Newcastle
BUSINESS CLUB

# 2021 VISION

an overview of the year that was

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# Stephanie Jordan

## 2021 President

Newcastle Business Club

It has been an honour to serve as President of Newcastle Business Club in 2021, its 88th year.

When I came to my first luncheon in 2017, I never dreamed that the following year I would join the committee and just three years later, be President. For this, I have to start with a huge thank you to Ty Brennock for introducing me to the Club and for my first nomination as a committee member. Then to Holly Martin and Clare Ferguson who, with some choice words, encouraged me to step into the leadership succession plan that brought me to where I am today.

During my term, I hoped to bring a fresh perspective and enthusiasm that would help us reach new local businesspeople, grow our membership and increase the opportunities the Club was able to provide to our members, while highlighting our incredible community.

I love a challenge and with the support of our committee, luncheon after luncheon was quickly pencilled in. I was so proud of the local talent we were showcasing and bringing to Newcastle. However, it wasn't long before COVID-19 struck again and lockdown was in place, forcing the cancellation of many of our events.

This could have included our Annual Awards - however tradition is important to Newcastle Business Club and I am grateful that in difficult times we were able to recognise some of the shining lights in our region through the first ever virtual Annaul Awards. As a face-to-face networking organisation, it was difficult to disconnect from our community for so long. Coming together again, even on video, was wonderful and reignited my pride for Newcastle and the Hunter region.

As soon as restrictions began to ease, the Committee made the vote not to cancel another luncheon and the November was held with a hugely positive reaction from our members. Tickets sold out in record time and we were back!

Being President in 2021 has reconfirmed one of my beliefs - strength in numbers, especially as a Novocastrian. The level of support our community has shown through the last year has shown that when someone is in need, we will always be there to help each other.

Though this year did not turn out as planned (when do they ever really), I am so proud of everything we achieved. And I say we, because each ticket, speaker, sponsor, social post, badge, sign and more, has a committee member behind the scenes helping make things happen. So, thank you, to the Newcastle Business Club 2021 Committee. I appreciate everything you contributed this year.

Extra thanks and gratitude go to those behind the scenes in my life, the ones that lift us up when we may not know we even need it - my friend and boss Lisa Macklin for support with my hours spent outside of the business; Jodi O'Connor, for above and beyond commitment and hours donated outside of her business; my parents, David and Maree who made me the woman I am and for Dave, my partner who pushes me to grow and be the best version of myself every day while keeping me humble. Thank you.

**Stephanie Jordan | 2021 President**

## Jodi O'Connor
*Junior Vice President*

Jodi is the joint founder and Managing Director of local branding and design studio Ronnoco. Her background covers 25 years as a graphic designer, project manager, business analyst and Adobe InDesign trainer. She is passionate about connecting businesses with their audience through strategic brand development with clarity, substance and authenticity.

Jodi enjoys spending time with family and friends, swimming, cooking and supporting the local community.

This is Jodi's fourth year on the committee.

## Stephanie Jordan
*President*

Steph is a local Novocastrian who grew up in New Lambton. She studied Business at Newcastle University and worked in the construction industry for seven years before a passion for property prompted a career change to Residential Real Estate Sales.

Stephanie has since been at Dalton Partners New Lambton office where she believes in providing exceptional communication and customer service to her clients.

This is Stephanie's fourth year on the committee.

## Jim Garis
*Senior Vice President*

Jim is the founder of The Garis Group, a professional family owned and operated financial services firm.

Jim is the current Treasurer of the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Deputy Chairman of The Newcastle Tourism Industry Group, and a Director of Business Hunter.

This is Jim's third year on the committee.

## Samantha Miller
*Committee Member*

Samantha has been a lawyer since 2001 having followed in the steps of her father, grandfather, great-grandfather and great-great-grandfather.

Initially admitted in 2001 as a solicitor in NSW and Australia, Samantha then moved to the UK where she was admitted as a solicitor in England and Wales in 2002. Samantha has been back in Newcastle since 2016 and since returning she has completed a Master of Applied Law (Majoring in Family Law).

This is Samantha's first year on the committee.

