

President's Message

Bonny Hills Progress Association

AGM March, 2009

Because our priorities have been determined by workshops with our community members during the past few years, a scan of the president's message at the AGM in 2008 shows a predictable and, I believe, appropriate consistency of focus and actions of the committee during the past year.

I could, in fact, present the report of 2008 as the report for this year, and it would, in essence be accurate – only the details of whom we met, who was invited as guest presenters to our public meetings, and the specifics of some of the ongoing proposals and negotiations for the area would change.

In the context of our continuity, I therefore propose to highlight, rather than to be specific and comprehensive.

I want to begin with the work of the Community Strength group who operate under the banner of the Progress Association. Their selfless commitment to our community spirit saw such events as the skateboard park competition and the bands on the deck for the young, and the young at heart in our community. They backed up with the Carols by Candlelight, combined with the fund-raising for our injured musician following the tragic car accident during the year.

Without thought of personal recognition or reward, it is the work of such people who help to make Bonny Hills a wonderful place in which to live.

An ongoing commitment to the quality of our environment was demonstrated again by such people as Jenny Daniel in her work for the improvement of Saltwater Creek, and by the work of the Bonny Hills Landcare group who, while working under their own infrastructure, often work very closely with the Progress Association, either through common membership over the two organisations, or through such shared activities as the annual clean-up of the State Forest and National park areas to the North and West of Bonny Hills.

Our commitment to the quality of our urban and natural environment was a clear focus, demonstrated by the numerous meetings with planners, developers, Council staff and with the Administrator, as well as responses regarding Development Applications.

Of particular interest were the proposals for the development of an aged care / nursing home facility in Bonny Hills, augmentation of our sewerage facility, the proposal for a high density “manufactured homes” community between Bonny Hills and Lake Cathie, and the ongoing plans for the development of “Area 14”, again, between our two communities.

We have developed a number of statements expressed in guiding documents. These have included a more clearly articulated vision statement, which will need some

refinement following our 2008 survey of our Bonny Hills community. We have also developed a clearly articulated statement of our core business, or charter, as a progress association, serving the interests of our community. A clear definition of the roles of our respective office bearers on committee should help to clarify and guide the roles and help to distribute the work across the committee a little more equitably than it has in the past. A code of conduct for committee members was also developed with the aim of maintaining and promoting our high level of professionalism and integrity.

A number of our committee members will stand down, either from the committee itself, or from their respective executive positions, and I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge and to thank them for their outstanding contributions during the past year.

I particularly want to acknowledge Penny Marshall, for her energy, her integrity, and her amazing capacity to co-ordinate and manage the regular business of this committee. Penny has indicated that she will be prepared to continue her membership of the committee if elected, but that she would like to pass on the baton of secretary to another runner.

Bob Fischer and Roger Stanley (the latter resigned during the year), should also be acknowledged for their years of work for the community. Bob held several key positions on the committee, but for various reasons, both professional and personal, both feel that they can no longer afford the time.

I believe that it is appropriate that I finish with the same dot point summary statement that I used in my annual report in 2008, namely that:

in the spirit of our commitment to open and transparent activity on behalf of our own community, I would like to conclude by reminding our residents that:

- Our committee meets every third Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm in the Bonny Hills Community Hall. The meetings are open and any resident who wishes to attend is made welcome.
- We have held general community information / consultation meetings during the year; these meetings provide an opportunity for our committee to inform the community about our current activities and priorities and to alert residents to forthcoming issues and events; and
- These meetings also provide our community with an opportunity to re-confirm or to redirect our priorities for the current term.

Theo Van der Veen
President
Bonny Hills Progress Association

Friday, 13 March 2009