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News

Newsletter of the
Public Transport Users Association

ISSN 0817 - 0347

Volume 20 No.4 October 1996

Printed on recycled paper

20th Anniversary Celebrations

Join us to honour some of the PTUA's outstanding members from the first 20 years!

You are invited to the PTUA's special 20th anniversary celebrations.

This will be your chance to meet Tim Pharoah, who is Reader in Transport and Urban Planning at South Bank University, London. He is an expert on planning for traffic reduction

He will talk on "From Thatcher to Traffic Calming: The Transport Policy Turnaround in the UK".

Honorary life memberships will be conferred on a number of members who have made outstanding contributions to the Association during the past 20 years. (For this reason, this function is formally designated a General Meeting of the PTUA)

An informal buffet dinner and drinks will follow. The function will conclude at 9pm

Thursday 14th November at 6pm for 6.30
Victoria University of Technology, City Campus,
300 Flinders Street, (between Elizabeth and Queen Streets)
12th floor, conference room 12A

We need to know accurate numbers for our catering arrangements. Please send us the RSVP coupon on the back page by 6th November and enclose cheque.

20 years of achievement

Without the PTUA, public transport in Melbourne and Victoria would almost have disappeared! Some of our victories include

- beating the Lonie Report
- stopping Met ticket - remember Jim Kennan
- keeping Grand Final at MCG
- promoting 'Night Rider' buses
- day and night XPT services to Sydney
- protecting many suburban and country services under threat from the current government.
- influencing the Upfield line victory, also under the current government.
- today, the PTUA is campaigning for a dense network of trains, trams and buses across the whole of Melbourne.
- the freeway onslaught on Melbourne is a great threat to the future of a liveable Melbourne and the PTUA is heavily involved in defending our city and the vital role of public transport for a sustainable city.

FREEWAY BATTLE SHAPES

Demand does not justify freeway, opponents argue

By TIM WINKLER, environment reporter
Environment groups are concerned that the State Government is about to build the Scoresby Freeway, despite lack of demand for the road. The president of the Public Transport Users Association, Mr Paul Mees, said he is concerned the freeway will be built as a result of a state council proposal.

jams

by PAUL AMY

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'Freeway of no use'

Frankston — the route of the way is of no use to this traffic. The road lobby

ANTI-FREEWAY tify
stepped up

👉 Scoresby battle heats up see story on page 3

Keeping in touch...

PTUA office

Ground Floor 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne
Telephone: 03 9650 7898

Committee Meetings

1st Thursday of every month at 6pm, 247 Flinders Lane
For details please call the office

Membership

Graeme Gibson: 03 6950 7898

The PTUA on the 'Net'

The PTUA home page is on
Vicnet at <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~ptua/firstpt.htm>.

Committee Members

Paul Mees - President
Les Chandra - Secretary
Tim Hoffman - Treasurer
John McPherson - Assistant Secretary
Patrick O'Connor - Media Liaison
Alan Hardie
Gerry Warren
Demetri Pimenides
Domenica Settle

After a long stint of working tirelessly with the PTUA (and Save Albert Park), Neva Finch has retreated to the Western District and will be sampling West Coast Rail in the future. We thank Neva for all her hard work. She will be greatly missed.

The PTUA welcomes our new committee members:

Josephine Connellan

Well known transport activist from Brunswick

Christina Sindt

Teaches engineering at VUT and happy public transport user

Mary Jamieson

Has campaigned vigorously for the return of the Mildura train

Peter Dann

Architect and public transport proponent from Abbotsford

Anthony Morton

Avid cyclist and occasional engineer



**This is your last chance
to renew membership
or join the PTUA before
membership fees rise
early next year.**

**The 1st meeting of the 96/97
committee has resolved to
raise regular membership rates
to \$15 per year and the
concession rate to \$8 per year**

AGM Report

The 1996 PTUA AGM was held on Wednesday 18th September at 7pm at Ross House.

The President, Paul Mees, reported on the activities of the past year emphasising our educational role with the community and our lobbying role with all levels of government. The legal cases underway in the Federal Court (by PTUA member Phil Morey) and the case in the Commonwealth Administrative Appeals Tribunal which has PTUA support were mentioned.

