

40 YEARS OF WORK

The response to the formation of Yeppoon Lions club was so strong that an embargo was put on new membership extension for a short period because it had reached 44 in three months. Membership reached a peak of 55 in 1976. It has fluctuated up and down during the years and currently has 30 members.

Yeppoon Lions Club's first project was to concrete the floor of the Ganter Pavilion in Yeppoon showground. The first major development was the first Lions Park at the intersection of Park Street, Rockhampton Road and Tanby Road. A few years later, the club built a new secretary's office and broadcasting tower on the edge of the show ring in Yeppoon showground.

Within two months of founding the club, the board of directors was approached by a church group asking Lions to take over the annual Pineapple Festival that started in 1961 and in its sixth year had made a loss of \$120. A two hour debate carried a motion by one vote majority to take it on.

The 1967 promotion sent Lions with Pineapple Festival colouring competition leaflets and truckloads of free pineapples to travel west to Duaringa, Biloela and Gladstone on tour of all schools on the route. For several years the festival was held in Yeppoon showground, on the beachfront and at Beaman Park in Yeppoon, closing the main street. The first festival staged bullfighting, a blind driving competition and a crazy Keppel Bay Fire Brigade act driving through an ignited Hessian shack in centre ring. The steer for the bullfight was too wild to truck to the ground, its replacement, a yearling beast was scared stiff of the matadors and ran itself into the ground. One of the blind drivers went out of control and wrecked a radio broadcasting van in the ring.

Yeppoon Pineapple Festival gradually grew from one day to 10 days and on the way in the early 1990s changed its title to Yeppoon Lions Tropical Pinefest. When the Capricorn Coast Society of Arts was formed the festival program welcomed a four day Festival of Art combined with the official opening. The exhibition of fine art, pottery, woodturning, china painting and other crafts were on sale and created a popular market among residents and visitors. Yeppoon Lions Tropical Pinefest has raised about \$300,000 for worthy needs and causes over the past 40 years. Major recipients of donations have included, Queensland Cancer Fund, The Heart Foundation, The Leukaemia Foundation, Livingstone State Emergency Service, Yeppoon Coastguard, Yeppoon Surf Life Saving Club, The Royal Flying Doctor Service, St Vincent de Paul, Yeppoon Hospital and Nursing Home Association, Red Cross, Capricorn Coast Blue Nursing Service, Blue Care Nursing Home and many others. The record pinefest fund raising peaked at \$44,800 in 2005.