



BHA PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

This has been another very interesting and extremely busy year. This has been a team effort with significant community support and interest. In particular a big thank you to:

- Our loyal members and welcome to all our new members and supporters;
- Talking Heads, we have been very greedy again this year and Trish has been so very supportive and encouraging. Our page 3 is our main mechanism for communicating with the town and our visitors.
- A wonderful committee, who all come when asked and participated in a broad range of community activities throughout the Bellarine;
- Our very generous donors.

We continue to build relationships within the community and are very pleased at the number of traders who continue as members and regularly attend our meetings. We keep our members and the community involved through regular newsletters and our monthly Talking Heads article. Monthly BHA meetings have been well supported and have encouraged a broad range of discussion. We are still trying to attract some younger members, and acknowledge how hard it is for people with young families to attend our evening meetings. We welcome any new ideas.

This year we have said farewell to our Vice President Jeremy Gaylard who has moved closer to Geelong; Bernard Napthine has retired; and our dear friend and oldest/longest member John Romeril who sadly passed away.

HIGHLIGHTS

Being part of the Bellarine

The BHA has been a strong supporter and leader in the establishment of the Combined Bellarine Community Associations. This group has really strengthened in 2017/2018, starting with a series of election forums leading up to the CoGG council elections. We meet bi-monthly or as required and have developed a trust and capacity to share information and collaborate on matters of mutual interest. Members include representatives from community associations from Portarlington, Indented Head, St Leonards, Ocean Grove, Breamlea, Drysdale, Clifton Springs and Point Lonsdale. Judith Brooks and I have been the representatives from the BHA; we will encourage others to attend this year.

The return of an elected Council

We welcomed the return of elected Councillors in November, and in particular our three Bellarine Ward Councillors Stephanie Asher, Jim Mason & Trent Sullivan. This is a hard gig, and not only have they had to work out priorities for the Bellarine, they have had to deal with all the other CoGG issues. There is little doubt that The City of Greater Geelong is a big complicated beast. Is it too big? Should coastal towns like Barwon Heads be part of it?

Our Councillors have always been available and willing to talk; can they deliver what we want – I don't know.

Ozone Rd Jetty & Water Quality in the Barwon River

The City of Greater Geelong installed a new stormwater discharge outfall at the Ozone Rd Jetty. We expressed our concerns about the scale of the project, the inappropriate location of a major stormwater drain into the Estuary, and the implications of the construction activities. During the process we became a pseudo project manager and were more involved than we should have been. The design of the drain failed to properly take into account the changing sand levels and difficult construction conditions. So amended plans were required and the outfall is not fully submerged. In March we sought an undertaking from CoGG that they:

- Remove the sand build-up on the road at the intersections of Ozone Rd & Flinders Pde.
- Liaise with Barwon Coast to investigate vegetation acceptable / required to provide additional stabilization to the sand embankment next to the Eastern side of the road.
- Remove rock from the surface of the beach
- Review again when these works are done

The beach is still covered in sharp shards of construction blue metal and larger rocks from below the ground in the tidal zone, it is significantly degraded and in an unacceptable condition. This material should have been collected and removed from the site rather than be spread over the beach. We continue to press CoGG and Barwon Coast for substantial improvement.

This was not a good project for Barwon Heads, and highlighted a weakness at CoGG and its capacity to plan such complicated projects.

However – we met some good people. The BHA with significant input from our Committee members John Nolan, a qualified engineer and Judith Brooks have overseen the establishment of the Barwon Estuary Public Health Water Quality Monitoring Project, with stakeholder's meetings held with agencies late last year.

Our goal is to have an ongoing and integrated water quality-monitoring program of the Barwon River, its estuary and local beaches established with ready community access to the monitoring data and reporting of expected future conditions. The monitoring would focus on public health indicators for recreational uses. We have recently been informed that there is \$15,000 funding from DWELP for a project to be overseen by the Corangamite Catchment Authority.

Our local member Lisa Neville is the Minister for Water; she has been kept well-informed and provided support and encouragement.

PLANNING

Planning has continued to be a major challenge for Barwon Heads residents and the BHA. This will be an ongoing challenge without proper protections and recognition of the frailty of our location. Where are the best practice guidelines for coastal development? Where is innovation recognised and encouraged? Why aren't the community valued and listened to as the major stakeholders, rather than the bureaucrats fixated with ensuring low cost housing and development anywhere.

