

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC**  
**Held on Saturday, 19 September 2015**  
**in the Mount Wilson Village Hall, The Avenue, Mount Wilson**

**1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting at 5.40 p.m.

The Committee was recognised: Vice President Alison Halliday, Treasurer Libby Raines, and Committee members Lorraine Barrett, Nancy Fox, Ted Griffin and Peter Laving.

Unfortunately our new secretary Sue Woolfenden, along with Steve, is away overseas for a couple of months. We are delighted Sue has taken on the role of secretary and has taken to it with such alacrity. It is also great to see our on going members and former secretary Moira, and Ron Green, here this evening. (Moira and Ron were given a rousing clap and cheer of applause in recognition of their long period of extensive service to the Mount Wilson community.)

Alison Halliday is standing in for Sue and taking the minutes for this meeting.

We welcome new members Sonya and Colin Cornick who bought Ron and Moira's home Noona Meena but unfortunately the Cornicks are apologies today.

We never forget the thanks due to our volunteer First Responders and members of the RFS. At the Brigade's AGM in June, Beth Raines reported our local paramedics attended 10 requests for help and there were 31 crew callouts for motor vehicle accidents, fires, rescues and storm damage. We remain very indebted to these members of the community who provide such an essential service in a remote location such as Mt Wilson! Their extraordinary efforts during the 2013 State Mine Fire have been further recognised, along with other mountain brigades, with a Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation and recognition of the "Crews demonstrated service above and beyond the call of duty."

**2. ATTENDANCE**

**Committee:** Richard Beattie (President), Alison Halliday (Vice President), Libby Raines (Treasurer), Lorraine Barrett, Nancy Fox, Ted Griffin and Peter Laving.

**Other Members:** Peter Anderson, Philip Beeby, Robert Chesney, Barry Freeman, Kim and Tim Gow, Ron and Moira Green, Alex Halliday, Owen Haviland, Wendy Holland, Susie Hope, Bob Korogiannis, Marilyn Laving, Robin and John Leonard, Stephen List, Maurice May, Janet McDonald, Elizabeth and Joe Montano, Robert Nicol, Roger Pfund, Beth Raines, Thom and Johanna Renton, Alan Rose, Beverley and Graham Thompson, Graham and Judy Tribe, Rosie Walsh, Neville Whan.

**Guest:** Our Federal Member Louise Markus.

**Apologies:** Our local State member, Trish Doyle, BMCC Councillor Sarah Shrubbs, Dan Long, Program Leader, Operations (Recreation Assets) BMCC, Bruce Kerridge, the Secretary of the Mount Irvine Progress Association, and our members Brian Abrahams, Bruce Arnold, Tom and Suzanne Bassett, Loretta Beattie, Jane Beeby, Sonya and Colin Cornick, Helen Freeman, Deb Griffin, Mary Holt, Sarah and David Howell, Margaret and Stephen Dean, Sarah Hope, Katherine and Alex Montano, Peter and Ann Pigott, Peter and Linda Raines, Keith Ralston, Michael Sweeney, Bill and Maureen Ryan and Sue and Steve Woolfenden.

### **3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

#### **Minutes of the AGM of September 2014**

Any matters arising? – no

Proposer: Graham Thompson, seconder: Susie Hope

#### **Minutes of the General Meeting of April 2014**

Any matters arising? – No

Proposer Alex Halliday, seconder: Susie Hope

#### **Minutes of the Special General Meeting of April 2014**

Any matters arising? – No

Proposer: Judy Tribe, seconder: Beverley Thompson.

### **4. TREASURER'S REPORT**

#### **Preview by Chairman:**

Before asking Libby to present the Treasurer's report I should mention that the committee, and Ted in particular, has spent much time considering issues we now realise are the committee's responsibilities for the MWPA property, the Marcus Clark Reserve. This is the major asset of the Association. In previous years it has not been included in our financial statement, maybe because it was seen to be acquired for what might have been thought of as an immaterial cost of \$1. We now realise this amount should be included in the annual financial statement. Similarly items such as member fees paid in advance should be correctly reported. MWPA member Richard England, an accountant, has kindly assisted with the financial statement in the course of his review of our accounts.

#### **Report presented by the Treasurer**

It was noted that the financial statement of an association such as the Mount Wilson Progress Association are not required to be audited. Nevertheless Richard England, who had audited the accounts in previous years, assisted with the preparation of the financial statement and reviewed the books.

Any matters arising? – No

Proposer: Susie Hope, seconder: Barry Freeman.