## Sam Matthews
*Secretary*

Sam joined the committee in 2018 at which time he joined his family business, Matthews Jewellers. Prior to this he spent 12 years in the corporate world with the Commonwealth Bank in Newcastle, Sydney and Indonesia. Sam oversees three Matthews Jewellers retail jewellery stores at Westfield Kotara, Salamander Bay and Singleton.

Sam also enjoys cycling, surfing and spending time with his young family.

## Jessica Cole
*Committee Member*

Founder of Cole Consulting Group and Jess is focused on bringing quality financial information to businesses without the fuss. She is passionate about change and continuous improvement and her process improvement initiatives have seen her consulting in Australia, Canada and the United States.

Jessica previously led the Virtual CFO and Bookkeeping division for a local accounting practice with a portfolio of clients across varied industries. She draws on her extensive experience working in a commercial role as a Financial Account and Commercial Manager for a global company, responsible for leading the Accounts Payable and Receivable teams, Reporting and pricing strategies to name a few.

This is Jess' first year on the committee



Photography: Edward Cross

## Clare Ferguson
*Sergeant-at-Arms*

Clare is a partner in Monica Clare Recruitment. Her background covers 15 years in the Recruitment sector in both Australia and the UK. She is passionate about making a difference in people's career choices and supporting businesses to hire the very best talent.

Clare enjoys playing hockey, spending time with family and friends and contributing to the Newcastle community.

Clare was President of the Club in 2020.

## Jon Jones
*Treasurer*

Jon is an experienced Mortgage Broker with a demonstrated history of working in the financial services industry. He is skilled in Residential and Commercial Lending, Investment Properties, Insurance, and Equipment Finance.

2021 is Jon's first year on the committee.

## Kyle Griffiths
*Committee Member*

Kyle is the Managing Director of Griffiths Wealth, a modern financial planning and wealth management firm based in Newcastle with clients across Australia.

Established in 2016, Griffiths Wealth helps everyday Australians grow investments, save tax, reduce debt, protect assets, and build and manage impressive, independent retirements.

This is Kyle's second year on the committee.

## Holly Martin
*Past President*

Holly is the Managing Director of local consultancy, The Marketing GP, as well as the General Manager of local business news website Hunter Headline.

Holly has been a Club member since 2002 and Committee Member since 2004. She was the Junior Vice-President and Editor of VISION magazine and undertook a number of marketing and event management tasks for the Club. In 2018 she was President of the Club and is now a Past President and continuing committee member.

## Liz Murray
*Committee Member*

Liz is a proud Novocastrian who started her business Edge of Possibilities (Leadership Coaching, Training and Mentoring) in 2017. After over 20 years in leadership roles, Liz appreciates the value of empowering leaders to achieve success through increased self-awareness and an ongoing focus on strengthening emotional intelligence. Liz is passionate about collaborating with exceptional Leaders to inspire their teams to thrive with confidence and certainty.

Liz loves an early start to watch the sunrise, spending time with her family and bushwalking.

This is Liz's first year on the committee.

## Andrew Olsen
*Committee Member*

Having spent the last 25 years in Australia helping businesses solve problems through technology and services Andrew is passionate about working with organisations to help and derive meaningful value from them.

Andrew now runs his own business as it provides him the greatest flexibility in applying the best value and customer service to his customers. As a cloud communications advisory he is focused on helping Hunter businesses address challenges around flexibility, scalability, supporting a distributed workforce, all while minimising IT costs and resource requirements.

This is Andrew's first year on the committee.

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# February 2

# Local Government Area Mayor Panel

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## Marina Views Function Centre

**President's Message**

Welcome to 2021! And thank you to all that made it to our first event and new location, Marina Views Function Venue.

As is tradition, our first luncheon was our annual Mayoral Panel and included Lord Mayor Nuatali Nelmes, Mayor Kay Fraser, Mayor Ryan Palmer and Mayor Loretta Baker.

The focus topic was What council is doing for business, specifically the initiatives their council has in place, or in planning, to assist local businesses to succeed. This year, there was a particular focus on how each responded to new challenges for local business due to COVID-19.

Development approvals, tourism, local arts, population growth and small business immediate financial support were hot topics between all Local Government Areas.

