

President's Address

on behalf of the

2013/14 Bonny Hills Progress Association (BHPA) Committee

Annual General Meeting, 18 March 2014

1. Brief introduction to BHPA and its purpose

The nub of our charter is to champion and protect the agreed community Vision for Bonny Hills.

2. So what did we do in 2013/14?

Summarising under each of the four Vision themes:

- **Maintaining village character and quality of lifestyle**

Master Plans for Bonny Hills (BH) Reserves.

- A Grant of \$35k was obtained through CBPP¹ for new public toilets at the Hall Reserve, along with a \$50k contribution from PMHC. These facilities are scheduled to be installed before June 2014.
- Revegetation has commenced along the northern end of the RBR frontal dune to create a storm shutter² effect. This has been a fruitful partnership with our local Landcare group and Council [led by Gary Hill].
- RBR playground rejuvenation – \$60k has been allocated in forward estimates for this project by Council, and BHPA is applying for grants for various items of equipment.
Tami Hickey has been leading the charge here on behalf of BH parents, carers and grandparents, working with Lucilla Marshall from PMHC. Concept plans have been on display as a basis for community discussion and a survey of interested parties has been completed. Draft plans and ideas will be presented for the first time here tonight.
- Holiday Park Boardwalk – the long awaited pathway along the northern edge of the Park has been completed. This has been championed by BHPA for many years and it is great to see such a magnificent facility finally in place. Congratulations to all involved.
- Representation of BHPA Committee members on the BH Hall Committee to ensure a strong presence in order to maintain this amenity in good order for use by our community.

¹ CBPP = Community Building Partnerships Program; PMHC = Port Macquarie Hastings Council; BH = Bonny Hills; BHPA = Bonny Hills Progress Association; RBR = Rainbow Beach Reserve; WBHSLSC = Wauchope-Bonny Hills Surf Life Saving Club

² **Storm Shutter effect** - lifting the on-shore winds up and over the dune and the immediate area behind it – is achieved by strategic plantings of wind and salt tolerant species across the dune to protect it from all but the most violent storms and tidal surges.

Major developments.

As you will have observed, a Development Application (DA) to have the Nursing Home site approved for housing was successful; and two of the developments in Area 14 are well underway, with construction of the new school due to begin shortly. And a DA for a small supermarket in Jungarra Crescent has been approved.

The application for an increase in the extraction rate from the Grant's Head Quarry was approved by Council, subject to some conditions, so compliance is the main issue now.

Submissions were made by BHPA regarding:

- Glasshouse Future Directions
- The Grant's Head Quarry Voluntary Planning Agreement
- Council's 5 year Delivery and Operational Plan
- White Paper regarding changes to NSW Planning legislation
- PMHC's draft mapping project [also see below]
- PMHC Environment Portfolio – lack of Councillor champion

Community Strength Group:

- This group has served its original purpose and has been shelved for the present. The annual Carols on the Deck has been 'handed over' to the W-BHSLSC

- **Conservation of the natural environment and wildlife**

- PMHC mapping and biodiversity strategy

BHPA has been closely monitoring progress on this project as it will result in the policy and implementation platform for the preservation of flora and fauna in our local area – a major reason why most of us like to live here. For this reason we encouraged members and the BH community at large to engage in the community consultation phase. Thanks to Matt Rogers from PMHC for his support with this project.

Currently Councillors are seeking more information on the 'robustness' of the flora and koala mapping data and the proposed processes for its ongoing update and review, prior to agreeing to move forward on policy development.

- Hello Koalas project – BHPA was addressed by the project manager, Linda Hall, and has been in communication since regarding the prospects of Bonny Hills being included in the "Koala trail".

- **Water quality in Duchess Creek and Rainbow Beach**

- Maree Smith (PMHC) reports that PMHC staff have conducted a site inspection with the environmental consultancy SMEC to establish what works need to be undertaken to determine whether there may be transmission of contamination to the creek via groundwater from the STP site. This will involve the sinking of boreholes and further geological investigations.

Once the report from SMEC is received and approved the work will commence, possibly in April/May. The results of this will dictate what our

next actions (if required) will be, including any relining of concrete tanks or clay liners.

- Prior to the recent heavy rain, Blue-Green algae were observed in stagnant pools at the outlet of Duchess Creek, but not in the creek itself. These have since dissipated.

- **Ensuring safe roads for people and wildlife**

- LATM plan implementation is progressing, but slowly due to Council's budget constraints
- A Safety Audit of BH roads and pathways is seen as a way of developing a sharper focus on the priorities and Council's presence here tonight is the next phase in this project.

3. Consultation and communication

- Public meetings

None held this year

- Discussions with Mayor, General Manager and Council Officers

A number of meetings have been held and email communication maintained primarily in relation to the issues outlined above. In addition a number of our members are on Council's Community Reference Group.

- BHPA website

The BHPA website www.bonnyhills.org.au has been up and running for three years now with the primary aim of presenting the activities and communiques of BHPA as public material.

- Bonny Hills Newsletter articles and Press releases

Our Publicity Officer has delivered articles about BHPA activities on time for each issue of the BH Newsletter and has written press releases or articles regarding a number of the above issues. Thanks must go to Kylie Moss from Ocean Drive Realty for her efforts in supporting the BHPA and other community groups with this newsletter.

- Coast and Estuaries Committee

BHPA obtains information on the outcomes of meetings by this Committee, but BH does not register as a hot spot. Duchess Creek water quality issues are handled separately by Council – see above.

- Grant for communication equipment

A grant of \$2,000 was obtained from the Volunteer Grants Program from the Federal Government to purchase the equipment we are using here tonight for public presentations and Committee work.

- Consultation with other Progress Associations and RAN³

Consultation and cooperation with like organisations is productive on issues in which we have a common interest. Examples would be the conduct of business by Council and Area 14 development proposals. BHPA Committee has representation on RAN which is the main forum for these discussions.

³ RAN = Residents Action Network; LATM = Local Area Traffic Management

4. Report Card

Were BHPA's efforts in 2013/14 a useful contribution to Bonny Hills? We think so but we do recognise that there is always more to accomplish.

And special thanks to:

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- my outgoing committee – Bernadette, Bill, Carmel, Florence, Joyce, Lucas, Pam, Penny and Phil, and also to Tami, Ken and Scott;
 - the support of BHPA members
 - and to many of the PMHC staff for all their efforts on our behalf over the last 12 months
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5. Challenges for the incoming committee

These will include:

- Bringing the current suite of projects into being – viz RBR playground upgrade, Hall Reserve toilets, RBR revegetation.
- Help develop the road safety issues identified in the audit into an implementation plan with associated funding commitments.
- Continue to work on improved engagement and communication with the wider Bonny Hills community and other relevant organisations.

Roger Barlow
President

On behalf of the 2013/14 BHPA Committee.