

Newsletter 23 - February 2005

We always appreciate your comments and contributions. Please email any suggestions or news items to the editor of ACCORD NEWS, Suzanne Henderson at suzanne.henderson@uts.edu.au.

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Tsunami: co-operative movement pulls together

ICA tsunami appeal

Ivano Barberini, ICA President has congratulated the international co-operative movement on their response to the devastating Tsunami. "I made an appeal for international solidarity on 30 December," he said. "Since then numerous co-operatives throughout the world have established relief and reconstruction funds to help the victims of the tsunami." Details on the ICA's Tsunami Appeal Fund can be found at www.ica.coop.

The ICA dedicated the first issue of its [weekly digest for 2005](#) to the Tsunami disaster and includes:

- How the global cooperative movement is responding to the tsunami disaster
- Commentary: Robby Tulus - The role coops can play in the longer-term reconstruction of areas affected by the disaster.

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Special role for Unions

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and its Global Union partners have launched an international trade union initiative to channel funding to sustainable rehabilitation and reconstruction work in the areas affected by the Tsunami disaster.

The ICFTU represents 148 million workers in 234 affiliated organisations in 152 countries and territories. ICFTU is

Unions are uniquely placed to ensure maximum coordination of the efforts of donor governments, UN agencies and non-governmental organisations.

"With initial humanitarian assistance underway now, we need to take a hard look at the future with the people and communities affected. Long term commitment to rebuilding infrastructure and creating decent employment are essential tasks which must be right at the centre of

"The International co-operative movement has responded very quickly and generously. This is not surprising given its long tradition of global solidarity,"
Ivano Barberini

also a partner in Global Unions.

international support", said ICFTU General Secretary Guy Ryder. "The global trade union movement will play its part in this, through this initiative, and by making our views heard by the UN, governments and other agencies involved

in reconstruction work", he added.

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What the co-ops are doing

The co-operative effort

Links with local communities, networks and resources mean co-operatives are ideally suited to assist the relief effort as these examples demonstrate.

- [Local co-operatives help food aid distribution, Colombo](#)
- [Sri Lankan co-operative credit union mobilises local networks and resources to help disaster communities](#)
- [SOS Children's Villages Canada, provide relief based on co-operative principles, for tsunami orphans](#)
- Members of the Alpha House Artists Co-operative in Sydney, Australia made over 100 dolls to send to children in a Sri Lankan orphanage who were affected by the Tsunami



Zio Ledeux from the Alpha House Artists Coop with some of the 100 hand-made dolls

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Commentary

Young Australians and Democracy: a glass half full or half empty?

Andrew passey, Senior Research Fellow at ACCORD comments on the Govenor General's Austalia Day speech ...

In his Australia Day address, **Major General Michael Jeffery**, Governor-General of Australia, talked of a 'worrying trend of disengagement from our democratic process, particularly amongst younger Australians.' (*Sydney Morning Herald report Jan 27th*). This trend, he suggested, stemmed in part from the sense that the issues that interest them are often overshadowed by the rough and tumble of politics.

In a way, the Govenor-General is both right and wrong. He is right because younger people do appear less engaged with formal politics and political parties. But he is wrong in that in a pluralist democracy like Australia, the democratic process is about more than voting in elections or membership of political parties. Australian democracy entails a far wider range of activities and attitudes, and the evidence here is that younger people are engaged.

Read the full article : [Young Australian's and Democracy](#)

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ACCORD YEARBOOK launched

Activities, achievements and aspirations

'Our goal is to be recognised as a centre of excellence for research and development within Australia's social economy.' - *Paul Fitzgerald, General Manager, ACCORD*

ACCORD's first full colour [Yearbook](#) (PDF 1.14Mb) highlights the centre's activities and achievements in 2003-2004 and its aspirations for the future.

The Yearbook launch in January was attended by the ACCORD staff, who were joined by Roger Spear, Chair of the Co-operatives Research Unit, Open University, UK. Paul Fitzgerald, General

Manager of ACCORD, said during his speech that, 'Last year we confidently began to build a more national focus, with stronger industry driven research, and the launch of Australia's first National Co-operatives Database. Our goal is to be recognised as a centre of excellence for research and development within Australia's social economy.'