I would like to thank each of our speakers for generously donating their time once again. Another special thanks to our panel facilitator Garth Russell who 'just happened to be walking past' and helped manage the day.

Dalton Partners New Lambton were quick to sponsor the day and show their support for my first event as President. Thank you!

**Stephanie Jordan | 2021 President**

Photography: Snapper Studio

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# March 9

# Port of Newcastle

## Marina Views Function Centre

**President's Message**

Glenn Thornton – Executive Manager Projects, Port of Newcastle, treated members and guests to an insight into the vision for the old BHP Mayfield site – the largest and best-connected vacant port land site on Australia's East Coast.

Originally a local, after 15 years away Glenn was enticed back to Newcastle. This was thanks to the opportunity to assist Port of Newcastle in their vision to build foundations that ensure the Hunter, NSW and Australian economies have the future infrastructure needed for growth and sustainability.

Glenn discussed his focus on the delivery Port of Newcastle's proposed $1.8 billion Multi-purpose Deepwater Terminal (MDT) project. The project is a once in a generation opportunity for Newcastle with the unique direct water frontage and potential for deep water berthing enabling a world-class facility to be constructed.

The vision will not only create thousands of jobs during construction, it will have ongoing employment and business growth opportunities for our city. New South Wales businesses are also offered a competitive platform globally with more efficient access to international markets and direct ship-to-rail delivering substantial cost savings.

The MDT project has been many years in the making and we are excited to see how the project approval progresses.

**Stephanie Jordan | 2021 President**

Photography: Snapper Studio

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# Members Function

## Sponsored by Jenkins Legal Services

We continued our focus on member benefits, by reintroducing our members function, which had been missed in 2020, due to COVID-19.

This was a free event, available only to current members of Newcastle Business Club. It was sponsored by long-time supporters Jenkins Legal Services.

Photography: Snapper Studio

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# April 20

# Entrepreneur Panel

Marina Views Function Centre

**President's Message**

April was an extra special event for members and guests who joined us on the stunning Autumn day. We were lucky to secure four local entrepreneurs to share their very individual business experiences.

First up Timberlina informed us of her country upbringing and transition to the 'big city' where she worked in a number of jobs before being introduced to the life of Drag and being paid to perform.

Timberlina runs her own production company Timber Productions, manages a number of other performers and even scored a major sponsorship with Absolute Vodka. Admitting she was one of the lucky ones through COVID-19, her business grew and through this, now expanding her management to help entertainers in the queer community all over the East Coast of Australia.

We then met Belinda Bartholomew, a newer local who fell in love with our city when she arrived in 2017 following her Newcastle Knights footballer husband. Belinda was a new mum when she found a gap in the market and started ScrunchieO. After having her own manufactured and seeing their popularity with her friends, Belinda started ScrunchieO with immediate success, selling out in no time.

It was 2018 when Belinda started her next venture BOÉ wines. Belinda and her friend Zoë noticed that there was a lack of Australian owned and grown Rosé currently on the market. They combined their love and knowledge of wine to create this Australian Rosé.

Next up was Justin Hales who has been busy! Camplify was founded when Justin saw how expensive RV or Caravan hire was, yet so many sat parked on the street for months at a time. Once the idea was formed, Justin followed a clear business growth model and literally hustled out front of the local Caravan show to kick start the brand. Camplify has seen over 110% growth year on year and operates in the UK, NZ and Spain. This is all despite some investors not convinced a Newcastle based business could achieve so much.

Justin worked hard with his team to keep everyone employed and focused on supporting van owners who also suddenly lost what had become regular income. With the local travel industry back up and running (mostly), Camplify is operating successfully once again.

Last, but definitely not least, Anna Farthing from Doughheads won over the crowd immediately with her delicious mini doughnut favours for every attendee. Anna has definitely seen the highs and lows of business. Starting with a converted laundry to commercial kitchen at home, four children and an idea, Anna saw Doughheads initially as a side hustle market stall. Before long, the lines at her stalls grew longer and Anna negotiated a month-to-month space in the Newcastle Mall where she still did not see herself as a 'real business'.