This has been a challenging and disappointing year. Our members face significant challenges to the peace, quiet and privacy that they have come to expect as residents of

the Village of Barwon Heads. Single lots of land are being subdivided and single story houses replaced by bland 2/3 story structures. The failure to protect vegetation and provide adequate parking continue to grow as significant issues. We have been putting in objections to applications that set poor precedents and threaten the coastal village amenity.

Barwon Heads Structure Plan 2017 – C375

This has been a major project for the BHA and the community. Council wrote to all households inviting comment on amendment C375, it failed to do this when the residential growth zone was applied to most of Barwon Heads. The proposed plan was advertised in February and we responded with 2 submissions one planning based and the other traffic based.

We supported the recommendation to retain the town boundaries and to protect Warrenbeen Court.

We argued for further changes including:

- removal of the IHDA on the bases that Barwon Heads does not have an “activity centre”, is not a commercial mixed use or former industrial area and is not accessed by trains/buses to a central hub.
- Heights of 11m are still possible in the General Residential Zone, and should be reduced to 9m
- Inclusion of advertising for single dwellings in the General Residential Zone
- Protection of mature trees on private land

The draft plan failed to include any future planning for traffic and parking. We put in a separate submission and are dismayed at the continual waiver of parking for developments in Hitchcock Ave.

In August we presented to the Panel set up by the Minister for Planning. We strongly opposed the Amendment on the basis that it facilitates a level of change that is incommensurate with the strategic and policy context of this small coastal town, and will undermine valued aspects of local character. We argued that if the proposed Design and Development Overlays (DDO41 and DDO42) are intended to identify and preserve local identity they fall well short of the mark, as they seek generic built form outcomes that fail to establish a sense of place or preserve the special qualities of our coastal location.

We wait for the recommendations from the Panel and the CoGG reaction.

1 Flinders Pde

The Council failed to deal with the planning application for an apartment block on the most important site in our village. The developer took the application to VCAT and was successful in this application. Council decided out of time that it would have refused the application, but failed dismally to defend this decision at VCAT. A sole Council officer with no experts to support his argument was like a lamb to the slaughter against legal Senior Council, and four experts. We didn't have the resources required to put up a proper fight. A very disappointing process.

Developments in Hitchcock Ave

We are witnessing proposals for significant developments in Hitchcock Ave. All require waiver of parking. We cannot understand why this is so easy, and wonder where people are meant to park. The area is currently very busy, and with the proposed developments will become saturated with out review of parking and traffic. Traffic reports accompanying 3

major development applications and accepted by Council all have the same statistics from a 2 days in winter, to justify the waiver of 36 car parking spaces

Proposed childcare centre in Geelong Rd

This is a proposal by a private developer. Our main concerns have related to traffic and parking. This application has not been decided by Council.

Traffic & Pedestrian Safety

The pedestrian crossings have made Barwon Heads safer for pedestrians, locals and visitors. It has slowed down traffic in the very busy pedestrian streets; but cannot be to blame for the traffic jams that have occurred in town over the past 5 years during the peak holiday seasons. Vic Roads shared some GPS data (tom-tom) with us, which was not very satisfactory. Council has little interest. We are currently involved in discussions about proposed improvements for the 2018/2019 Christmas/New Year periods. We continue to express our concern about the speed of motorists through Barwon Heads and in particular the size and number of large trucks that are now using Barwon Heads as the truck route.

The Barwon Heads Library

Our Library continues to grow and is now a role model for other small community libraries. The Friends of the Barwon Heads Community Library was formed with the support and encouragement of the BHA. It has had numerous events this year with strong community and school support and are listened to by the Library Corporation. Thank you to Karen Firth and her committee for their time and energy. Thank you to BHPS Principal Daniel Vella for his interest and availability. Hopefully our library is now safe.

Old Kindergarten in Clifford Pde

This remains unresolved. We have initiated a number of meetings with the Lions Club, Scouts, Seniors and the Arts Council. A large group met with Council officers. Our message is we want this retained for community use. We will protest very loudly if Council proposes to sell it. Council has advertised its social infrastructure plan – nothing in it for Barwon Heads (we are too small).