Paul pointed out that the Coalition transport policy for the state election had been clearly influenced by PTUA ideas. He mentioned our on-going campaign in the Scoresby corridor to prevent another freeway.

The Secretary and temporary Treasurer, Les Chandra, presented a financial report which indicated the need for a rise in subscriptions, even though membership increasing.

The meeting discussed a rise in membership fees and there was general agreement for a small rise, which the new committee will discuss.

The new 1996/97 Committee was appointed with five new members, three being formally co-opted onto the committee for 96/97 at our first regular committee meeting.

PTUA rocks transport policy boat in Outer-East

Since late July's Age newspaper article entitled *Demand does not justify freeway, opponents argue*, the PTUA has had great success in raising the profile of transport policy in the outer-eastern suburbs. The state government has appointed consultants Sinclair, Knight and Merz to investigate present and future travel needs along the freeway reservation stretching from Frankston to Ringwood. The PTUA suspects that the result of the consultants' study is a foregone conclusion - "we need a \$600 million freeway".

The first study working paper has confirmed what 1991 census figures suggest, that congestion on Stud and Springvale roads is caused by local traffic accessing east-west routes and not by commuters travelling long north-south distances. Of the 17,000 workers who reside in Ringwood, only 22 make a daily return trip to Frankston - the route of the entire freeway. The construction of the Scoresby Freeway would be one the largest white elephants in Melbourne's history.

As the majority of car movements are east-west, the existing rail system with appropriate extensions and vastly upgraded service, together with a dramatic upgrade of bus routes, would cater for travel demand in the Scoresby corridor and ease road congestion. Specific public transport improvements could include:

- extension of the Glen Waverley line to Rowville to provide a high quality public transport link to this isolated area;
- extension of the East Burwood tram to Knox City Shopping Centre along the Burwood Highway.

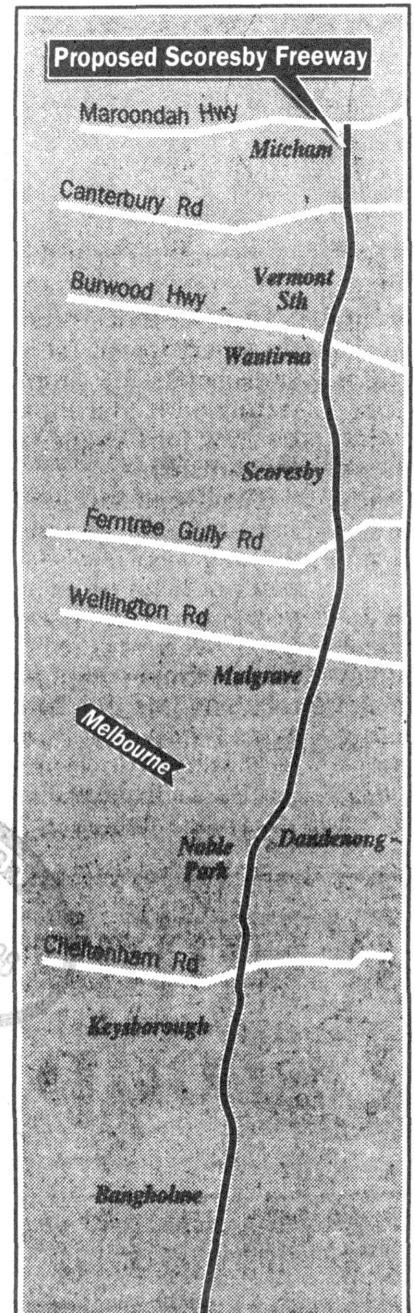
Our press coverage has been very broad with supportive articles in local newspapers in Dandenong, Knox, Doncaster-Templestowe, Ringwood, Croydon, Waverley and the Diamond Valley. We know we're having an impact when pro-Scoresby freeway MPs make the effort to appear in the Knox Post (28/8) to label the PTUA "ill-informed and unrealistic" when we made front-page two weeks earlier with headlines like "Freeway Battle Shapes Up". The final decision on whether a freeway will be built is not due until 1998 - plenty of time to again shatter the myths of the road lobby which is essential to allow the possibility of great public transport to become reality.

Phil Morey

Demetri Pimenides has returned from gallivanting in Europe and will be replacing Phil on this campaign from October.

