



PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

It is with pleasure I present the President's Annual Report.

2014-15 has been a busy year for the BHA with success on many levels. After extensive community consultation through 2014 we were able to lobby our candidates for our new seat of Bellarine in the November state election for funding for our pedestrian safety project. We were successful in achieving a commitment from Lisa Neville for \$800,000 towards pedestrian safety. This is probably one of the biggest funding arrangements for the town of Barwon Heads that the BHA has achieved. It will reap great rewards for the town. What was also significant was that this was achieved by a properly conducted community consultation process led and supported by the BHA.

The BHA has maintained its program of information sessions while also taking up the concerns of members and residents. These have covered increasing concerns about dangerous footpaths and narrow corners on narrow roads which have to service buses travelling both north and south. We have concerns about cyclist safety and motorists speeding through town. Many of us have general concerns about preserving our village atmosphere. This was shown in the many emails against traffic lights at the roundabout at Bridge Rd and Hitchcock Ave.

During 2014-15 we have continued to build relationships within our community and provide a contact point for exchanging ideas and proposals of interest to our community as well as responding to complaints and concerns. Last year it was the important community conversation around the future of the old kindergarten and strongly supporting its retention as a community asset. This year much of our energy has been directed towards the Pedestrian Safety Project.

Activities

1 Continuing our theme of maintaining strong working relationships with key stakeholders in our community we have liaised with the Barwon Coast, the Barwon Heads Sustainability Group, The Senior Citizens, The Primary School and the Trader's Association and the Barwon Heads Arts Council. We keep consistent communications with our members and residents via our Talking Heads column, personal letters to members, our newsletters and our website. We have also kept contact with the Ocean Grove Community Association.

2 During 2015 both our state member Lisa Neville and our federal member Sarah Henderson spoke to a general meeting of the association and were generous with their time and readiness to answer questions. The BHA appreciates their response to community requests for engagement.

3 2015 has seen our new-look website develop mainly as access to our minutes and newsletters. Shelley Cross from Ocean Grove's Wonderful Websites has managed our site this year. The Committee has been keen to find ways to supplement the expense of using Shelley. Various advertising ideas have yet to be acted upon.

4 We have attended question time at CoGG during the year and have kept a consistent communication with our local ward councilor and our local state representative. We still expect to negotiate with the mayor's office to run a joint BHA and OGCA meeting for us to meet Mayor Lyons.

5 Last year, with the help of Barwon Coast we revived the issue of 13th Beach Road Safety. We are currently waiting on council engineers to get back to the group to do the final work on the environmental significance of sand and vegetation removal. It is not surprising that since 13th Beach Road has no friends on council there has been a deafening silence about any treatments to aid pedestrian and bicycle safety. Vicki Shelton has several times clearly stated that pedestrian safety at major intersections in Barwon Heads must have priority in terms of limited council budgets. 13th Beach Rd advancements are well and truly on the backburner.

6 The formation of a Pedestrian Traffic Safety Working Group.

This BHA sub-committee met on 15th July 2014 and formed the basis of our liaison group with VicRoads. This led to the formation of the Pedestrian Safety Community Consultation Group chaired by VicRoads.

This group comprised the BHA, Senior Citizens, BH Sustainability and the Trader's Association and met in March, June, and August 2015 and will be meeting again after VicRoads collates the community response from their public presentations in September.

Our forum/meeting program 2014-15

September 2014 AGM review of the year's activities

October 2014 Those present have complained about rates – very concerned about level of rates and basis of calculation. BHA formed a sub-committee to research rates with a view to presenting an evidence - based paper to council.

November 2014 Combined community forum with Ocean Grove Community Association with candidates for the state election.

December 2014 Christmas drinks meeting.

February 2015 Guest speaker Peter Hann, experienced valuer to speak on rates. Introduced and organised by Jeremy Gaylard.

March 2015. Report back to membership re first meeting of Community Reference group with VicRoads

April 2015 Barwon Heads Sustainability Group presentation & Pop Up Controversy

May 2015 Guest speaker Hon Lisa Neville

June 2015 Guest speaker Mark Tonkin VicRoads presentation on pedestrian safety options.

July 2015 Guest speaker Sarah Henderson Federal member for Corangamite

August 2015 Guest speaker Gary McPike General Manager Barwon Coast Committee of Management

September 2015 Annual General Meeting President's & Treasurer's Report.

Future Challenges for the BHA

As the town gets busier and the development around it grows pressures experienced in the last few years will intensify. Residents will not need the BHA to point out the impacts on the community. CoGG appears to be unresponsive, indeed dismissive, to many of our concerns. Our recent presentation to council regarding the state of our footpaths is a case in point. Further action using the media to highlight our concerns may be worthwhile.

The BHA needs to continue lobbying for the completion of stage 5 of the Ring Road as soon as possible to provide an effective traffic by-pass of Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads. Forming alliances with appropriate interests groups may help the residents of Barwon Heads achieve beneficial outcomes.

Acknowledgements

When Sandy Gatehouse and myself became President and Vice President in August 2012 Trish Clayton the editor of our local paper Talking Heads offered us her immediate support. Bob Jordon, and later Gary McPike as General Manager of Barwon Coast have been available and always ready to discuss our concerns. We also thank them for this.

Bernard Naphine, in his role as President of the Trader's Association, has also offered the BHA very positive support and Viki Strachan from the BH Arts Council has been a supportive member of the BHA.

I wish to thank all the Committee for their efforts not only during this year, but over the three years I have been president. Vice-President Sandy Gatehouse has offered enormous time, research resources and personal support to me, and Treasurer Geoffrey Waite has kept meticulous spreadsheets on every cent spent. Thanks also to our new member Jeremy Gaylard for his valuable contribution and shared expertise, Richard Hastings for his commitment and work on the Public Transport, Paul Fox for his great community research and contribution plus providing resources for the BHA Committee

Finally thank you to the many residents of Barwon Heads who support us both in words and action.

Judith Brooks
President
September 2015