It was a clear passion for bringing joy through her business and pure determination that kept Anna going. By scaling back and hard work, she was able to again create a profitable business. 2020 then through its own challenges but Anna stayed focused on how to continue to reach her loyal clients through lock down and is still successfully operating from the well-known store at The Junction.

Hearing from such a variety of local businesspeople was inspiring and the feeling of Pride for Newcastle was discussed many times. Thank you again to our panel and those that were able to join us.

**Stephanie Jordan | 2021 President**

Photography: Snapper Studio

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## May 18

# Gus Balbontin

McDonald Jones Stadium

MONICA CLARE RECRUITMENT

**President's Message**

Don't lay too much 'Concrete'. This was one analogy Gus Balbontin used throughout his presentation at McDonald Jones Stadium.

Concrete became a solid theme throughout each message and refers to the routine, systems or comfort we unknowingly introduce into our lives daily. From driving to work the same way every day, to using the same coffee mug, Gus described routine as the killer of adaptability.

As businesses, we need to be able to adapt and change constantly as whatever products or services we use are only as good as today. If we do not adapt, change and be better, someone else will and we will fall behind.

Don't be mistaken though, some stability is necessary as long as it is complimented by instability.

Each of these inspiring messages and so many more were delivered with passion and Gus had the room in stitches! I wish it were possible for me to share every one of his golden quotes.

Bringing Gus Balbontin to Newcastle was a dream of Past President Clare Ferguson after seeing him on stage previously. Without Clare and Monica Walmsley, this event would not have been possible. Thank you for your sponsorship Monica Clare Recruitment.

**Stephanie Jordan | 2021 President**

Photography: Snapper Studio

## June 15

# Newcastle Airport

Marina Views Function Centre

**President's Message**

Stephen Crowe joined us to discuss not only the exciting recent runway expansion announcement but also to provide insight into his career that brought him to his current role as Executive Manager Corporate Affairs, Newcastle Airport.

Stephen started his career with the Newcastle Knights and was even part of the premiership winning team of 1997. The Club had such an impact on his early career that he attributes it to changing his life. Now, Stephen is still heavily involved with Rugby League as the current President of the Knights 'Old Boys'.

But how does any of this relate to 'business' as many of us know it?

When Stephen joined the Knights, they were a new team with no money, no facilities and no star players. 90 players tried out for the team and Stephen admits he was not one of the most talented.

Coach Allan McMahon immediately had an impact that would influence Stephen immediately and continue to impact him today. Day 1 on the team, Allan wrote on the board 'be the player others want to play with'.

From then, Stephen learned that it wasn't talent that made great players, it was toughness, showing up and resilience. These lessons are how Stephen's time at the Newcastle Knights connects with business and his current career.

Stephen still believes in having a strong commitment to his role and the impact the airport can have on our community.

Newcastle Airport is in line with this and describes themselves as 'committed to being the airport the region deserves'.

The recent announcement of the expansion of our runway is not just about International flights, the Airport enables a higher level of economic activity both out of and into our region. Think stronger relationships with Defence, more political competition, expended opportunities for freight and a diversified economy with job possibilities we can't even begin to predict.

When the room was open for question time, it was clear the community still has hesitations around access to the airport specifically with the need for better public transport. Stephen encouraged the room to get booking on those flights when they come up as the growth of demand will filter to development of infrastructure and with Global Connectivity, Newcastle will be a Global City.

**Stephanie Jordan | 2021 President**

Photography: Snapper Studio

PORT of NEWCASTLE

# Award Winners 2021

**Thank you to Port of Newcastle for their support of our 2021 Annual Awards – the first ever time we undertook the presentation virtually!**

Organisation **The Business Centre**

The Business Centre is a community invested organisation that has been responding to the needs of entrepreneurs, businesses, and governments for more than 34 years.

With a strong focus on supporting Newcastle based businesses, the Business Centre has ensured that throughout the COVID19 pandemic, these businesses had access to quality business advice and resources to ensure their survival. This was achieved through general business advisory, online webcasts and workshops, podcasts, downloadable toolkits, and online courses with virtual classrooms.

In September 2020, the Business Centre launched its Small Business Support Centre located at 265 King Street Newcastle.