Roger Spear, Chair of the Co-operatives Research Unit, Open University, UK with ACCORD's General Manager Paul Fitzgerald at the launch of the Yearbook.

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[National Database online](#)

Australia's first national database of co-operatives is now online. Developed by ACCORD, the database lists almost 2000 co-operatives across New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland. Accessible at <http://www.accord.org.au/links/coops/search.cfm>, the database is easy to navigate and update. Designed for maximum efficiency, it makes information on Australia's co-operatives available at the click of a button. Other states will be included over the next few months.

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Co-operative Development and Mutuality

Co-operatives and good governance

"Good governance is the product of true, dedicated and efficient managers" says Dr Daman Prakash, Director of the Rural Development and Management Centre, New Delhi and Senior Consultant, IFFCO Foundation, New Delhi.

Such managers are the products of positive, progressive and responsive environments surrounding them: good working conditions, harmonious relationships with the board of directors and the managers, positive and democratic legal frameworks, flexible bylaws and reduced bureaucratic procedures.

Read the [full paper](#) to find out how co-operatives can ensure good governance and hence better performance.

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Co-operative Profiles

100 Years and Still Going Strong

'In contrast to the butchers of today, the industry prior to 1905 was severely demoralised. Bad debts and overdue reforms in the market place were inhibiting growth and threatening the livelihood of many butchers.' - *Bruce Carter*

On Saturday night, 5 February 2005, 750 butchers and meat industry representatives from all over South Australia put down their cleavers and converged on the Adelaide Convention Centre to celebrate the centenary of one of the world's most enduring co-operatives. Formed in 1905, Master Butchers Co-operative Limited (MBL) is the oldest co-operative in South Australia.

A highlight of the evening was the launch of a commemorative history book, *Master Butchers Limited - Our First Hundred Years*, by the Federal Member for Makin, the Hon. Trish Draper. This historical account traces the development of MBL by a handful of disgruntled butchers in 1905, and its transformation into the multi-million dollar co-operative of today.

Bruce Carter, General Manager of Master Butchers Co-operative Limited says, "In contrast to the butchers of today, the industry prior to 1905 was severely demoralized. Bad debts and overdue reforms in the market place were inhibiting growth and threatening the livelihood of many butchers."

MBL has 450 meat industry members from across South Australia, Northern Territory, Broken Hill and western Victoria. The co-op employs over 50 people and its annual turnover exceeds \$20 million. For more on the celebrations read the [press release](#) or email Bruce at mbl@adam.com.au.



*Hon. Caroline Schaefer
MLC presents Bob
Conroy, oldest member
(93) with gold plated
meat cleaver*

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Rochdale celebrates 160 years, UK

Co-op shops once dominated the retail food industry in Britain, now they have a tiny percentage of the market. BBC R4's *Food Programme* examines whether that change was inevitable and how the movement has shaped the British food industry right up to new food co-ops today.

Food has always played a big part in the movement, from the origins in Rochdale in 1844. This year, Rochdale is celebrating the 160th anniversary of the UK co-operative

Brown salutes the Movement

UK Chancellor, Gordon Brown, paid tribute to the principles and ethos of the co-operative Movement when he opened United Co-operatives' new headquarters in Rochdale last week. "Rochdale is right at the centre of the great traditions of the co-op movement and today's ceremony marks the opening of a new

movement.

chapter," he said.

Presenter, Sheila Dillon visits the Rochdale

Pioneers Museum where she speaks to manager Gillian Lonergan in the original grocer's shop, opened by the Rochdale Pioneers in 1844. She is joined in the studio by Dame Pauline Green, chief executive of Cooperatives UK, which represents cooperative enterprises in Britain, Robert Clark, independent retail analyst and Dr Bill Lancaster, historian at the University of Northumbria, to discuss the development of food co-operatives in the UK.

