

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

**Held on Saturday, 20th September, 2014
in the Mount Wilson Village Hall, The Avenue, Mount Wilson.**

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting at 5.30 p.m.

The Committee was recognised, Vice President Alison Halliday, Treasurer Libby Raines, Secretary Moira Green, and Committee members Brian Abrahams, Nancy Fox, Ted Griffin, Peter Laving. Nancy Fox has joined the Committee and at her first meeting so willingly picked up a number of tasks.

This is the first time in a good number of years Bill Ryan has not been a member of the Committee. Bill's resignation brings to an end an extensive term of service with the Association and as our president for five years. He has offered his ongoing support. Bill was thanked very much for his contribution over many years with acclamation.

There are two new members, Ben Shepherd and Anton Smith at Donna Buang, and Bob and Angela Korogiannis at The Mill have rejoined.

The volunteer First Responders and members of the RFS who give extraordinary service were recognised and thanked.

The passing of Ellis Reynolds who died aged 89 on July 23 was noted. Ellis was for many years one of the many extraordinary characters of Mt Wilson. He was secretary of the Progress Association from 1994 to 1998 and worked for the Historical Society and the Village Hall Committee. He will be much missed.

Mary Reynolds, Tim and Kim Gow, former members were welcomed as guests.

Condolences were extended to the family of Sebastian St Vincent-Welch who lived and worked here and was a member of the RFS and died so tragically in the accident last week; and to Peter Raines and his family that this terribly unfortunate death has occurred.

2. ATTENDANCE

Committee: Richard Beattie (President), Alison Halliday (Vice President), Libby Raines (Treasurer), Moira Green (Secretary), Ted Griffin, Brian Abrahams, Peter Laving, Nancy Fox

Other Members: Barry Freeman, Ron Green, Diana & Joe Landsberg, Judy Tribe, Loretta Beattie, Mary Holt, Elizabeth & Joe Montano, Michael Pembroke, Wendy Holland, Beverley and Graham Thompson, Susie Hope, Owen Haviland, Robert Chesney, Marilyn Laving, Bill Ryan, Alex Halliday, Kathleen Oakes, Martin Barge, Anne De Salis, Neville Whan, David Howell, Duncan Peppercorn, Janet McDonald, Philip & Jane Beeby, Stephen List, Rosie Walsh, Robert Nicol, James Stein, Peter Anderson, Barbara Harry, Bob Korogiannis, Judith & John Teulon, Jane & George Mayne, Keith Ralston, Peter McDonald

Visitors: Local State member, Roza Sage MP, Brian Carrigan (MIPA Secretary) Mary Reynolds, Kim & Tim Gow, Bruce Kerrige, Sarah Sernak, Barbara Landsberg

Apologies: Councillor Don McGregor, Louise Markus MP., Mark Bancroft (MIPA), Robyn & John Leonard, Jill Hoskins, Jack Davies, Suzanne & Tom Bassett, Bruce Arnold, Peter & Linda & Beth Raines, Carol Carrigan, Deb Griffin, Margaret & Stephen Dean, Graham Tribe, Sarah Howell, Maureen Ryan, Annemie Stein, Helen Freeman.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

It was moved, Ron Green, seconded Mary Holt that the minutes of the AGM held on 21st September, 2013 be accepted as a true record. The motion was passed.

It was moved Rosie Walsh, seconded Alex Halliday that the minutes of the General Meeting held on 22nd March, 2014 be accepted as a true record. The motion was passed.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Libby Raines presented the following report:

Mount Wilson Progress Association Inc.