Editor's note:

The PTUA is preparing a 'Scoresby' edition of *Wrong Way Go Back*, outlining an environmentally friendly transport strategy for the corridor. Members' ideas and comments are most welcome. Please call the office if you would like a copy of the draft strategy.



The Knox Environment Society has organised three public meetings in November to discuss transport issues in the 'Scoresby corridor'. Please attend if you can to support the push for better public transport.

- Wednesday 13th, Ferntree Gully Primary School, cnr Dorset Rd and Burwood Highway, 7.45 pm
- Saturday 16th, Regional Library, Knox City Shopping Centre, 3pm
- Thursday 21st, Rowville Community Centre, Fullham Road (Mel. 81 K1), 7.45pm

We need your help

The PTUA always needs more people from among our membership to help run our campaigns and our office which is staffed solely by volunteers. So if you have some time available during the week consider getting involved with the PTUA. You will enjoy the experience and the people. Mondays and Fridays are days of particular need. Ring the office on 9650 7898

We also need help with stalls at festivals and community days. The next one is at Blue Devil Day, Sunday 27th October, 10am-7pm (off Yarra Bend Road)

Ring Domenica about helping at this and any other stall on 9482 1215

Vancouver sets green course for

from Guardian Weekly 25/8/96 by Neal Peirce in Vancouver

It's tough to imagine a US metropolis with the courage or political will to promise - with clear figures - how it will be more liveable 25 years down the road.

Would a Baltimore or New Orleans region ever get up its nerve, for example, to guarantee a 20 percent reduction in its prospective highway traffic loads in 2021? Could a Tampa Bay region promise to cut back vehicle pollution 37 percent? Or Cleveland to reduce capital outlay for roads and transportation by 30 percent?

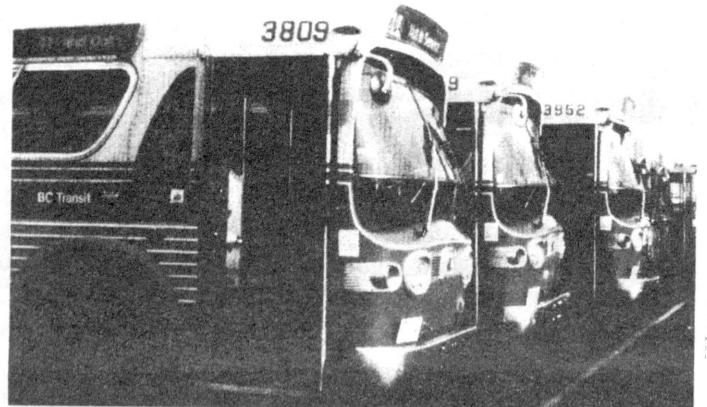
Such promises, with programs to back them up, could protect neighbourhoods, assure clean air and save open spaces. And tough as they seem politically, they can be made.

Indeed, the goals cited are precisely those just pledged by the 20 local governments of Greater Vancouver, Canada's window to the Pacific. The Vancouverites even say they'll reduce conversion of rural land by 33 percent - land equal to their entire centre city today.

Against the trendlines of rising automobile dependence and rapid exurban settlement, such pledges are remarkable. And all the more so in a rapid-growth region like Vancouver, which may see its current 1.8 million reach 3 million in the next 10 to 15 years.

Vancouver's reach for a superior future began with intensive fact-finding by the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD). Population, traffic, air quality, sewer, land use, road and transit trends were all analysed.

The consequences of business-as-usual drift were 'not a pretty sight', says Port Moody Mayor John Northey, head of the GVDR's strategic planning committee. More and more people would live farther and farther from Vancouver proper, in auto-dependent communities spread up the Fraser River Valley. Air and noise pollution would get worse, traffic would intrude into local neighbourhoods,



Priority is to be given to walking, cycling, and transit over the private automobile.

open space would disappear. The 47 traffic lanes crossing major bridges today would have to soar to 85 to accommodate projected 2021 traffic.

Any region that fails to control sprawl and excessive auto use, Northey argues, will be less efficient and therefore penalised in today's competitive global economy. Community is undermined and transit choice denied to the 30 percent of the population either too old or too young to drive.

