

President's Annual Report 2023 – 2024

Why we exist

- 1929 – Progress formed – early days it lobbied for amenities such as a post office and postal service, then a telephone service – met informally but in 1943 land purchased by locals – hall built and opened 1949 – its purpose community meeting place – memorial hall because pragmatically that was how commonwealth funds could be obtained. A mortgage was also used.
- In the seventies there was a major focus on the environment especially the establishment of the arboretum.
- 1999 - Progress Association incorporated – NFP status – current objectives outlined – promote the best interests of the ratepayers, protect and enhance environment, maintain association property and manage the hall.
- That is why we exist.

So what have we done in 2023 - 2024

- Pete Richardson, on behalf of the Association) has continued to discuss with the appropriate council officers our concern about the roads. There has been some rectification works and there are plans for more extensive works.
- The environment sub-committee has put in submissions about building approvals that do not meet the 2022 Development Control Plan (DCP) which includes a Location Specific Development Controls for Pearl Beach.
- Currently looking at submission re proposed toilet block changes (we'll look at that in detail later).
- It is important that as issues arise with the council individuals respond as well as the Association.

- The constitution and guidelines working party finalised the Code of Conduct which was approved at the June general meeting.
- Hall maintenance has been a major focus, with the ceiling having insulation and panelling installed, floor sanded and finished and the painting of the interior walls.
- We have set up a working party to look at developing a plan for the kitchen, storage and toilets. Users will be consulted, members will be involved in the final decision, and suggestions are of course welcome to build on those already collected. Membership – Peter Romey (lead), Margaret Moore, Bruce Swalwell, Mary Knaggs, Victoria Crawford. Once a plan is developed, we will be able to obtain any planning consents required and look at applying for grants, but we will have to supply 30% to 50% of the monies needed.
- The garden continues to be maintained by our small but dedicated working group - Margaret Moore, Gabby Porter and Anthony Maestri.
- We have a band of volunteers who manage the sound and lighting. Without them our events would not run as smoothly as they do. Paul Wickham, Nigel Tisdale, Peter Romey and often assisted by Phil Rich and Ron Saunders.
- Jeanne Albrecht does a wonderful job managing the hall hires. We have four weekly commercial hires (at one stage we had 6), one weekly community group (the singers) and two monthly community groups (the lunch club and the book club), and during winter fortnightly cinema club. These groups do not pay hire charges. Other groups such as tennis and the arboretum hire the hall for meetings from time to time (and pickle ball) as has another Central Coast NFP group for two-day long meetings/training. And of course ten general meetings, executive meetings and sub-committee and working party meetings.
- We support other training activities – 2 CSC training sessions for the hall – 2 first aid CPR training sessions (no hire charge).
- Australia Day races and bingo are also popular community activities.

- There were 7 breakfasts on the deck which were very successful until they stopped in March. We are trialling morning teas starting 27 October with Burnt Honey who approached us to bring back their wares.
- The jam making group also ceased production in March.
- Other successful community and fundraising initiatives have been the garage sale; food and wine fare; art trail BBQ, cake stall and plant sale; the book fair; coffee van mornings; raffles (sometimes stand alone at the café other times in connection with hall events); the two movie showings with the producer (OysterFarm and Caddie). Santa on the beach during December and three kid's discos in January.
- We have had many musical performances from the Singers concert in 2023 to the singalong in 2024; the scholarship concerts; jazz; classical; folk; and rock (in the arboretum).
- There have been six weddings; five memorials; one baptism, three birthdays, two community dinners; and two yoga retreats.
- And there are probably many others – the hall is a very busy community place. If you have something you'd like to see in the hall, please make the suggestion or even organise it.
- Catherine Lancaster applied for a grant from Australia Post and was successful for the Lunch Club and its mental health importance. We will be joining with Patonga in the hope the program can be extended. Catherine has also applied for a grant to cut our rates.
- We have had four editions of The Gem and Peter Doddrell is always looking for contributions.

What have been the difficulties

- Four of the executive members resigned in March 2024. Karina Stafford (president), Nigel Tisdale (secretary/assistant secretary), Amanda Winley (treasurer) and Pete Richardson (vice-president). The remaining members decided the best course of action was to continue. Victoria Crawford was appointed president and treasurer,

Donna Higgins was appointed secretary, Malcolm Davison was appointed public officer) and Margaret Westcott as an ordinary member. These resignations meant an increased workload for those remaining.

- Several members of the Events Committee also resigned leaving a planning and logistical hole.
- The breakfasts and the jam making group ceased and many in the community miss them. I know some of the jam making group miss the camaraderie they experienced during the sessions.
- We have had a drop of about 60 members.
- Whatever the underlying difficulties that caused these resignations, the outcome has been considerable discord and hurt in the community. However, the PBPA executive is happy to work with all members and welcomes everyone who wishes to work collaboratively.

Thanks

- Thanks to all those who have volunteered to help with events over the last year – there are too many to list. There are some who do step up repeatedly and we appreciate it.
- A special thanks to the executive Donna Higgins, Gary Phillips, Lynne Lillico, Malcolm Davison, Margaret Westcott, Paul Barclaire and Catherine Lancaster

Where to next?

- The new executive will consider what projects to pursue.
- We still have the survey to distribute and hopefully you will provide us with information we can build on for a plan for the future.
- At any stage though the executive is always happy to receive feedback and suggestions.

- An organisation such as this is dependent on its members and volunteers. We want to encourage those who live in Pearl Beach (either full-time or part-time) to join the Association and work with us to continue to grow a healthy happy community.

Victoria Crawford