Safety & Security

This has continued to be a major focus during the year. There are a number of initiatives that we continue to participate in. Personal and community safety is a high priority for all. The BHA is a member of the Bellarine Community Safety Group, initiated and chaired by the Hon Lisa Neville. This participation has given us direct access to senior and local police. We now know our local police and share the discussion with other community representatives from Queenscliffe, Portarlington, Indented Heads, Ocean Grove, Drysdale and St Leonards. Judith Brooks and Geoffrey Waite regularly attend these meetings. We have remained involved with the Bellarine Police Community Support Register, a confidential register of personal information that is voluntarily provided by people living on the Bellarine Peninsula, in conjunction with Bellarine police. Jeremy Gaylard was our representative.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We continue to form close relationships with other community groups. In particular the Barwon Heads Arts Council; Save Barwon Heads Alliance; the Barwon Heads Senior Citizens (for friendship & the use of their facility) and the Ocean Grove Community

Association. We also have strong working relationships with Barwon Coast and the City of Greater Geelong.

I thank all of the Committee for their efforts this year:

- Jeremy Gaylard has been a very supportive Vice President; he retired earlier in the year and has relocated closer to Geelong;
- Geoffrey Waite is an amazing keeper of the purse and membership records
- Sarah Jackson provides support, strong connections with the community and sends out all mail outs to members
- Colin Bridges took over as Vice-President and has been a significant support on all planning matters this year, Colin is a retired lawyer with a great interest and passion for the community and a broad range of skills we value and now rely on.
- Judith Brooks has continued her passion for Barwon Heads and has made a very valuable contribution over the past 8 years. She has been a constant representative on the Combined Bellarine Community Associations, and she and Geoffrey have represented the BHA on the Bellarine Safety Committee for the past 2 years;
- Richard Hastings continues his passion for the history of Barwon Heads and continued understanding in and involvement with the providers of public transport on the Bellarine;
- Paul Fox – a long standing member of the Committee has provide support and wise advice
- Karen Firth has strong community connections and interest in the community and equity, her IT skills mean she is now managing our website; she is the Chair of the Friends of the Barwon Heads Community Library Committee
- John Nolan joined the Committee at a pivotal time and has been a significant contributor especially the proposed drain into the river, water quality, planning and he chairs our traffic and parking sub-committee
- Gabrielle Nagle also joined the Committee last year. She has strong community connections and we value her input.
- Philip Bade is our newest member, his input into planning matters is growing and we value his advice.

We are very lucky that we have such good opportunities to engage with our parliamentary representatives.

We thank Lisa Neville our local Member of Parliament who is always available and interested in anything we contact her about; Sarah Henderson our local resident who represents us in Canberra and Simon Ramsay our member in the Victorian Upper House.

I repeat our thanks to our Bellarine Councillors Jim Mason, Stephanie Asher & Trent Sullivan.

We also value the strong support from Gary McPike the CEO of Barwon Coast.

OUR MEETING PROGRAM AND GUESTS 2017 - 2018

September 2017 – AGM 2016-2017, guest Peter Dorling Administrator

October 2017 – Local residents Karen Firth, Maria Malakellis, Alex Kuebler, Tom Hudson talked about their families and their connection with Barwon Heads, the meeting was held at the BHGC

November 2017 – Bellarine Police Senior Sargent Shane Madigan

December 2017 – Christmas drinks at Starfish with local community leaders including Trish Clayton the proprietor of Talking Heads, Bruce Symons Chair of the Bendigo Bank in Barwon Heads and Helen Edwards from the Barwon Heads Op Shop.

February 2018 – Daniel Vella Principal of the Barwon Heads Primary School

March 2018 – Lisa Neville Member for the Bellarine and Minister for Police and Water

April 2018 – Stephanie Asher, Jim Mason, Councillors for the Bellarine

May 2018 – Gary McPike CEO Barwon Coast

June 2018 – Sam Pirrotta, Fiona Simpson and Luke Britnell from Vicroads and Guy Wilson-Browne & Vicki Shelton from CoGG also the Simon Ramsay MLC member of the Legislative Council

July 2018 – Anna Murray, Manager, Infrastructure Operations at Barwon Water.

August 2018 – Tim Goddard, President of the Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club, and Brian Cook from the Barwon Heads Scouts.

September 2018 – Helen Wood the Captain of the Barwon Heads CFA.

Sandra Gatehouse

President Barwon Heads Association 2017-2018

22/10/18