The collaboration connected established business owners with business experts and low-cost temporary office space with the goal to protect and stabilise their business during the COVID19 pandemic.

The Business Centre has also developed the Business Disruption to Recovery Toolbox which is a free tool to help businesses on the road to recovery. The Toolbox provides a roadmap detailing the 10 stages of business disruption, a Canvas to brainstorm solutions to each of the steps from disruption to recovery along with a Recovery User Guide.

From March 2020 to September 2021, the team at the Business Centre has provided 10,320 hours of subsidised advisory to Hunter & regional businesses.

The Business Centre's commitment to the business community of Newcastle & the Hunter region has made a significant impact on those who needed it the most.

Youth **Luke Connors**

Luke Conners is a builder who started his own building company Spartan Projects in 2014 at the age of 22. The company engages in projects all over the Newcastle/Hunter region undertaking residential renovations, granny flats, bathrooms, decks and pergolas. The company now employs 11 people.

Luke Connors brought Talk2MeBro to the Newcastle and surrounding areas in 2019. The mission was as simple as running workshops/ sessions to as many people as possible with an end goal of preventing suicide. Since its inception, Luke has reached more than 8000 Novocastrians through his work at seminars, retreats, schools, businesses, trades and sports clubs.

Luke has also supported Soul Café especially the Annual Sleepout with a team called "Week on the Street". Luke encourages his work team to sleep rough for a week whilst also continuing to undertake their work commitments.

Through his building business, Luke has assisted many disadvantaged people by completing Building /renovation work on pro bono basis.

Luke also serves as a corporal in the Army providing service to the country.

Luke has demonstrated outstanding commitment to his community and his fellow man and has greatly contributed to the Commonweal of Newcastle.

Individual **Meg Purser (posthumous)**

Meg was the ultimate professional, who used her skills and connections to help business and not-for-profit organisations across the Hunter Region. She was an unsung hero who worked behind the scenes to make things happen for organisations and the community. Her work literally helped to save lives and make organisations successful.

She served on many committees and boards and was never a passive member. Meg was always the go to person who rolled up her sleeves and got the job done. She lit up a room, connected with people and made people believe in themselves.

From a business perspective, she was a board member and/or provider of pro bono services to Lake Macquarie Business, Throsby Basin Business Chamber, Hamilton Chamber, Newcastle & Hunter Junior Business Chamber, Hunter Manufacturing Awards, Professional Communicators Network, University Of Newcastle Alumni Advisory Committee, Gen Collective and more.

In terms of community, she supported the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service, Hunter Breast Cancer Foundation, Mentor Support Network, Surfest Women's Pro Event, Got Your Back Sista and the 2NURFM Community Radio Advisory Board.

Meg Purser was also a stalwart of Newcastle Business Club serving on the committee from 2000 to 2006. She spearheaded the club's website in 2001 as well organizing media coverage of the club events that were being held and facilitated sponsorship of a huge number of events.

Meg was able to strengthen the connection between the business community and charity by championing charity events such as golf days, race days and more. Her commitment to the Business Club saw Life Membership bestowed upon her in 2008 in the clubs 75th year.

It is clear to all that Meg Purser made a significant impact on the people of the Hunter Region and significantly contributed to the commonweal of Newcastle.

Our community lost a giant when Meg Purser passed away from breast cancer on 14 January 2021.

# November 9

# Ampcontrol

## Marina Views Function Centre

**President's Message**

For our first luncheon post lockdown, Rod Henderson – Managing Director & CEO, Ampcontrol highlighted to the room how committed the company is to our region and humanity as a whole.

Growing up in Cessnock, Rod started his career as an electrical apprentice at Alcan Aluminium (Hydro) at Kurri Kurri which then led him to Ampcontrol where his career spans 30 years.

The majority of Rod's presentation showcased inspiring projects Ampcontrol has been involved in recently, focusing on diversification, transformation, and particularly growing their Energy sector.