Statement of Accounts 1-7-13 to 30-6-2014

Working Account

Receipts:-

B.M.C.C. - maintenance of reserves	22,000.00
Membership	5,828.00
Website - payment for usage by property owners	1,206.66
A.T.O - GST Refunds	913.00
Rabbait - payments for usage by members	187.00
Donation to website	20.00
Interest	697.98
Total Receipts:-	\$30,852.64

Expenditure:-

Maintenance	Alan Gunn 12,156.30)	
	Peter Raines 3,942.20)	19,328.00
	Micah Fink 2,230.00)	
Tunks Landscaping – soil for War Memorial Reserve		465.00
Johnstones Trees – stump grinding at War Memorial		1,650.00
Insurance		2,330.00
Website – annual fee and extra gigabytes		1,320.00
C.W. Print - printing		445.01
Secretary - office supplies		385.36
Village Hall		386.00
A.T.O. - GST payments		527.00
Gift to Village Hall – photograph of 2013 bushfires		400.00
Adam's Shed - Glysophate and rabbait		428.60
Department of Fair Trading - annual fee		52.00
Service at War Memorial		300.00
Omnalink – map outlets for phone communications		220.00

Transfer to Fixed Term Deposit	2,000.00
Bank Fees	<u>156.00</u>
Total Expenditure	<u>\$30,394.27</u>
Total receipts	30,852.64
- Total expenditure	30,394.27
	= 58.37
+ Carried forward	11,990.14
	<u>\$12,448.41</u>
<u>Bank Balance 1/7/2014</u>	<u>\$12,448.41</u>
<u>Fixed Term Deposits</u>	<u>\$20,000.00</u>

The report was audited by Richard England on 8th September, 2014

It was moved by Barry Freeman, seconded David Howell that the report be approved. It was approved.

5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

COMMITTEE MATTERS

The Lithgow State Mine Fire

The most significant event for us in the last twelve months has been the State Mine Fire, and the extraordinary community response as so many people pitched in to help when faced with this threat. Subsequently there has been the ongoing work by the RFS to be prepared for any other emergency that affects the community – all in, an example of community spirit of the highest order.

In recognition of the preparedness of the village to face a major bushfire, the Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine RFB Community Engagement Plan has been awarded joint first prize (shared with a Red Cross project in the Hunter Valley) in the not-for-profit section of the NSW Resilient Australia Awards. This is a great achievement led by Kathleen Oakes in her Community Engagement Officer role and everyone in the Brigade involved with the development and application of the plan during the October fires. There will be an award ceremony at Parliament House on 16 October – coincidentally the anniversary of the start of the State Mine Fire.

The recently enacted 10/50 state legislation allowing removal of trees within 10 metres of homes and shrubs or scrub within 50 metres is not explicit about pile burns for cleared material. However, advice from the RFS suggests the change in the legislation allows the existing pile burning rules to continue to apply with the necessary consents we've been used to getting from Katoomba, and that of course means a permit is required since the early September 1st start of the fire season. Nancy Fox will be pleased to hear about any logs from tree felling that could be used in Cathedral Reserve as vehicle barriers. We need a lot!

On behalf of the RFS, the Progress Association submitted an application that was successful for \$8,246 to a post-fire NSW and Commonwealth government grant program. The application was for signs aimed to improve safety and property protection by communicating to residents their responsibility for fire preparation, alerts for current risks, and a timetable for action. We have also asked for signs to clearly identify locations for emergency incident management.

Much needed additional funds were raised by the Brigade this year through donations and support for events like the opening of the beautiful gardens at the Moss's Dennarque and the Barrett's

Nooroo in Church Lane over Easter. Then over the Anzac Day weekend the first Mount Wilson Autumn Festival organised by Diana Landsberg and Nancy Fox was held raising funds for the Village Hall.

Keeping Mount Wilson Looking Good

Core work for the Progress Association is our responsibility for maintenance of the street trees and verges, the reserves and walking tracks for the Blue Mountains City Council with funds provided by council in response to a detailed request Libby Raines puts in each year. Peter Laving has recently taken over the role from Alison Halliday liaising with the council and putting in our community service requests.