The minutes of the three previous meetings of the MWPA and the 2015 Treasurer's report, were all passed unanimously.

Richard England's letter on the review of the financial statement and the statement appear from page 13.

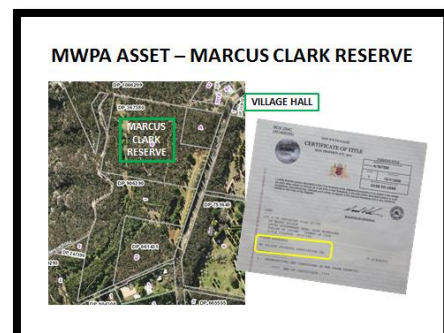
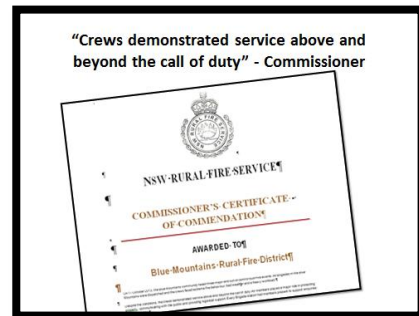
### **5. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 19 SEPTEMBER 2015  
PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

After a great summer and autumn with its rain and sunshine, winter showed off what it can do in the mountains with snow and cold that made for much time around the fire and electricity bills best not remembered. But for Mount Wilson this past period we've generally had a good times bar the tragedies that have occurred in the last year or so.

**Committee Matters**

For the Committee there has been further attention on the Progress Association's property, the Marcus Clark Reserve, which is delineated in this slide I showed at our General Meeting in April. The RFS authorities at the Glendenning office, unbeknown to the Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade,



wrote to the Progress Association requesting permission to investigate the Village Hall as a potential Neighbourhood Safer Place for use in the event of a bushfire threat. An NSP requires significant set back from the bushland. Glendenning RFS has sought the Progress Association's assent for Asset Protection Zone works in the reserve. The clearing will involve slashing of shrubs, grasses and ground covers and the thinning of the tree canopy while possibly retaining small clumps of shrubs and the majority of the tree canopy. The RFS will pay for the initial works and central RFS funds are available for ongoing maintenance.

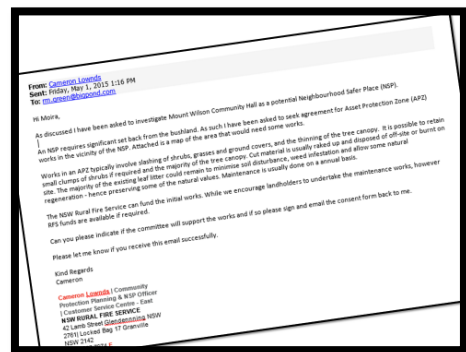
Because of concern about the possibility of there being endangered species on the land, the Committee engaged an environmental consultant, NGH Environmental Pty Ltd, to report on the site's "flora and fauna constraints relating to the site's development potential". The report found "the site does not contain any endangered ecological communities but has the potential to provide habitat for threatened species", as frankly, I imagine hundreds of thousands of hectares immediately to the north of the land does too. We have sent a copy of the report to BMCC requesting confirmation council takes no exception to the Glendenning request. The RFS will be asked to pay for the cost of the survey.

### MWPA maintenance

Peter Raines, now on a three year contract with the MWPA working as agent for BMCC, has done a lot of work about Mount Wilson during the last six months. The reserves and street verges have been mowed and slashed.

Peter has made a new fire trail at Wynnes Rocks and created a new asset protection zone there for the picnic shed.

On the land adjacent the fire shed, the parking area has been extended and the APZ maintained.





Opposite the school, the brush has been cleared, the ground levelled, top soil added and seeded with grass.

