



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018-19**

As we head towards our 2019 Annual General Meeting, it is appropriate to reflect on what has been another busy year for the Pearl Beach Progress Association.

This year has been particularly significant as it marks the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Association. The focus of the celebrations will be the October long weekend, when the *Tides of Tide* exhibition will be open in the Hall on Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 October. This exhibition will comprise historic photos and other memorabilia provided by former and current Pearl Beach residents, and will I am sure be of great interest to anyone who would like to know more about the rich cultural history of our unique village. This project has been more than a year in the making, and members should take the opportunity to demonstrate their appreciation to coordinator Jane Clarke and her large team of volunteers for their tireless efforts in organising the celebrations.

There is rarely a weekend where there is not some event occurring in the Hall, on the beachfront or the Arboretum. The Australia Day celebration, comprising the Kids Races on the beach and a community barbecue on the reserve was again a highlight of the year. The event, in its more limited and community based form, provides a sustainable model for the future. Particular thanks are due once again to Larry Nelson, Greg McPhee, Stephen Parsons and Peggy Todd and their band of enthusiastic helpers for organising the event, and for generous financial support from Ross Hilliard at Pearl Beach Real Estate. The proceeds of the barbecue raised \$700, which was donated to the Mingaletta Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Corporation.

Lynne Lillico and the members of the Events Committee continue to devote an enormous amount of time and skill to the events program. The annual Glee Club Singers concert this year was themed *A Time To Remember*, celebrating the evolution of musical culture over the 90 years that the Association has been in existence. The event sadly marked the final occasion for longstanding supporters Dr John and Jean Irvine, and their contribution will be greatly missed. However, the contributions of many others, especially Lynne Lillico, Paul and Pauline Toohey, Gary Phillips and of course all of the performers who gave so much of their time and energy, were also critical to the organisation of the concerts.

The Showcase Concerts in May, also supported by the Irvine family and showcasing outstanding students from the Central Coast Conservatorium, provided great musical stimulation to our community, as did the June Long Weekend Music Festival concerts, featuring outstanding musicians including Jane Rutter and Simon Tedeschi. The Jazz in the Arboretum and Opera in the arboretum events were similarly high quality (if musically contrasting!) events, and also provided an opportunity for the members of the Association to cooperate with other local organisations (Crommelin Arboretum and Woy Woy Rotary Club).

Other regular events such as the Anzac Day ceremony, *Bungaree Commemorative Weekend*, Food and Wine Fair, Community Carols, Literary Lunches, *Soup, Sax and Sweets* fundraiser, Melbourne Cup lunch, Christmas in July lunch and Easter Book Fair again proved very popular and successful gatherings for not only the community but for many from beyond Pearl Beach. The recent *Hot Dogs on Parade* was appreciated by all of who attended (human and canine), and raised \$5,500 for Guide Dogs Australia. There were too many sponsors to name for this event, but particular credit goes to Greg McPhee and his team for organising such a popular and happy event. No doubt I have inadvertently neglected to mention other events, but this omission only serves to illustrate just what a busy little cultural community is our village.

The Easter Book Fair was once again a great success, and is the single most significant contributor to the Association's fundraising, providing approximately \$8,000 for the annual costs of maintaining our Hall.



Thanks to Victoria Crawford and her dedicated team of volunteers for organising the event. Victoria has decided to focus on her new role of Arboretum President for 2019-20, so we are hopeful that another member will step up to continue this critical role for the Association.

Outside the major events, our numerous community groups continued their important work of providing the members of the Association with a diverse range of activities from which to choose, including the Arboretum, Bush Care, Dune Care, Tennis and Bowls, Plodders, the Aboriginal History and Guringai People Working Groups, Ma Jong and the Craft Group. Thanks is due to the dedicated organisers who quietly manage these activities to the ongoing benefit of the community.

The residents of Pearl Beach continue to be grateful for the wonderful work of the men and women the Rural Fire Brigade, and the Association supports the group through fund raising activities. The RFS were recently provided with a mobile fire unit, which will be located within the village. The Pearl Beach Safety Advisory Group (PBSAG) continues to work with the RFS to coordinate our strategy for alerting the community about the impending danger posed by bush fire. PBSAG has also organised a number of other important community safety initiatives, including CPR and defibrillator training and the maintenance of safety equipment, and has submitted several grant application to equip the Hall as an emergency response centre in the case of an emergency such as a major bushfire.

