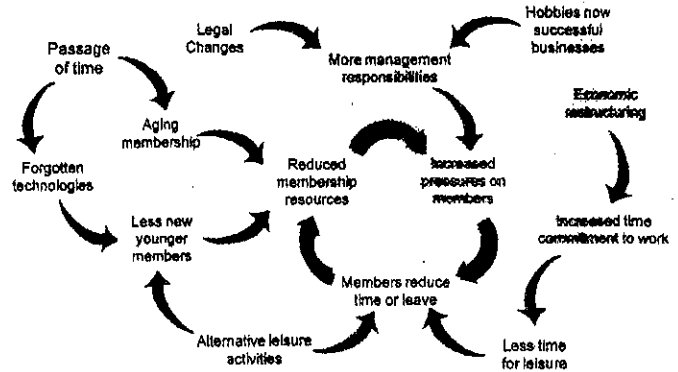
Government

Success



Time

Social



Richard Gilbert: agreed with the Speaker and stated that he had presented papers previously along these lines. He felt that present young people were not generally interested in doing things like those of one or two generations ago. Richard urged that we build on what we can and try to get young ones to join in and not feel they are outside a “clique”.

John Radcliffe: commented that many of us were “hooked” at a relatively young age. He felt that we have now reached the “business” stage of development. We need to have Managers who are sympathetic to both employed staff and volunteers, while also looking for interest from public volunteers.

Les Stewart: gave an example of a conventional old sport recently having to adapt itself to get new members.

Peter Kahn: feared that older founding members of a society do not want to change anything, whereas “new” members have different ideas based on today’s thinking.

Bruce Dale: gave an example from overseas of a method to attract government funding.

John Radcliffe: commented on “levels” of museums from top Government down to volunteer museums—the latter is basically an Anglo-Saxon phenomenon. He asked, “How many of our museums have a Business Plan?” He urged that we should do this if we have not done so.

Lindsay Richardson: spoke re junior members. He felt that existing members “self destruct” when dealing with new/young members and inadvertently get rid of them.

Les Stewart: groups who are potential members—that is, those who have time on their hands—include those who have just left school and married partners who have just got their children off their hands.

Trevor Dennhardt: felt that youngsters today have changed to “do your own thing” types and he asked how can we redirect them.

Len Millar: enquired how we can train new volunteers to do work without “killing” their interest.

Dennis Bell: work experience students recently worked at Bendigo Depot with reasonable results.

John Radcliffe: felt that we would need an experienced adult member/employee who could give continuity of supervision.

Les Stewart: mentioned an example from Christchurch of a volunteer who helped at Ferrymead and it enabled him to get an apprenticeship.

Bryce Pender: we need to train staff in various aspects including handling tourists.

Les Stewart: summed up the discussion and how to meet the various challenges.

Richard Gilbert: suggested ways of advertising to “outsiders” to get them to become interested in our operations.