Also in the programme, Sheila and Robert Clark visit the Unicorn Grocery in Chorlton in Manchester, one of the finalists in the 2004 BBC Radio 4 Food and Farming Awards. Three people set it up in 1996, now it has over thirty co-owners, a turnover of over £3 million and an impressive and loyal customer base. They speak to co-workers Kelly Bubble and Alan York.

[Listen to the programme](#)

Click on the link under Previous Programmes: Co-operatives

For Further information:

[Rochdale Pioneers Museum](#)

[Co-operative College](#)

[Co-operatives UK](#)

[University of Northumbria](#)

[Unicorn Grocery](#)

[BBC Food](#) website

[BBC News Online](#) looks at how changes in the countryside have affected the people who live there - and what they can expect in the future.

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Co-operative Food Store

The Co-operative Advantage

Taxman and 'spirit of giving'

More Australians are donating to charities and non-profit organisations than ever before and the Christmas season is the time when we are most generous, according to a research project led by the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS).

The research on giving and philanthropy has been undertaken by the *Giving Australia* collaboration: the Centre of Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies (QUT), the Centre for Australian Community Organisations and Management (UTS), Roy Morgan Research, McNair Ingenuity Research and the Fundraising Institute of Australia. Support for the research is from the Prime Ministers Community Business Partnership.

One of the factors encouraging giving by

Key findings:

- Tax deductible donations in 2001-2, were up by 3.5% from the previous year.
- 34.8% of all taxpayers made and claimed tax-deductible donations in 2001-2.
- Since 1996, the amount donated

Australians has been changes to tax deductibility arrangements introduced by the Howard Government. In 1997 the ABS estimated that in total \$2,768 million was given to non-profit organisations, in that same year tax records show tax claims of only \$539 million were made.

by individual Australians as a proportion of total income has been rising and is at an average of 0.25%.

- The average tax-deductible donation in 2002 was \$241.35.

See www.acoss.org.au to download *Giving Australia: Summary of key data* and www.cpns.bus.qut.edu.au to download the Current Issues *Information Sheet 2004/12*.

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Co-operative publications & links

Conference Publications

Papers from the [ICA Asia-Pacific Co-operative Research Conferences](#)

[ACCORD paper - PPT slides for the 3rd ICA Asia-Pacific Cooperative Research Conference](#)

For more details contact Lee Wilson Lee.Wilson@uts.edu.au

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Co-operative Bank Case Study

Investigate its past and study its development as one of the most socially responsible businesses in the world today. Read about:

- Biography of The Co-operative Bank
- Robert Owen - the founding father of co-operative
- The Rochdale Pioneers
- The first century of Co-operation
- Turbulent times at the Co-op
- Transformation at The Co-operative Bank

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Demutualisation in the spotlight

[Should our co-operative demutualise?](#) (July 2004) by David Griffiths, from the australia.coop web portal

[Co-op Conversions: Demutualizations Still Rare but Pressures Growing, Study Finds.](#)

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[The Economics of Organization Structure Changes: A US Perspective on Demutualization](#) by Fabio R. Chaddad and Michael L. Cook in the *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics* Vol. 75, No. 4, pp. 575-594, December 2004.

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[**Non-profit Sector in a Changing Economy**](#)

Report from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) covers new trends in the non-profit sector, reviews the sector in a number of countries and provides tools to finance, monitor and evaluate the sector.

[**Community Development publications - Dr. Jim Cavaye**](#)

Publications cover a range of subjects including measuring social capital, community capacity building, building social capital in rural and regional communities, small town renewal, in the Australian context.

[**Can Do Community - showcasing community capacity building**](#)

This web site provides the opportunity to find out about community-building and development activities happening across Australia.

[**ICMIF**](#)

The International Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF) is the only international association that represents both mutual and co-operative insurers. The organisation produces a digital information service, Newsbyte.

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ICA News

Women's Forum

The fourth Regional Women's Forum was held in Chiangmai, Thailand on 30 November 2004. More than 80 delegates from countries in the region discussed the ways and means of empowering women, and how to get larger participation in decision-making positions in the co-ops in the region.