Examples of work completed during the past year include:

- Silva Plana is growing well after the winter rain. We'll let the grass drop seed into the bare patches before Alan Gunn cuts it again.
- Silva Plana has finally been secured post *Gatsby* against vandals easily getting on the ground and doing wheelies. The gate locking mechanism has been fixed with the help of our local metal working artist Scott Leonard. He made a replacement for the missing steel bar and Beth Raines supplied an RFS BF3 padlock.
- The Waterfall Track, perhaps the most beautiful walk in Mt Wilson, is on steep, muddy ground and needs constant maintenance. Peter Raines and David Gunn built a small bridge over an area of the path always deep in mud.

The Bushcare Group has got the public reserves largely weed-free but has to constantly go back to areas cared for to remove little blackberry plants, agapanthus or many other weeds that re-emerge. The Group has recently been recognised by Council with a certificate marking its 15 years of good work for the community.

One of the major threats of weeds reinfesting public areas are the weeds in private gardens like ivy and hollies with their red seeds so favoured by birds that then drop them indiscriminately. If you have any of the problem trees or shrubs please remove the offenders.

Rabbits and Wild Dogs

There continue to be reports of rabbits in Mt Wilson gardens, especially in Mt Wilson East, and George Mayne keeps a stock of Rabbait available for purchase to control rabbits.

The War Memorial and Remembrance Day Service

In The Avenue the area behind the War Memorial has been restored to the natural fall of the land and the missing bollards at the temporary access replaced. Unfortunately Council has done a less than best job to fill the eroded area adjacent the road at the memorial.

To mark the centenary of the start of the First World War, Alison Halliday has produced with only minor editing changes a reprint of the history of the War Memorial to acknowledge the service and sacrifice of all those from our local communities who fought in World War I and later wars. The booklet will be distributed next month to all homes in Bell, Mt Irvine and Mt Wilson.

Our traditional Remembrance Day service at the War Memorial is being organised again by Brian Abrahams and Alison will give another address here in the hall on what her research has found on another two names on the memorial.

Communications

The Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine website goes from strength to strength with more than 750,000 views of pages. In our reach out to the wider world, the site established in February 2011 has been a real success. It keeps us being relevant and recognised in today's hyper technological social and visitor information environment. Graham Tribe continues to provide essential support for the site as do all the contributors who keep it updated.

At no cost, we have recently joined Blue Mountains, Lithgow & Oberon Tourism Ltd, a Katoomba based organisation with information about places to visit in their area. We will work with them to have a Mt Wilson presence on their website and newsletters.

And what would we do without Tim Gow, now resident in Leura, but continuing as the editor of *The Mounts*. Thank you Tim for all the hours you put in to producing what we would all agree is a vital element of what helps make Mt Wilson the special community it is.

In the last few months since Tim and Kim Gow and Mary Reynolds have left the mountain, we have had their requests to continue membership of the Progress Association. Unfortunately the constitution is clear: on leaving Mt Wilson you are no longer eligible to be a member. The Committee strongly believes that needs to change so any **member owner** who wishes to continue as a member may do so. **Membership** and **ownership** will be critical qualifications to be an ongoing member. We have just started this review and are open to suggestions. Ted Griffin with his legal background and experience preparing new constitutions for two other associations will use the relatively new 2009 NSW *Associations Incorporations Act's* model rules as the foundation of a new constitution to put to you next year. Please send any ideas you might have to Ted.

Updating and making our constitution relevant is only one step the Committee has under way in this direction. You will remember the community survey we undertook at the end of 2012. Among the responses were these three:

- Should we try to increase visitor numbers Yes 73%
- Would you like to see more B&Bs Yes 73%
- Should we promote garden visits Yes 79%

A first step to achieve these objectives has been to commission a two minute promotional video on Mt Wilson. The production is taking place this spring. It has a forties-something couple with two children visiting gardens and with shots from sunrise to sunset and including some older visitors admiring what a wonderful place Mt Wilson is. There is no narration, just music, and a simple graphic with words like: ***Mt Wilson – Discover the Beauty***. The clip will have a prominent place on our website homepage and we'll be working to have it used by the NSW Tourist Commission, other sites like that of Blue Mountains, Lithgow and Oberon Tourism, the Council's site and any garden organisations we can interest being linked with us. The aim is:

- To target people who fit into the demographic that would have the resources and lifestyle outlook to be predisposed to living here
- To promote garden visits and the B&B trade
- To promote special annual events that will generate revenue for the community, and
- To improve the ambience and facilities at Mt Wilson in order to provide a better experience for the community and visitors.