The Vancouverites spent four years identifying and debating distinct growth management scenarios for their mountainous and seabound region - debating every issue from rapid transit to telecommuting to traffic disincentives. Thousands of citizens were engaged in meetings and discussions.

from the mailbag

Craig Butler from Ross Creek is a regular commuter from Melbourne to Ballarat and has encountered some very silly ticketing arrangements "devised" by V/Line. Craig makes the point that long term travellers who consistently purchase tickets in advance, at a discount, get no other added benefits, whereas a person who travels once a year will be offered all the special deals available. "I know next time I wish to travel to Melbourne, I will certainly weigh up all my options before thinking of V/Line first."

Tony Fuery our esteemed ex-Newsletter designer writes to us from Bangkok, Thailand. Tony includes some English language newspaper cuttings describing the desparate transport situation in this city where some commuters spend 25% of their day in traffic jams. The Thai Deputy Prime Minister is introducing laws to impose a four-year rush hour ban on cars registered after January 1st next year. The proposed ban is designed to curb the rapid growth of new cars while the construction of the city's mass transit system is under way.

21st century growth



At first, says GVRD chair Gregory Halsey-Brandt, mayor of suburban Richmond, lots of people refused to face the tough trade-offs for a society that loves its cars but also its forests, mountain views, friendly neighbourhoods and still vibrant inner city.

But as people reviewed the horrors of unbridled sprawl, a dramatically different 'concentrated growth option' won public support and eventually unanimous approval of the 20 GVRD communities. A 'Liveable Region Strategic Plan', a detailed new transportation blueprint and British Columbia's 1995 passage of a Growth Strategies Act all dovetail to set the new direction.

So what must happen? First of all, municipalities will nominate land to add to the 'green zone' of parks, watershed, ecosystems and farmland around Vancouver, creating a long-term boundary for urban growth

Second, the region pledges to build and perfect 'complete communities - transit-connected town centres

and surrounding residences to sprawling unfocused subdivisions, bringing jobs and housing closer together.

Third, there must be a 'transit-oriented and automobile-restrained' regional transportation system. How? Through more light rail and bus connections, giving high-occupancy vehicles and goods transport priority on highways, letting sheer congestion discourage some auto use, and retrofitting local streets to favour transit, bicycle and pedestrian uses. British Columbia's provincial government has pledged \$1 billion for light rail.

The net result Vancouver envisions is a more compact and efficient metropolitan region, development focused on close-in areas and discouraged in the far-out suburbs.

Does the average citizen realise what a tough set of choices has been made - especially active discouragement of more autos and big suburban lots? Maybe and maybe not.

Municipalities will soon have to write contracts detailing how their land use and housing will support the new regional plan. That will include how much additional dense housing (town houses and apartments) each is willing to accept, an especially tough issue for Vancouver's neighbourhood and close-in communities.

Conversely, some of the farther-out suburbs may chafe under requirements that they slow and control their growth.

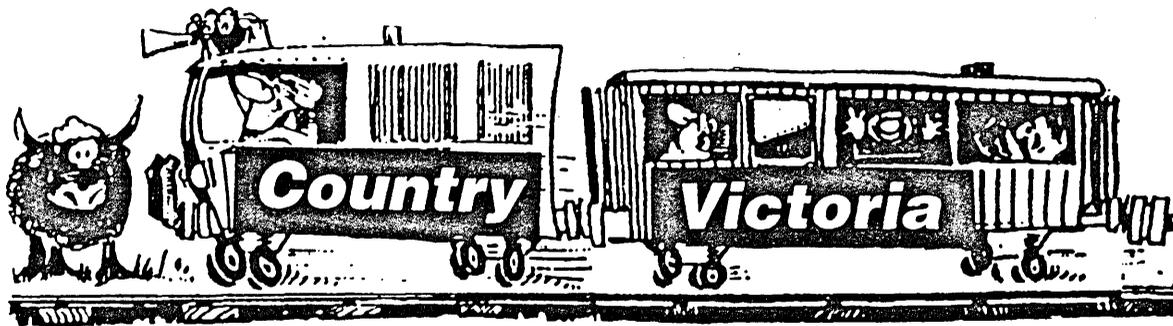
Still, Vancouver is taking a giant step toward the kind of futuristic planning all citistate regions must make - unless they want to face a 21st century of dire traffic congestion, foul air, shattered community and declining economic prospects.

