# Round Table's 40th Year Anniversary

September 1981 was the month in which Simon & Garfunkel reunited to play a free concert in front of 500,000 people in Central Park, New York; the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women came into effect, but also, in that month, Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities (RT) first met. **It was Almost 40 years ago!**

The organisations and individuals involved were:

● Association for the Blind of WA: Doreen Hill

● Association of Blind Citizens of NSW: Roy Hallett

● Australian Association of Blind Citizens: Roy Hallett

● Braille and Talking Book Library: Jan Smark

● Hear a Book: Barbara Sattler and Peter Stevenson

● Narbethong School for Visually Impaired: Eric Searle

● National Federation of Blind Citizens: David Blyth

● Qld Braille Writing Service: Leona Kitson

● Qld State Library: Joan Gamble

● Qld Tape Service for the Handicapped: Joan Gamble

● Royal Blind Society of NSW: Joan Ledermann, William Byrne and Jennie Pitt

● Royal NSW Institute for Deaf and Blind Children: John Berryman, Bill Jolley

● Royal Vic Institute for the Blind: Margaret Fialides

● St Paul's School for the Blind: Anna Ashby and Joanne Ashby

● National Library of Australia: Cliff Law

Apologies were from:

● St Lucy's School for the Blind

● Christian Foundation for the Blind

● Deakin University

● Education Dept of NSW

● Royal Tasmanian Society for the Blind and Deaf

● Australian Listening Library

● Melbourne State College

Elected Executive at that meeting:

Chairman: Bill Byrne

Hon Secretary: Bill Jolley

Hon Treasurer: Doreen Hill

With apologies for any omissions or errors, this list comprises the genesis of what has become an organisation of organisations with the expressed intention "To facilitate and influence the production and use of quality alternative formats for people with print disabilities by optimising the evolving Round Table body of knowledge."

The current Executive Committee of RT decided that this 40 Year milestone should not pass us all by without both recognition and celebration of its importance. In those 40 years many organisations, and individuals who have represented these and future member organisations, have contributed substantially to both the success of RT as an umbrella organisation but, more importantly, have contributed to the development of the body of knowledge that has been at the heart of RT's reason for existing.

Ideally, for an event of such significance, RT would have hosted a Conference Dinner celebration to recognise the achievements of RT and to thank the people and organisations who had the vision and foresight to create it. Sadly, some of those individuals are no longer with us but their contribution to RT will not be forgotten. However, in the absence of a physical meeting and conference in 2021 it was considered to be very important to still recognise the 40th anniversary in this, the appropriate year.

We are very fortunate to have some of the early pioneers of RT to help us both reflect on the history of RT and to also tell us about why it was important for an organisation that became known as RT to be created. At the time of the writing of this Abstract those venerable individuals include John Berryman, Mary Schnackenberg, Jan Smark Nilsson, Jennie Berryman (née Pitt), and Bill Jolley.

We expect that this session will be both entertaining and historically instructive in our quest to unlock the details of RT's creation and its subsequent contribution to access to information of people with print disabilities.