Peter Laving is overseeing the production for us. The cost will be about \$13,000 – at least half the cost of a regular commercial production. This is possible because a young film maker with friends

from the Film and Television School now with about five years' experience has offered to produce the clip essentially at cost. There will be no charges for the actors, or the garden shooting locations, and crew accommodation is being provided by Peter and Marilyn. We have the funds in the bank for just such a project as this and will work to replenish what is our "sinking fund" of \$20,000 as soon as we can. We hope to have the clip for you to see on the website before the end of the year.

And last on the Committee issues, Moira with Graham Tribe's help has produced and distributed an updated copy of the phone book. Thank you Moira and Graham. Additional copies are available from Moira for \$5.

BMCC & OTHER AUTHORITY MATTERS

Mt. Wilson, Mt Irvine and the Federal Government Mobile Coverage Programme

The Federal Government has under way a national black spot Mobile Coverage Programme that will provide \$100 million support funding for areas with poor or no mobile wireless, voice or broadband data service.

A working group of Henric Nicholas and Brian Carrigan from Mt Irvine and Graham Tribe and Richard Beattie put in a submission to the Federal Department of Communications pointing out our communities are clearly areas meeting criteria for investment including being small communities, in areas that are prone to experiencing natural disasters and locations with unique mobile phone coverage problems.

The federal government issued its first update on the Programme on 29 July last. There are more than 4,000 nominated locations nevertheless our local federal member Louise Markus has included Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine as one of the three localities out of eight nominations in her electorate in need of towers. We will continue to lobby her and anyone else who might be able to help especially emphasising the safety critical element of our claim because of the recently demonstrated bushfire threat.

Bowen's Creek Road and Bridge and Mt. Irvine road in the Hawkesbury LGA

The serious problem of an alternative access and egress from Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine in the event of the closure of Mt Wilson Road and/or the Bells Line of Road has again received considerable attention.

Through a contact with ABC TV, Elizabeth Montano succeeded in having an excellent news item broadcast in July. You will have seen the story on the item and the approach made to the politicians and Hawkesbury and Blue Mountains councils included in the last issue of *The Mounts*. That publicity put the issue back on Louise Markus' To Do list and a meeting of local community representatives was held with her at Mt Irvine on August 21. Elizabeth along with David Howell, Peter Raines, Peter Laving and Brian Carrigan were there. More work is under way to provide yet more information on what needs to be done.

Road Sealing

The BMCC project to reshape, grade and bitumen seal the roads and lanes in Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine has been completed now Danes Way has been sealed. On the Five Mile – the faded white lines have been repainted and new cat's eyes put down to make the road safer. We still have to get the vegetation obscuring roadside markers cleared. But a good job has been done after requests over a number of years for the gutters on the zig zag to be cleared.

There were years of talk about removing the failing old elms in the Avenue. They went in June last year, the ground left for fifteen months and twelve substantial new Green Beeches will soon be planted to replace them. Libby Raines with help from Alison Halliday put quite a bit of time into achieving this good outcome.