A major achievement in 2018-19 was the preparation and adoption of a comprehensive set of Policies and Operational Guidelines to guide the day to day operations of the Association, including the use and hire of the Hall. The Association also adopted a Budget for 2019-20, which is the first time that we have been able to take such a strategic planning approach for the following financial year. Both of these documents were developed by small working groups led by Jane Clarke. The Association is in a much more strategically sound position as a result of these two initiatives, and we acknowledge and appreciate the work of Jane and her colleagues.

During the year a number of broader issues were raised that are of concern to the members of the Association, and we have continued to pursue these with the relevant authorities, in particular the amalgamated Central Coast Council. These issues include the condition of the old Pearl Beach-Umina coast track, potholes in the edges of Diamond Road and Pearl Beach Drive, holiday period traffic congestion in Pearl Parade, the intersection of Pearl Beach Drive and Diamond Road and the condition of the lagoon. We have also made submissions to the Council in response to the draft Consolidated LEP/DCP and the draft Tree and Vegetation Management policy. Some of these issues have been satisfactorily resolved, while others continue to be subject to ongoing liaison. However, the Association does appreciate the interest of CCC Mayor Councillor Jane Smith and MLA for Gosford Liesl Tesch in addressing these concerns.

The major asset of the Association is of course the Pearl Beach Community Hall. In recognition of the need to improve the functionality of the building, we have developed a scope of proposed works that comprise a new awning roof over an enlarged rear deck, a new chair store and an additional external walkway on the southern side of the Hall. The design was developed following extensive consultation with the membership, and we received DA approval for the project from Central Coast Council in July. We appreciate the contribution of Association member Brian Mazlin, who prepared the architectural drawings. Our next challenge is to source grant funding to assist with the building costs, even though we propose to utilise volunteer labour as much as possible.

During the year, the functionality of the Hall was substantially enhanced with upgrades to the lighting and sound systems. The lighting upgrade was funded by a grant from the NSW government prepared by Russell Grove and Paul Wickham, while the sound system improvements were developed by Gary Phillips. Paul and



Gary have worked tirelessly to set up and refine the upgrade hardware, assisted by Greti Rieger and Paul Toohey.

*The Gem* continues to titillate our members with tales of what is really happening behind the well mannered façade of Pearl Beach. The editorial team have produced four information packed issues over the year. Co-Editor Beverley Kingston did decide to step down during the year because of other commitments, but Donna Higgins continues to produce the journal, which is now in an electronic form that reduces both lead times and costs. Our thanks to Donna and Beverly for their efforts.

The financial situation of the Association remains sound. At 30 June 2019, our cash assets were approximately \$90k, notwithstanding that we are holding some funds in trust for return to property owners in Coral Crescent who provided contributions for the preparation of a report for restoration of the beach after severe storms, which was never delivered. Our auditors Thomas Davis and Co have certified that our financial management and accountability is compliant with the required standard for community organisation. The Association appreciates the support of the auditors in providing this service on a pro bono basis.

The Annual General Meeting of the Association will take place as usual in October, but please note that due to the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events on the long weekend, the AGM has been rescheduled to 5pm on Saturday 12 October. The AGM also marks the end of the terms for the Executive Committee, including the office holders. Members who are interested in becoming more involved in the management of the Association are invited to nominate to join the Executive Committee, but you will need to submit a nomination form, signed by two financial members. The forms are will form part of the AGM documentation, and need to be submitted by Saturday 5 October.

Whilst the public face of the Association is more obvious through its events, other work done on liaison with local and state government, financial, secretarial, Hall management and legal matters is less conspicuous but no less significant. I acknowledge therefore the contribution of a skilled and hardworking Executive team:

Malcolm Davison and Russell Grove	Vice-Presidents
Gabby Crompton	Secretary
Donna Higgins	Assistant Secretary
Elizabeth Nelson	Treasurer
Lynne Lillico	Events and Publicity
Di Swalwell, Jane Clarke, Beverley Kingston, Gary Phillips	General Members

Sadly, Gabby Crompton and Di Swalwell have decided to retire at the AGM, and I acknowledge their significant contributions during their long terms on the Executive.

In closing, I would like to thank all of the members of the Executive, the members of the various PBPA subcommittees and community groups who put in enormous effort and commitment during the year to keep the myriad activities of the Association on track. I also thank the broader membership of the Association for their support, and if re-elected I look forward to another year of working with the Pearl Beach community.

**Peter Romey**

President  
September 2019