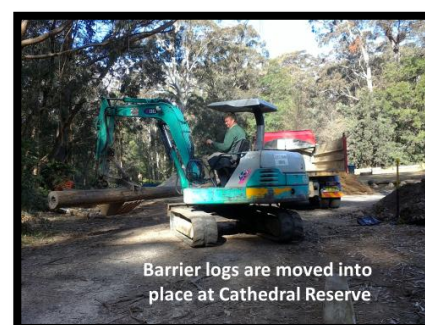
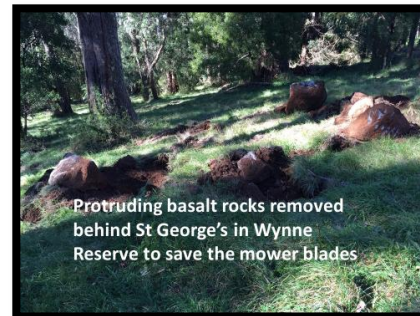
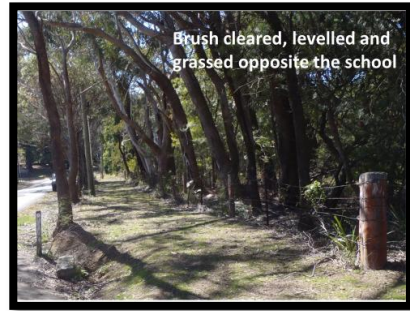
Basalt boulders protruding in Wynne Reserve behind St George's Church were breaking mower blades. Peter removed the rocks which will be placed as a cairn feature near the intersection of Queens Avenue and The Avenue at the corner of Silva Plana. The fire break behind the church has been tidied up and a big pile burn done with the cleared waste.

At Cathedral Reserve the trees on the poor soil there have had mulch treatment.

Peter Laving is our primary contact with BMCC, which of course owns and has ultimate responsibility for Cathedral Reserve and the adjacent road. Peter arranged for another contractor, Tony Crawford, to replace the old, rotted log vehicle barriers protecting the playing area with disused, non-arsenic-treated power poles.

First, with the concurrence of council, the blocked road edge gutter on Mt Irvine Road was cleared and the edge battered.

The logs we purchased were installed . . .



Placed on the concrete cradles . . .



Then the protruding hardware and nails were removed.



That left the newly battered gutter and pole job done along Mt Irvine Road after years of consultation with BMCC about the need for the work.



Soil from the battering job and other work will be placed over the sunken bare areas in the reserve and seeded.

We will be asking the Council to contribute to the cost of the completed work made possible in part with funds raised by last autumn's festival.

The timber street signs are now in need of restoration, will soon be taken away, replaced with temporary signs, treated, the lettering repainted and then the signs replaced.



Other work under way by Libby, Alison and Lorraine will be organising the removal of overhanging vegetation along The Avenue down from the Hall outside Breenhold and some tree planting there with the basalt rock cairn I mentioned to be at the top of Queens Avenue.

There is to be a teak bench from Cotswold Furniture installed on the newly laid concrete at the War Memorial. The purchase of the bench has been made possible with funds provided by Toyota for community projects and won with a submission by Keith Ralston of Coolangatta. Thank you Keith!

Libby reports there have been quite a few new volunteers join the Bush Care Group removing the invasive weeds we have often talked about. We announced in *The Mounts* the Progress Association will pay for expert advice for landholders wanting to identify and have recommendations for contractors to remove these weeds. Alison is the contact.

Our biggest success this year has been the Mount Wilson Autumn Festival

When you look at the Operating Statement, you will see we raised a net \$21,411.

We owe a huge vote of thanks to the people who opened their gardens, the hard workers providing the constant flow of food and drinks, those organising all the details from publicity to volunteer scheduling, and everyone who made the event so great on the day. Many thanks to all of you. It was such a success, next year the Festival will be on again on Saturday, April 16. May the weather be kind again!

Everything from an emu sculpture, plants, gardening equipment, food and drinks and expert talks were available for to buy.

Puppies too.





Despite the traffic jams everyone got away without incident.

However, we did have real difficulties arranging insurance cover that, together with other similar problems, has led us to change our insurance broker.

The Festival was truly a great team effort.

Thanks Nancy for making it happen!

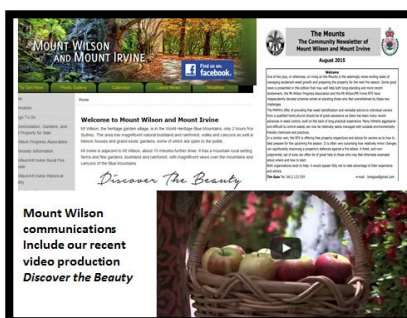
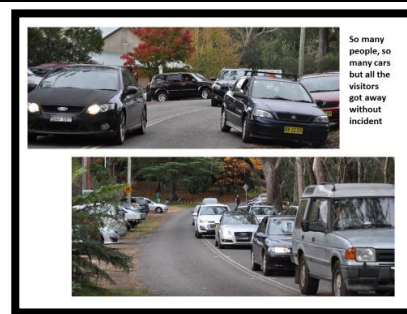
Successful communications are at the core of creating successful events and as ever Tim Gow maintains our up-to-date email list, sends out special messages, writes for, edits and distributes *The Mounts*. Graham Tribe maintains the web page and developed the Facebook connection for us for the festival. Facebook just needs lots of Mount Wilson people posting to it to attract lots of attention. Since 2011 when our web site was launched it has had 1,146,204 content view hits as of Thursday. That is about 4,000 in the last week alone. Thanks as always to Tim and Graham!