[Conference papers](#)

[Read the full digest](#)

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News in Brief

In Australia

[Dairy Farmers to lift prices](#), *The Age*, Melbourne, Australia 1/13/05

Australian dairy co-operative, Dairy Farmers will increase milk prices to consumers on the back of oil price hikes. Also, Victorian co-op Bonlac Foods Ltd, which is 50 per cent owned by New Zealand dairy giant Fonterra, lifted the price it pays to farmers

demonstrating the company's resolve to pay milk returns from improving operational performance.

[Armatree farmer in line for award](#), *Advocate*, Warren, Australia 1/13/05

Jenny Bradley from the Tooraweenah Prime Lamb Marketing Co-operative, was named as a finalist in the NSW 2005 Rural Women's Award. Ms Bradley wants to help lamb producers to improve the way lamb is marketed, thereby helping to minimise the impacts of market factors such as price fluctuations.

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In the UK

[You don't send me flowers anymore](#)

Interflora's members have backed a controversial private equity bid to buy the flower business. The outcome left opponents of the plan in shock after they had fought to derail the bid, which will end the not-for-profit structure of the group and pass control of the business from its 1,850 florist members to 3i.

David Adair, who headed the rebel Interflora Stakeholders Association, said: *"Maybe it was a slow Christmas, which meant that people were more tempted by the money. But there's no such thing as a free lunch. If you're getting money now, you'll pay for it later. Interflora has been given away at a bargain price."*

[Somersetfield calls time on Co-op war](#), *Evening News*, Manchester, England, United Kingdom 1/14/05

A UK co-operative food retailer has survived a dirty tricks campaign designed to close down its stores. Somerfield bosses, worried about losing market share to the Manchester-based Co-operative group, offered a £5,000 incentive to store chiefs who managed to close down their local Co-op store and £500 to anyone who could successfully entice a Co-op employee to move to their store. Two hundred Co-op stores across the UK had been targeted.

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Other Territories

[Liberalisation of Coffee Marketing Opposed](#), *The East African Standard*, Nairobi, Kenya 1/12/05

The Kenya Planters Coffee Co-operative Union (KPCU) cautioned the government against opening a second marketing window for the produce. Such a move would not only disturb the price discovery mechanisms but also cripple the co-operative movement by robbing it of collective bargaining power.

[Panel suggests sweeping changes in co-ops working](#), *The Economic Times*, New Delhi, India 1/11/05

A task force on co-operative credit structure has recommended sweeping changes in the functioning of co-operatives. The draft report has suggested that co-operative credit institutions should return the equity infused by state governments over a period of time.

[Co-op takes flight](#)

Touchstone Energy support North Carolina's Festival of Flight. "Innovation is one of the core values for Touchstone Energy cooperatives," said Jane Pritchard, director of corporate communications for North Carolina's Association of Electric Cooperatives. "And the history of flight is a history of courage, ingenuity and innovation."

Nationwide, close to 600 Touchstone Energy cooperatives in 44 states are delivering electric power and energy solutions to more than 16 million customers every day.

[Cooperative movement to be reorganised](#), *Daily News*, Colombo, Sri Lanka 1/14/05

An institute to provide comprehensive training to all employees of co-operatives with the aim of making the co-operative movement an efficient national service free of corrupt practices, would be established at Pallekele Central Province, according to Minister of Cooperatives, Power and Highways, Ediriweera Weerawardhana.

[Co-ops improve rural healthcare](#), *China Daily*, Beijing, China 1/11/05

A new national rural healthcare co-operative system will become a major contributor to local social and economic development in areas of need such as the remote Cangyuan Wa County.

[Minister says cooperative sector's mission is to provide social equity](#), *MEHR.com*, Tehran, Iran 1/5/05

"The mission of the co-operative sector is to provide social equity for the people, development without social justice could not be liberating", said Iran's Co-operatives Minister. In the Constitution, he added, the co-operative sector is considered the provider of the social justice with the aim of nurturing and forming a dynamic economy.

[Consolidation bug bites co-op banks too](#), *The Financial Express*, New Delhi, India 1/14/05

Consolidation fever now seems to be hitting the co-operative banking sector. The 'big boys' of the sector are competing with each other to grab the smaller banks, irrespective of strength or weakness.

