



President's Message

It's been 12 months since we implemented our growth and management plan, taking in-house the membership processing to improve control and security, establishing our own public liability and firearms financial protection for greater transparency and cost effectiveness, and seeding our own communication channels such as this newsletter.

On this anniversary I am pleased to announce we have engaged an expert webmaster to rebuild our website and next month we will be reaping the benefits of a firearms industry business marketer and strategist. This new staff member will work closely with the Queensland and National firearms industry to guarantee our members get the best possible benefits while ensuring the industry remains strong and viable to reinforce our sport's future.

Government relations, particularly with the Weapons Licensing Group, who manage firearms licensing, permits to acquire processing and firearm range approvals, has always been essential and I, along with former Queensland and National President and now Queensland General Manager Bob Green, have had many detailed discussions with the Director and Police Minister to ensure our members are being treated appropriately. We submit our comments and recommendations to floated legislation changes that may affect our members, as we did in February in response to firearms prohibition orders and the Queensland Community Safety Bill.

As part of SSAA Queensland's growth, we are extending our government relations reach to Canberra and our federal legislators. Strategy, Communications and Relations Executive Director Tim Bannister recently visited the nation's capital to represent Queensland to discuss with politicians and senior bureaucrats areas that affect us such as the National Firearms Database rollout. Tim has also engaged with the media and given interviews on firearms issues, most recently with ABC Radio Brisbane, the *Courier Mail* and *Bundaberg Today* newspapers.

Our growth can be attributed to the decisions and support from the Queensland executives and nominated delegates who meet in September for the 2024 State Annual General Meeting and Conference to plan for the future.

Hellen Gill

SSAA Queensland President



Left: Labor’s Dan Repacholi is also a talented pistol shooter. Right: SSAA Queensland’s Tim Bannister met with politicians from various parties including LNP member Ross Vasta, a keen shooter and supporter of the sport.

Our voice heard in Canberra

By Jennifer Martens

With the resumption of federal parliament after the Winter break, SSAA Queensland’s Executive Director of Strategy, Communications and Relations Tim Bannister, took the opportunity to engage with politicians from a variety of parties and discuss firearms related issues with senior bureaucrats in Canberra. Liberal National Party’s Ross Vasta, former Prime Minister Scott Morrison’s Liberal replacement, Simon Kennedy, Independent Bob Katter and Labor’s Dan Repacholi all took the time to meet with Tim to discuss state and national issues that have implications for our 79,000 members.



“As the Wieambilla shootings have shown, state events can attract a national response, which we now see in the form of the National Firearms Database rollout. This will have direct effects on our members and all firearm’s licence holders and it is critical that we are heard regarding our concerns for effectiveness, data security and cost implications. “To ensure good governance SSAA Queensland’s voice must be heard and we look forward to continuing to engage with the Independents, Conservatives and Labor Party into the future,” Tim said.

This was the second time SSAA Queensland has been represented in Federal Parliament this year and marks the beginning of many discussions with our country’s legislators.

Above: The ‘father’ of the house of parliament Bob Katter is always generous with his time.

Townsville steps up for the juniors



Juniors are the future of Queensland shooting. We need the younger generations to be passionate, proactive, and vocal about the shooting sports. How can we as a state increase our junior membership? It starts at the club level.

SSAA Townsville is a good example. It is doing its part in building a stronger junior base by offering various shooting opportunities and allowing juniors to shoot at the club at no cost.

One of their shooting programs has been running for more than 30 years. In 1993 the club was approached by all-boy's school Ignatius Park College about starting a school shoot. Max Vella, Denise Pearce and John Davies worked hard to get the program up and running and become the success it is today.

During the school's camp week, Year 8 boys take part in a shooting day at the club. Camping nearby at Hervey Range, they get bussed down for a group shoot using the club's .22 rifles. Throughout the years, the competition has become legendary among the boys. If a student shoots a 20mm group or smaller, he becomes a 'marksman' and is eligible to shoot what is known as 'The Beast' – a scaled-down 6.5 Swedish Mauser. Boys at 'Iggys' have been aspiring to shoot this firearm for years and the challenge has created many friendly rivalries and tales.

Around 150 boys experience this shoot each year. Some have come back to the range for a shot as adults and remember the great experiences they had. Regardless of whether they become a club member or not, providing positive exposure to firearms is always a plus. "Introducing kids to firearms correctly and safely and teaching them how to treat them respectfully is what is most important," said Max.