Community Service Requests

Outstanding Community Service Requests we have put in and copied to each of our three Ward 1 councillors include:

- Project Puddle, as Peter has titled the perennial problem of the water at the entrance to the hall, has had close attention. Peter with help from Stephen Dean has cleared the gutter, taken levels, done drawings, proposed an inexpensive solution to Council and once again run up against the brick wall of insufficient council funds being available.
- Libby and I met with two senior council officers last month to discuss the problem raised by Rosie Walsh of insufficient and unclean toilets in the reserves during peak visitor periods and not enough of the blue top bins for the rubbish. It was a good meeting we followed up with reminder CSRs particularly for the peak periods:
 - Restoration of the two drop toilets in Cathedral Reserve
 - Installation of hand sanitizers in all the toilets
 - Appropriate signage for the toilets
 - Increased cleaning frequency
 - Installation of a lockable enclosure to store as many extra bins necessary for peak periods.
- Request for installation of an access gate at the dump near the bottom of the zig zag on Mt Wilson Road.
- Request to remove eucalypt saplings growing in the near vertical embankment above the Mount Wilson Road zig zag U-turn before the trees grow to be difficult to remove hazards.
- Request for maintenance or replacement of the lock on the first toilet at the Mt Wilson Fire Shed.
- Request for repair of roadside drop-away on The Avenue at Church Lane.
- Request for replacement of roadside reflector markers missing on the Five Mile making travel in misty and foggy conditions hazardous.
- Request for removal of four hazardous dead trees.

While the tally is not yet known for the Council ratepayer survey asking whether there is support for an increase, maintenance or reduction in services, we can only hope the result will be for an increase. Without it who knows what services and maintenance might be cut? Responses for the survey closed this week.

Unfortunately the work the Village Hall Committee hoped to have had done here this year on the new toilet block and storeroom was unable to go ahead despite the generosity of donations from the community. However, funds have been quarantined by Council for this project and Council has also applied again for a NSW Government Building Community Partnerships grant. The successful grants will be announced in December, so the work could be done next year.

Christmas Party

We can look forward again to an early start for the Yuletide season with our Christmas party which will be held on Saturday, 29 November 2014.

Business Arising from the Report

5.1 Graham Thompson asked about the quarantined funds for the hall. Funds raised by the community are in a separate fund. Also council committed funds are set aside but not guaranteed.

5.2 David Howell commented that a street sweeper was heard in Applecot Lane. This was a Council initiative.

6. GENERAL BUSINESS

6.1 Beverley Thompson requested help for the choir for Remembrance Day. Practice will be on 1st and 8th November. As the Open Garden Scheme is at an end, the Thompsons will be opening *Bisley* for the community on 11th October.

6.2 Barry Freeman informed the meeting about Sebastian St Vincent-Welch, who died in an accident last week. He was 23 years old, living in Mount Wilson for 6 months and a member of RFS. His sister had mentioned his growth in maturity in this period. The community has been invited to join in a celebration of his life at Smiths Hill. Barry commended the critical incident team and requested support for CFRs and Peter Raines in particular. Condolences of the meeting were expressed to family and friends.

6.3 Stephen List reported problems with speeding vehicles, particularly between 3.00 pm and 4.00 pm when he was run off the road. Richard Beattie has previously raised the issue with the Lawson Police Highway Patrol and suggests anyone experiencing similar situations contact the police and record the number plate. It was suggested that those who employ contractors and sub-contractors be pro-active and request them to drive appropriately.

6.4 Appreciation was expressed for Tim Gow and Mary Reynolds for the work they have done for the community during the years. Support was expressed for Peter Raines.

6.5 James Stein requested that documentation be sent to property owners with holly next to the rainforest with a request that they preserve the rainforest for future generations by removing the holly.

7. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2014/2015

The members of the Committee were thanked for their good work in 2013/2014.

As all the members of the current Committee have agreed to continue as members, and the number of nominations equals the number of positions, it will not be necessary to hold an election. The 2014/2015 Committee is: Richard Beattie (President), Alison Halliday (Vice President), Libby Raines (Treasurer), Moira Green (Secretary), Brian Abrahams, Nancy Fox, Ted Griffin, Peter Laving.

8. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The next General Meeting will be held on Saturday 21st March, 2015.

The meeting closed at 6.30 p.m. Everyone was invited to stay for drinks and cheese and biscuits.

Signed as a true record

Richard Beattie. Chairman