For those who haven't seen it and everyone who would like to see our web page video again, here goes . . .

No report would be complete without a reminder George Mayne has Rabbait if rabbits are a problem for you.

### Working with the authorities

We continue to liaise closely with the Blue Mountains City Council and have seen some good work done in response to our requests over the past six months.



PLAY VIDEO





Finely ground-up old concrete has been used in a number of places to improve the road surface. Here the turning area at Waterfall Reserve has been made good.

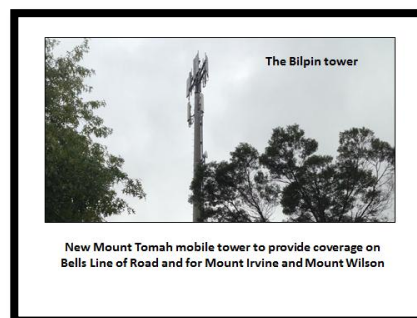
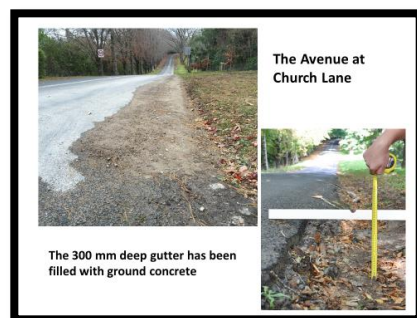
Grassed soil gutter embankments are helping keep storm water washing into private property.

Drainage outside the Fire Shed has been improved.

The deep drop-away on The Avenue near Church Lane has been filled. We will try to clean up the white mess left on the road.

Council has also installed a fenced enclosure behind the fire shed for us to store the rubbish bins for the peak season demand.

The federal government's national mobile phone and data black spot program has delivered for us. A new mobile tower is to be built at Mount Tomah that we hope will provide reliable coverage all along the Bells Line of Road between the towers at Bilpin and Bell and for Mount Irvine and Mount Wilson. Members of our working group including Brian Carrigan from Mount Irvine, Graham Tribe and I have been invited by our local member Louise Markus to be at an event at Mount Tomah on Tuesday when Paul Fletcher, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communications, will be there. Unfortunately Henric Nichols, also a member of the group, is overseas and can't attend.



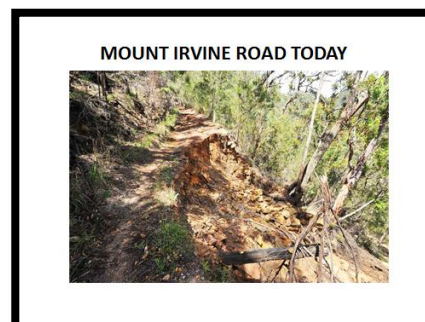
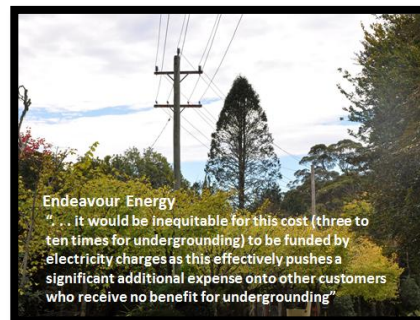
David Howell has told me he has been talking with NBN people about when Mount Wilson will be connected to the National Broadband Network. The response was that we will not be joined to fixed line NBN any time in the near future but will be able to subscribe to a satellite service. There is expected to be an announcement next month of the areas to be connected to satellite. David was told it is almost sure Mount Wilson will have the connection available in April. Installation will be free but the ongoing charge will be made by the service provider.

We passed a resolution at the April General Meeting calling for undergrounding of the overhead wires where the golden elms are being butchered in Mt Irvine Road. The Endeavour Energy response is disappointing: "... it would be inequitable for this cost (three to ten times for undergrounding) to be funded by electricity charges as this effectively pushes a significant additional expense onto other customers who receive no benefit for undergrounding". We were advised the community could pay the cost. A Mountains contractor sight unseen quoted us \$100 – 150,000 or more for the work. But we haven't given up and are seeking alternative overhead cables be installed by Endeavour that would allow the trees to develop much more naturally.