Editor's note: The PTUA report 'Wrong Way Go Back' available for \$5 posted from the office refers to the Vancouver region experience a number of times.

Peter Farrow from London wrote in to the Herald-Sun (1/8/96) to point out "what a complete sham" our train system is.

"In London, such a system would soon collapse. It just would not work. There would be no way travellers would allow such a system to continue. Compared to Singapore, Melbourne's system would not even rate on the scale."

Joan Bailey from North Carlton points out that the Age travel writers only tell you how to get to their favourite spot by road. She suggest they include how to get to the beauty spots they praise by train and bus, instead of just giving highway directions.



A trip on West Coast Rail

Early in August I took the morning West Coast train from Spencer St. to Camperdown. Naturally I was interested to see the improvements private enterprise operation of the service had made. I was to be quite disappointed.

That the train was running 10 minutes late by Geelong was the fault of trackworks near Lara but other issues I feel are within the West Coast ambit. The compartment interior was grubby and the coupling at one end of the carriage banged and squeaked (where was the grease?).

Public address announcements by the conductor were badly timed or did not contain enough information. On three occasions stations were announced as we slowed to a

stop at the platform. OK for locals but silly for tourists who need a few minutes warning. We were told about the snackbar, but not where it was situated in the four carriage train. No use had been made of display panels to advertise the menu. The coffee served was sadly instant.

Now and again a V/Line trip stands out because staff have been cheerful and more helpful and informative than normal and I suppose I thought that would be the private enterprise standard.

In reality I could detect no improvement over the average V/Line trip even on this very lightly patronized train.

John McPherson

in brief

BORONIA BUS-RAIL and Level crossing PROJECT Update

Peter Dann and John McPherson talked to Vicroads project manager Gary Liddle on 17th September. The basic proposal going to the short listed tenderers has changed considerably for the worse to meet PTC and Vicroads requirements. The PTC does not want user-friendly escalators (maintenance costs) and Vicroads requires easy access for buses and cars so the environment becomes more hostile to pedestrians and passengers on foot or bike. The PTUA will continue to pursue this issue!

Concession Cards

The National Union of Students in Victoria will soon launch a campaign to convince the Victorian state government to reduce the cost of the special tertiary students concession card from over \$100 per year at present to a figure more in line with other states at around \$10 per year.

Mullum Mullum Festival

Don't forget to pop in to the Mullum Mullum Festival running from 6th - 27th October

The Creek Carnival weekend is on 26th and 27th October 11am-4pm

Hillcrest Reserve, Mitcham (Mel. ref 48 K5)

Guided bush walks, displays, food, tree climbing, kids activities, environmental workshops etc

Saturday 26th: Acoustic and folk sound/Sunday 27th: Five live and fresh bands

For more information contact Cameron Taylor 9264 1752 or Felicity Lang 9870 0903

New Transport Group at Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth is forming a new Transport Collective. Get involved and work on the issues that are important to you. Come to the first meeting on Tuesday 12th November, 7pm, at Friends of the Earth, 312 Smith St, Collingwood.

CRITICAL MASS

Critical Mass is a huge POLLUTION FREE TRAFFIC JAM celebrating cycling and appropriate transport.

The next Critical Mass is on Friday 25th October, leaving 5.30 pm from the State Library on Swanston Street.

Don't forget the Critical Mass 1st Birthday party - at the November 29th Critical Mass - bring noise and banners for a massive celebration and party after the ride at a MYSTERY location!

Transporting Melbourne back to the 1960s?

In September, the state government released Transporting Melbourne, touted as "the first integrated transport strategy for Melbourne since 1969".

This was an interesting comparison to choose. After all, the 1969 transport plan was one of the maddest pieces of freeway-obsessed road engineering ever proposed. Within two years of its release, the plan for 500 km of freeways, much through densely built-up areas and parkland, had been repudiated by the government. The plan's freeway network was cut in half in 1973 by then-Premier Hamer.