About five years ago, SSAA Townsville also started offering a Scouts camping weekend. Simon Moore's son was in Scouts and an idea to let his troop try shooting came about. Simon put his hand up to get the ball rolling and each year the program has continued to grow, even extending to regional Scout groups and is now officially on the Scouts' annual calendar.

The boys and girls camp at the range and take part in a group shooting event. The top shots enter a shoot off, with the winner adding his or her name to a travelling trophy. Simon has seen many kids return to the camp each year – and improving

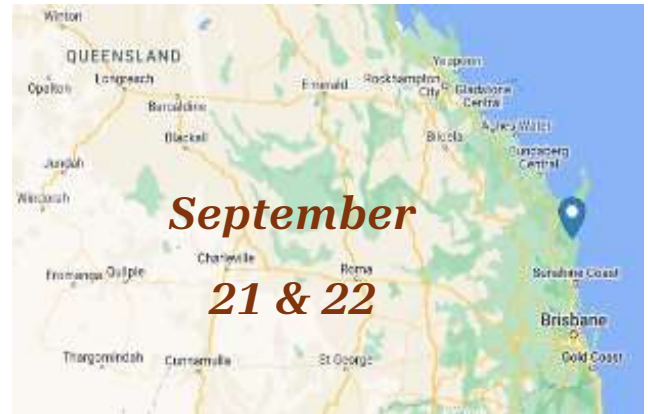


The Townsville range and insert, Max with 'The Beast'. If a student shoots a 20mm group or smaller, they become a 'marksman' and are eligible to shoot the scaled-down 6.5 Swedish Mauser.

each time. "They might start off a bit nervous, but I've never seen a kid leave without a smile," he says. While it doesn't have the 30-year history as the school program, it is proving very popular and with appropriate volunteers will continue to grow. The Scouts camp generally occurs at the end of August.

Adding to the junior calendar, SSAA Townsville has recently partnered with the local Lions Club to host its annual 'Shoot for a Cause' event. Both juniors and adults can compete with rifles, pistols or shotguns in September, with all entry fees distributed to various charities. This year's event is September 29. Tickets: trybooking.com/CATVV

Shooting is a fun pastime...we just need to show our youth that it is more fun than scrolling through social media. If we can do that, that is half the battle.



Cooloola Coast set for Air Rifle Championship

By Brian Leach

The world has been focused on Paris this month, as we watched our greatest athletes compete in their chosen sport. What a magnificent place to hold the Olympic Games and assemble dedicated sports people hoping to give their best performances at this event. While the media was focused on the more popular events, other lower-profile sporting disciplines, which include sporting shooters in air rifle, archery and shotgun, were also being run.

To be part of these Olympic Games was something special and it took most competitors years of hard work to get there. Sporting shooters do not grow on trees. They are members of local sports shooting clubs within Australia and from around the world where they gain their skills and knowledge through regular club participation, coaching and years of training.

One such club is **SSAA Tin Can Bay**, which holds regular monthly shooting events in air rifle, pistol, archery and shotgun. These events are aimed at developing competitive skills and promoting a positive narrative to the public about competitive firearm use.

Air rifle competitions in Australia are held at club, state and national levels. SSAA Tin Can Bay successfully hosted the Queensland State Air Rifle Titles in March of this year. And the club is set to host the 2024 National Air Rifle Field Target competition on **September 21-22**. This event will bring the best air rifle shooters from across Australia to Tin Can Bay and will be used to select a team to represent Australia in the International Air Rifle Field Target competition, which will be held overseas in 2025. First-rate sporting shooters will be competing, and spectators are encouraged to come and watch them in action. The venue is located at 32 Riflefish Rd, Tin Can Bay and the competition starts at 9am each day.

Air Rifle Field Target has 50 knock-down targets set in the scrub or field. Targets are placed at no specific distance between 10 and 50 metres. Each has a different sized hole for the pellet to pass through to knock it down. The target is then reset by pulling it up with an attached string. A score is recorded for each target knocked over, with a grading system in place. Air Rifle Field Target is one of the most popular disciplines at the club, state and national levels.

Inquiries can be made to tincanbay@ssaaqld.org.au or contact (Air Captain) Brian Leach (07) 5488 0159 (message bank) or President Brett Whiting 0467 332 303.