With policy slow, Rod showed how the industry is taking the lead in changing the way we work and live through their projects. It is from within their employees that some of the best ideas and inspiration come. Regular workshops are held at every level of the business so employees are involved in constantly finding ways to improve. These ideas then come to life through strong partnerships with companies that may specialise in the area of interest. This to me, highlighted where Ampcontrol has found its strength in the international space and that the talent available in our region truly is world-class.

Closing out his speaker spot, Rod gave advice to any business that success comes by surrounding yourself with a strong leadership team, a great mentor, and by engaging with your employees.

We are so grateful to have been back face-to-face after lockdown and a huge thank you for helping bring us back goes to our sponsor KPMG.

**Stephanie Jordan | 2021 President**

Photography: Snapper Studio

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John is one of the most honest and strongest people I know. His resolve to ensure issues were resolved and that people were held to account has won him the respect and admiration of his peers.

It is great to see a leader that is so decisive and also with such a human touch.

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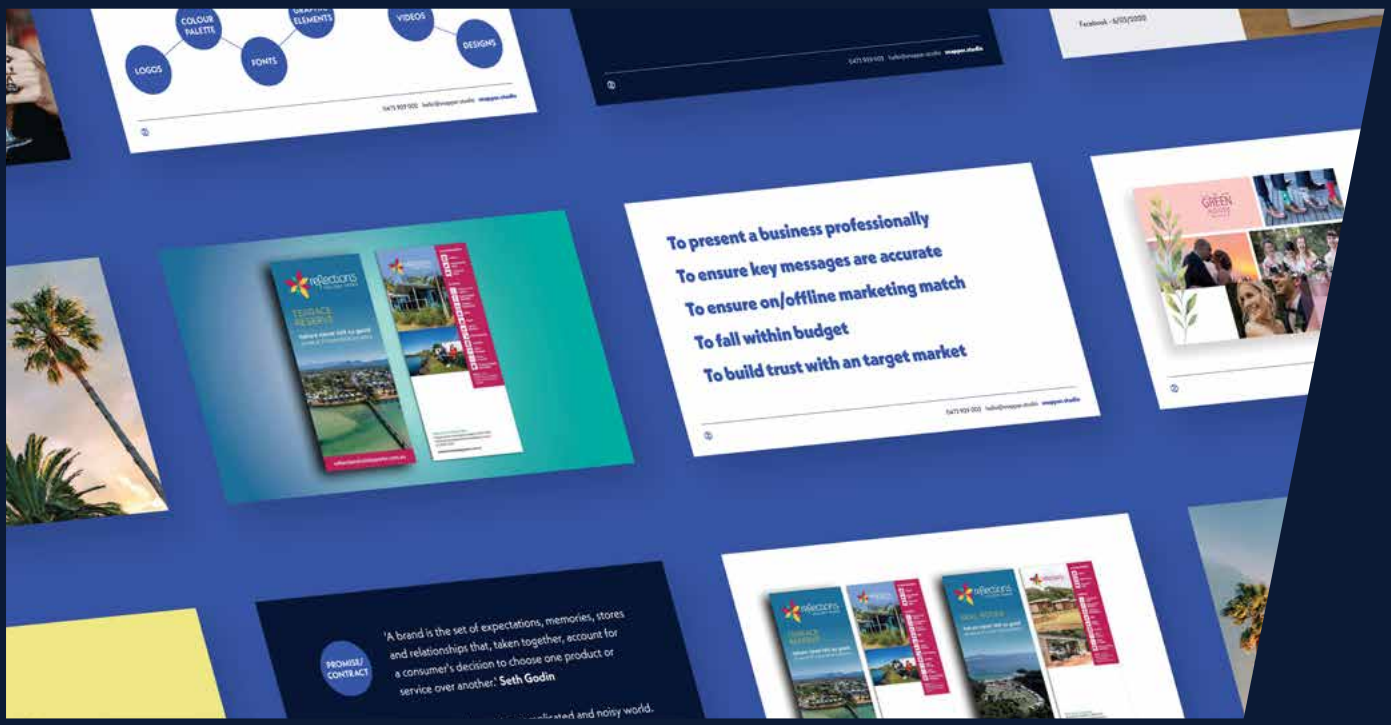