The 1969 plan's introduction piously intoned that "balanced transport is our only hope", and the document actually presents the road plans (which consumed 86% of the budget) last, after the public transport plan (which garnered the remaining 14%), as if roads were somehow less important. The English transport planner J M Thomson noted in *Great Cities and Their Traffic* that, while the Melbourne plan purported to be an integrated, multi-modal plan, and even contained some worthwhile public transport ideas, it was in reality a freeway plan dressed up to look like something else.

Transporting Melbourne makes similar reassuring statements to the 1969 plan about balance, integration and protecting the environment. The proposed public transport improvements appear ahead of the freeway plans, just like in 1969. As in 1969, there are also some modest but worthwhile ideas for improving public transport, such as:

- upgrading the Upfield line (already announced)
- an 'integrated framework' for assessing transport

investments (if this works, it should put an end to situations like that currently occurring in Knox, where the community is being told a \$30 million tram extension is prohibitively expensive by the same people who are promoting the \$600 million Scoresby Freeway)

- a high-frequency, interconnected public transport service, designed to be 'the mode of choice' (although, unfortunately, confined to the inner suburbs).

But all these good ideas are completely overwhelmed by the freeway explosion mooted in the plan, the largest expansion of urban freeways on the drawing books in any city in the developed world. Transporting Melbourne proposes more freeways than all the cities in Canada combined, than all urban areas in the United Kingdom, and by all urban and rural areas in Switzerland. And if anyone is in doubt that the agenda is what Alan Parker of the Democrats calls "Los Angelisation", the plan proposes that developments like office parks and hotels be actively encouraged to sprawl along the proposed "metropolitan orbital" (ie ring-freeway). As an integrated transport strategy, Transporting Melbourne is a failure; as an environmentally sustainable strategy, it's a sick joke.

The government has requested public comment on the plan, which can be obtained by phoning the Transport Ministry on 9619 6666. Comments are due by Christmas. PTUA will, of course, be making a submission welcoming the positive developments, but urging a complete rethink of the plan to restructure Melbourne around a freeway network.

PTUA talks to ticket inspector boss

Two members of the PTUA committee visited the boss of the PTC ticket inspectors on 22nd August. Mr Bob Daniels is the Director Customer Services at the Met. PTUA committee member Alan Hardie is a member of the community consultative committee for the Transit Division of the Victoria Police. The police have become concerned at the frequent complaints being levelled at the ticket inspectors who are being confused with the Transit Division police.

Alan Hardie and John McPherson told Mr Daniels that the PTUA received almost no complaints about Transit Division police but a constant stream of complaints regarding the

behaviour of the ticket inspectors. Mr Daniels agreed that some of his inspectors were too aggressive in their approach and that attempts were being made to identify these officers to enable re-training or dismissal.

Alan and John pointed out that confrontations were occurring between inspectors and the travelling public that have led to PTC customers being held in isolated rooms with no independent witness to support them and subject to an interrogation by the inspectors.

At a later review of the incident by senior PTC staff, the customer's account of the events is almost always never accepted because there is no one

to substantiate their version while the team of inspectors can confirm each other's accounts.

The PTUA position is that the regime of fines - \$100 minimum - is too harsh at least for a first offense and a warning should be the first stage before a fine.

Warnings will apparently be used during the introduction of ticket machines, which no doubt will be confusing to many passengers. Other public transport systems use penalty tickets and are much less punitive in their approach to ticket offenses. They remember they are dealing with customers who chose to use public transport.

PTUA News

Newsletter of the Public Transport Users' Association
Print Post: Publication No. PP 331088/00009
If undeliverable, return to:
PTUA Office, Ground Floor, 247 Flinders Lane Melbourne, 3000

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Copy deadline for the next *PTUA News* is 15th November 1996

Newsletter production: John McPherson & Christiana Stergiou
Printed by Complete Print: Johnston St. Collingwood
Our thanks to the dedicated mailout team

Yes, I would like to come to the PTUA 20th Anniversary Celebrations

14th November 1996, 6pm for 6.30
Victoria University of Technology
City Campus
300 Flinders Street, Melbourne
12th Floor, Conference room 12A

Name _____

Address _____

Contact Number _____

I would like to RSVP for

___ people @\$10 each (concession member)

___ people @\$18 each (regular member)

Please include payment and send to the PTUA 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000 by 6th November 1996.

I have enclosed a cheque for \$ _____

includes buffet dinner and drinks