Writers and photographers wanted

Club shooting, recreational hunting and general outdoors writers and photographers wanted to be a part of the Southern Hemisphere's largest shooting organisation's freelance media pool.



SSAA Queensland is growing its media resources to entertain, educate and inform its near 80,000 members. While stories will be locally dominant, we still want to inform members of firearm products, target shooting and hunting opportunities Australia and world-wide.

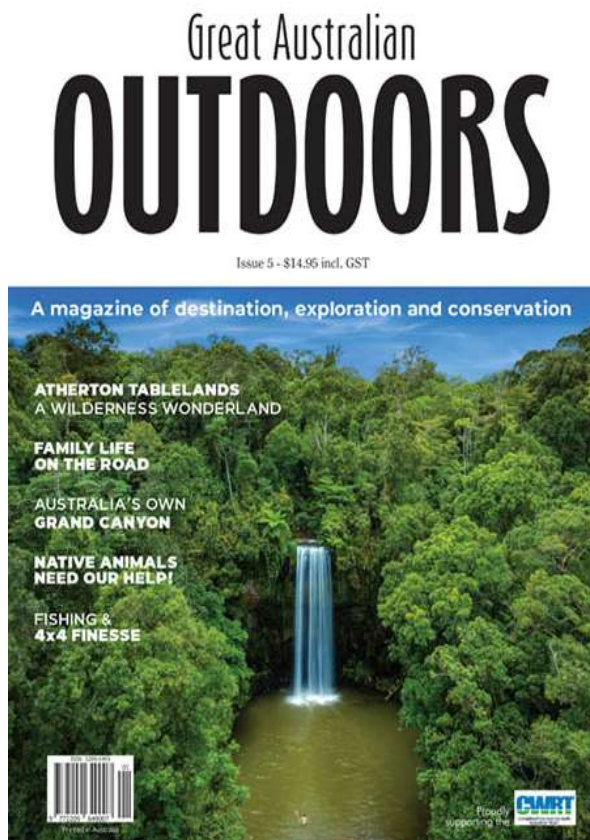
Contributions must be original, well written, be supplied with appropriate photography or artwork and conform with the laws of the land.

Published contributions will be appropriately paid for with remuneration agreed to prior.

**Send an example of your stories and photographs to
news@ssaaqld.org.au**

Queensland in focus

New edition out now!



If ever there was a time for SSAA Queensland members to buy a copy of *Great Australian Outdoors* (GAO) magazine, it is now, with Issue 5 heavily featuring our Sunshine State, specifically the Atherton Tablelands. There is a very comprehensive piece dedicated to the area, with nearly 30 pages touting tumbling waterfalls and walking trails, swimming holes and wildlife, fresh food and adventure activities and places to stay and tours to embark on. Moving towards the Outback is a story about Charlotte Plains, a family-owned and operated sheep and cattle station and campground where you can soak weary bones in 42-degree mineral-rich artesian springs. Near Cunnamulla, visitors to the station can expect spectacular views, traditional outback experiences and tours, and plenty of bird and wildlife to admire. History buffs will enjoy the story on the Rabbit Works Museum in Texas, Queensland. The Texas Rabbits Works was a processing plant from 1904 to 1947, providing residents of the town and surrounding areas with much-needed

employment opportunities and it even supplied the UK and USA with whole frozen rabbits, thanks to the newly invented commercial refrigeration systems.

Again, for those who enjoy learning about our past, in this issue you can read about Queensland's coach company Cobb & Co and the museum established in Southwest Queensland. If you visit the museum, you can follow the last journey the company took in 1924.

Of course, Issue 5 also features other great areas of Australia, including the Central Highlands of Tasmania, the Murray River in South Australia, a Top End treasure and Australia's own 'Grand Canyon' in NSW.

With 198 pages of destination, exploration and conservation, plus reviews on products to help you enjoy the great outdoors, there is sure to be something for everyone. The magazine was conceived to demonstrate to the non-shooting public the various reasons we hunt such as for the table and to conserve our native flora and fauna. The magazine takes the sensationalism out of firearms use and shows that they and we play a key role in the outdoors.

To fast-track your copy of GAO 5, call one of our local membership staff on **07 3492 9237** or order from the SSAA Queensland [website](#). For members it's discounted to just **\$12.95 including postage**, cheaper than the cover price at the newsagencies.