# Strategy & Brand Design *without* all the overwhelm.

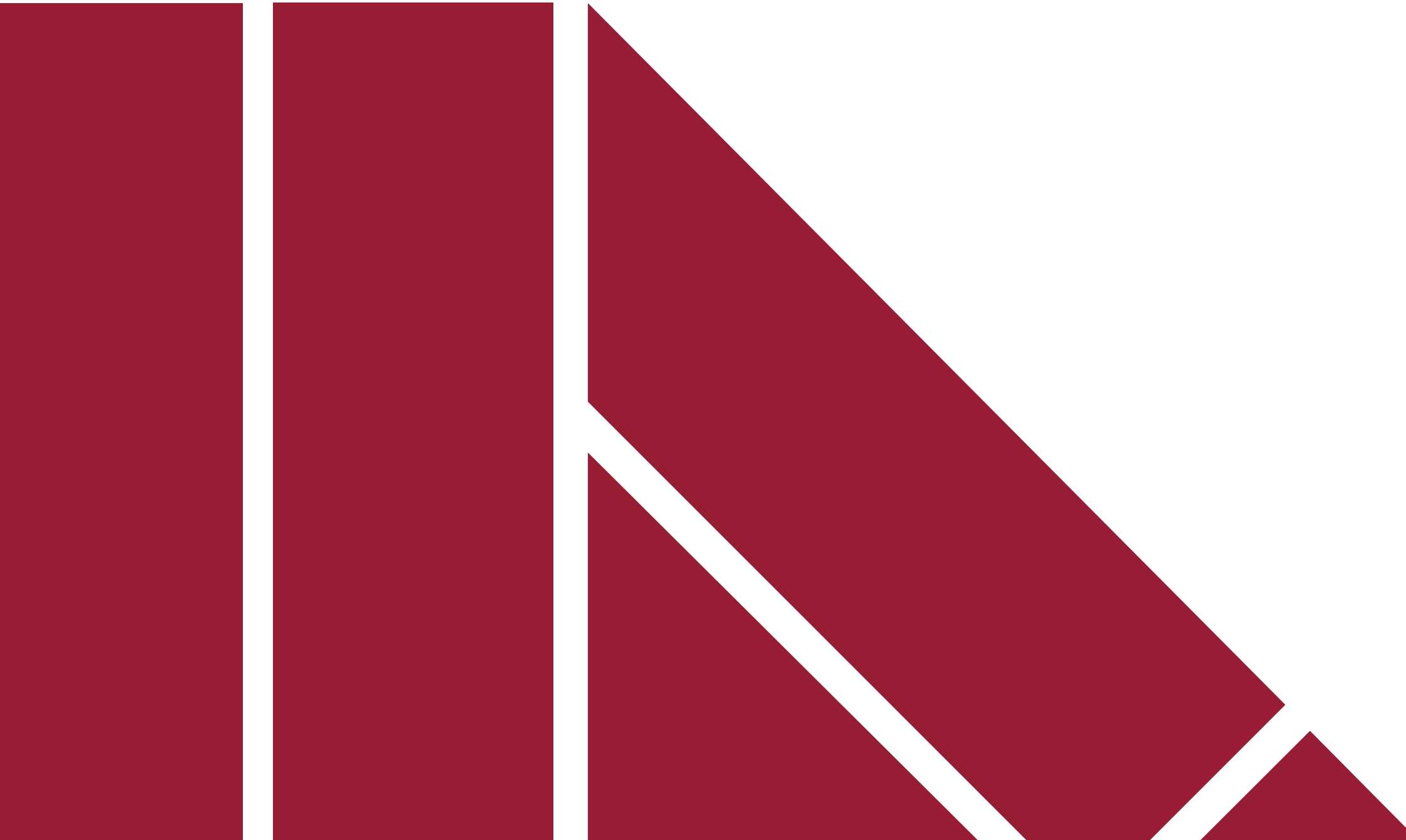
Upskill your staff and grow your business with a strategy.

## *WTF is a Brand Strategy?*

## *THE WORKSHOP*

**FEB 2022**

**+ 28 page workbook + 1-to-1 call.**

Visit ***snapper.studio*** for more information.

Or, speak to Martin, the Club photographer, about NBC pricing.