[Co-op Islami sales grow 30 per cent in Qatar](#), *AMEInfo*, Dubai, United Arab Emirates 1/12/05

Co-op Islami, the region's top real halal food producer, announced that its 2004 sales in Qatar had climbed 30 per cent on the previous year.

[Organic Valley 'Can Do' Model Yields Another Record Year](#), *PR Newswire*, New York, New York 1/10/05

Organic Valley Family of Farms, America's largest co-operative of organic farmers and the only national organic dairy co-op to remain independent, today announced its best-ever year with \$208 million in sales and a growing total of 689 organic farmers in 20 states.

More stories at: <http://www.wisc.edu/uwcc/coopnews.html#articles>

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What's on?

In Australia

Reinventing the Corporation through Participatory Ownership and Employee Involvement

Thursday 3 March - Reinventing the Corporation through Participatory Ownership and Employee Involvement 1 Day Conference, Intercontinental Hotel Sydney, 117 Macquarie Street, Sydney

Presented by: The Australian Human Resources Institute, the Labour-Management Studies Foundation, Macquarie University, and the Australian Employee Ownership Organisation

More information: [Conference Brochure](#)

There is a need for a policy debate on new structures rather than recycle the arguments of individualism versus collectivism. The conference will examine how the corporation can be re-invented using participatory ownership.

Beyond Declarations - Working Partnerships for Sustainability National

Conference: 16 - 18 March 2005, Manly Pacific Hotel, Manly, NSW

Conference designed for all who are interested in developing effective sustainability partnerships including sustainability practitioners from all levels of government (environmental scientists, environmental educators, social and strategic planners, engineers and councillors) and the corporate, academic and community sectors.

Contact: Julie McGraw (Conference Organiser)

jmcgraw@gemspl.com.au or 02 9744 5252

[Community Organising School 2005: 3 - 6 April 2005](#)

The School is a part of a broader project by the Centre for Popular Education, UTS, that seeks to link experienced organisers from a variety of movements, including community organisations, the union movement, environmentalists and social justice movements, to learn together and to build collective strength.

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Overseas

10th February - International conference on health co-operatives - London

Organised by South East London Doctors Co-operative (SELDOC), with assistance from Co-operatives UK and Mutuo, in association with the International Health Co-operative Organisation. Venue: One Great George Street, Westminster, London. Speakers from Canada, Spain, Sweden, Belgium, Russia and the United Kingdom.

Contact: telephone 020 8299 5501 or 020 8299 2619.

Email: suen@seldoc.nhs.uk

20th-22nd May - Co-operative Congress - Royal Concert Hall Glasgow

Annual meeting of co-operators from all sectors of the UK movement. Various speakers, fringe meetings and workshops.

Contact: 0161 246 2908

email: rita.butler@cooperatives-uk.coop

Two conferences on Social Capital and on Economy and Community - Call for papers

The Social Capital Foundation invites all interested persons or organizations to present a paper to one or both of its upcoming international, interdisciplinary conference that will be held respectively on September 21-22, 2005 and September 23-24, 2005 in the beautiful island of Malta. [TSCF international conferences](#)

Registration: [Online](#)

More information: [Brochure](#)

[ICMIF conference in Singapore: 16-18 November 2005](#)

The conference agenda under the slogan "changing times, constant values" is being put together and will focus on three key areas of regulation and risk, mutuality and solidarity, and best practices, one key focus area for each day.

Learn more about the last conference in Paris 2004. View the presentations and hear the speakers in four languages: <http://www.icmif.org/video>

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Announcements

Support for Enterprising Communities Pilot Project

Social Enterprises with a Wide Market Focus - An action research project for the Department of Education and Skills by [Co-operatives UK and Partners](#)

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About this Newsletter

We welcome your comments on our newsletter and any suggested topics or items for inclusion in the next issue, due for publication in late March 2005. Please forward any items of interest including news and events, case studies, profiles, reports or commentaries to suzanne.henderson@uts.edu.au by 15 March 2005.

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