

APACA launches itself officially to a packed house in Melbourne, 7th of December 2006



APACA founding members (left to right) Annie Horner (at podium), Karen Forsythe, Wendy Lees, Cara Gould and Gillian Cardinal. Photo by Wendy Lees, Lees Lizards Photography.

With a bit of glitz and glamour, the Australian Picture and Copyright Association (APACA) put on its glad rags for an official launch Thursday the 7th of December in Melbourne.

With strong support from ninety-odd people, the room was packed with supporters from a broad range of sectors, spanning cultural institutions, publishers, photographers, photo libraries and media to name just a few. As befitted the venue (a funky upstairs space along Little Collins Street), cocktails were sipped until the wee hours as people enjoyed mingling.

Many remarked afterwards that the occasion provided a great chance to finally put a face to a name, while others enjoyed meeting like-minded professionals for the first time. Providing chances of this kind is precisely what APACA intends to do plenty more of – we were delighted to have this perceived need validated.

We thank our sponsors for their generous support of the launch: Photolibary.com, Newspix, Thomson Learning and Picturehouse. The gorgeous photo banners gracing the

walls, provided by Photolibary.com and Newspix, were an apt reminder during the evening of just how beautiful photography can be.

After an hour of informal joviality, APACA committee members Annie Horner and Karen Forsythe took to the mike to commence official launch proceedings. Flanked by the remaining three founding members, Annie kicked off the speeches by outlining the genesis of the Association – how it was first conceived of and the spirit behind it.

APACA first came into being through a group of friends and professionals working in photo research / copyright in publishing settings. Starting with a few drinks in April 2005, this group soon discovered that they shared a strong belief that their profession is an important one, one deserving a dedicated Association of its very own. From the get-go each party agreed that there is a tangible need for an industry platform to be established, for the sharing of knowledge and the growth of the overall expertise of the profession. Throughout her speech, Annie encouraged all those present at the launch to visualize how an Association such as APACA could help them and to, in turn, help build its future direction.



Karen Forsythe. Photo by Wendy Lees, Lees Lizards Photography.

Karen Forsythe then provided an overview of the different initiatives APACA is currently undertaking and also sketched in a few highlights on the horizon.

Karen began by emphasising that the website, www.apaca.org.au, is intended to be a dynamic hub for members and that, after the launch, people should visit the re-launched website (which was developed by OneRedApple).

Highlights of the re-vamped APACA website include:

- **A new interface.** Features for both members-only (password-protected) and the general public.
- **Newsletters.** Current newsletters will be electronically accessed by members with a password, while previous issues will be archived on the site. Note, a copy of the first issue was given out in the launch showbags.
- **News updates** for the industry

- **"Find a Photo Library"** facility, which will have details for photo libraries which are our members. A few words will also be there about their collections.
- **A freelance register.** It has been our experience that freelancers can be difficult to locate when needed.
- **Job postings** Our industry employs unique skills, and the more traditional outlets where jobs are posted can be just too broad for both employers and employees. Posting jobs with APACA will target those in our community with the skills required.
- **Advertising space** for any individual or organisation wishing to reach our network of members. This could be a single individual or a multinational company.

Casting ahead to the future, Karen explained that APACA envisions being able to provide training through the Australian Publishers Association and other outlets. She highlighted that we recognise that this has been lacking in Australia, particularly for picture research, and needs to be addressed.

Furthermore, APACA intends to build on the momentum of its launch by hosting gatherings both formally (seminars/conferences) and informally (networking opportunities, wine & cheese/beer & pizza). Karen explained that the founding members hope to provide this for not only Melbourne but also other major cities, as the tyranny of distance is such an issue for Australia. Twice the number of guests would have come to the launch if this had not been the case and we are aware that for the organisation to reach its potential, it needs to be inclusive for all of Australia.

Karen closed by stressing that our community is dynamic and diverse, with a wide range of expertise. The founding members feel it will benefit enormously from the exchange of ideas that APACA will facilitate. However, what we become in the future will depend upon our members. We encourage feedback and invite participation.

APACA would also like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their generous time and energy:

- Jo Taylor from publishing services collective Folio
- Laura Brown from design company OneRedApple (Laura is also a musician, and launch guests would have found Laura's music CD in their showbags)
- Stella Vassiliou Design
- Terry Cuddy & Doug Townsend from Markstone Group