

Wagstaffe to Killcare Community Association Inc.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2015-16

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the Land on which we meet and pay my respects to the Elders past and present.

Time moves on, and again, we have much to be thankful for. First, to the community for supporting our work, giving ideas, attending meetings, helping at Australia Day and Trash and Treasure (ably organised again by Jeanette Martin and Fay Gunther respectively) and working behind the scenes to prepare, print and deliver Talking Turkey, sweep the tennis courts, maintain the gardens, carry out bush care, take photos, maintain the website and the notice board, carve poles and tables, attend functions, develop artistic works, keep an eagle eye on maintenance requirements, and many other activities. And thank you to Keron and the others at the Waggie Store who provide keys, coffee, and much more besides! And thank you too to all the local groups which use the Hall so effectively.

This annual report is a short one. Apart from our annual functions, the projects we have agreed on all take some time to bring to fruition. They have long gestation, discussion, and implementation, usually involving Council or in the case of the track to Half Tide Rocks, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service. Each organisation has its own set of priorities, and it is not easy to carry out any proposed project quickly. This year is no exception.

We report the major events in the monthly Talking Turkey and on our website. Some projects are welcomed, while others are not, as has happened with the proposed Fitness Project at the Pretty Beach end of the Dog Track. After a meeting with some of those who opposed the location and aspects of the project, the matter is now being considered by Council, and will be reported on further next year. It has been proposed that the fitness equipment be further screened from nearby houses, but time will show whether this is acceptable. Certainly the Association does not wish any of its proposed projects to cause division.

Fortunately this year there have been no major disasters needing local intervention by the Rural Fire Service and the Killcare Surf Life Saving Club, though their ongoing work protecting the community continues and the RFS supports us every year before and after Australia Day. The Council has supported us in starting work on the Turo Park extension, but more work is still required there, and plans for the footbridge over the creek have been submitted to Council, while further planting and the development of some focal art works is yet to take place. Similarly we await news on local land deemed excess by the Council, so that the Association may comment on that list. Our two local councillors have provided assistance on matters of concern to the Association, but were split on the matter of local council amalgamation, to which the Association objected. Details of the proposed amalgamation with Wyong Council are awaited. And like other groups that formed in response, the Association objected to a major proposal for over 50 houses to be built adjoining the Bells resort. WTKCA worked with these groups, attending the relevant Council meetings and preparing banners in traditional mode! We also opposed a Council proposal elsewhere in the Council area to take 50 per cent of income from Hall and tennis court lettings: at this stage the Hall operates on a month-to-month lease while the tennis court lease is expected to continue to its expiry on 30 June 2018. We will continue to keep an eagle eye on this matter.

The Association has supported the Council staff concerned in putting forward a community nomination for heritage listing of Wagstaffe Square and supported also the nomination of other buildings. Comment was made on one particular DA proposal that in the view of the Association would benefit from modification (in terms of height and location) to better preserve the character of the building concerned, but was not successful on this occasion. However, it is anticipated that in the future year more attention will be focussed on heritage matters.

Successful art shows were held during the June and October long weekends, but as with other community events, sufficient support through a local planning committee is required for these to be viable. Funds raised

are allocated to the Future Arts Fund, and over time will contribute suitable artistic works for the community. And as noted in the last Annual Report, the community continues to rally round and support the coordinators and provide the willing hands needed for Australia Day and Trash and Treasure. Collaboration is maintained with other community groups on matters of mutual interest, and this will continue. And as in the previous year, support was given to the Hardy's Bay Community Church in the holding of the open non-denominational Christmas carols on the waterfront.

The carvers continue their steady progress under Terry Baker, and we now have a resplendent whale table in memory of Gay Bull which we hope will be joined by another similar table in due course, with entry poles either side of the Hall entrance. Beautification of the area surrounding the Hall continues, ideas are being canvassed for future projects, while follow up also is taking place on the Half Tide Rocks Track, the Fitness Project, Turo Park extension, a bubbler at Hardy's Bay, and the possibility of bike racks and other community requirements. The paper bark in the centre of the garden in Wagstaffe Square continues to flourish.

In the absence of other takers, the Committee has supported me as an often 'absentee travelling' President (who with the wonders of the internet can email from afar). Everyone rallies round, and we are fortunate in the last year to have had both Bill Gregor as Vice President and Jon Mason as Hall Convenor. They have both worked assiduously to carry out broad ranging tasks, but both have future commitments which will preclude them from standing for Committee positions in the next year. We thank them both. And I would like to thank the rest of the Committee also (in no particular order): Ian Bull, Alex Sharpe, Fay Gunther, Robyn Warburton, Brent Walker and Helen Ferguson – and to the many others who help so much behind the scenes. As I noted last year (and in the years before that), there are many unsung heroes who keep this community going. So thank you all. But a gentle reminder: we look forward to some of you joining the Committee in the future, providing new ideas and inspiration, and in the meantime urge you all to work with the subcommittees that interest you to support this wonderful area in which we live.

As I said last year, 'We have much to be thankful for, living in such a beautiful area... We are grateful to everyone who helps us in the Association work, who give so cheerfully and freely of their time, who keep our key events going, and who work to make this a better place in which to live. We are building social capital by working together.' Long may this continue, and we should remember that we are privileged to live here, lucky to live free from warfare, and that we should welcome and support those who flee from violence. Thank you all.

Peta Colebatch, President WTKCA, 9 May 2016