Emergency vehicle access from Bilpin on Mt Irvine Road and Bowens Creek Road continues as an active issue being run by the RFS. Elizabeth Montano, who has continued to put many hours into the work, will brief us shortly.

Our Remembrance Day service is coming up and we hope as many people as possible might be able to attend what is always a moving service with a talk afterwards from Alison Halliday on two of those whose names are on the War Memorial.

And don't forget the Christmas party the Progress Association and our RFS will be hosting on the last Saturday in November, the 28<sup>th</sup>.



### Now for a quick summary

- RFS district office at Glendenning is working to make the Village Hall a Neighbourhood Safer Place
- Peter Raines, contractors, BMCC doing good maintenance job
- Autumn Festival to be held again next April 16
- Good win on the new mobile tower to be built at Mt Tomah
- Bowen's Creek Rd access and Mt Irvine Rd elm issues are actively being worked
- Don't forget: Remembrance Day and the Christmas party!

Please stay and join us for drinks and cheese.

### SUMMARY

- RFS working to make Village Hall a Neighbourhood Safer Place
- Peter Raines, contractors, BMCC doing good maintenance job
- Autumn Festival to be held again next April 16
- Good win on the new mobile tower to be built at Mt Tomah
- Bowen's Creek Rd access and Mt Irvine Rd elm issues are actively being worked
- Don't forget: Remembrance Day and the Christmas party!



## 6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE REPORT

Elizabeth Montano reported on the issue of emergency vehicle access to Mount Irvine and Mount Wilson. She gave details of the two meetings that had been held of the interested parties, including Hawkesbury CC and BMCC. It had been decided that the Brigade would be the leader of any action, representing the whole Mount Wilson community. She reported that there was to be a third meeting on Monday 21 September. She added that the Police, well known to us through the work of the Rescue Squad, the Blue Mountains Bushfire Management Committee and the NSW Ambulance service had supported the use of the road as an emergency access route strongly; as had the brigade at Mountain Lagoon. However, formal support from the authorities' senior management had yet to occur. (See report page 18.)

The following motion was put to the meeting:

Having regard to the significant risks to life and property in Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine caused by Mount Wilson's current "one road in and out" access to Bells Line of Road via Mt Wilson Road, this meeting of the Mount Wilson Progress Association resolves to urge the Blue Mountains City Council to work with Hawkesbury City Council and State and Federal governments and Members of Parliament to have Mt Irvine Road, Bowens Creek bridge, and Mt Irvine Road (being the route between Bilpin and Mt Irvine) restored for use as an emergency vehicles access route.

Proposer: Rosie Walsh, seconder Marilyn Laving.

The motion was carried unanimously.

A copy of the motion was given to Louise Markus who recommended the resolution be communicated to the Mount Irvine Progress Association with the suggestion it or a similar resolution be adopted by that association. Members of the MWPA were also urged to make individual submissions to all levels of government; and it was recommended that the Community Web Page be used as a site for petitions and to lobby the relevant organisations.

There was no other business arising from the President's report.

## **7. GENERAL BUSINESS**

- 7.1 It was noted that the signs on the Mt Wilson Rd between Bells Line of Road and Mount Wilson had been badly vandalised.
- 7.2 Beverley Thompson requested help for the choir for Remembrance Day. There will be only two practices and she mentioned the need for male voices.
- 7.3 It was suggested that two existing concrete pads near Withycombe and Nooroo could have their seats replaced. The Chairman commented that he hoped to have all the public seats restored and re-coated in the future.

## **8. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2015/2016**

The Chairman thanked the members of the Committee for their good work in 2014/2015.

As all the members of the current Committee agreed to continue as members, and the number of nominations equalled the number of positions, it was not necessary to hold an election. The 2015/2016 Committee is: Richard Beattie (President), Alison Halliday (Vice President), Libby Raines (Treasurer), Sue Woolfenden (Secretary), Lorraine Barrett, Nancy Fox, Ted Griffin and Peter Laving.

## **9. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

The next General Meeting will be held on Saturday, 19 March 2016.

The meeting closed at 7 pm. Everyone was invited to stay for drinks, cheese and biscuits.

Signed as a true record

**Richard Beattie**

Chairman



## Richard England

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15 September 2015

The Mount Wilson Progress Association Inc  
MOUNT WILSON NSW 2786

Dear Sir/ Madam,

### **REPORT to THE MEMBERS OF THE MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC**

#### **( " The Association " )**

I have reviewed the accompanying Financial Statement for the year ended 30 June 2015. The statement has not been audited as this is not required for a Tier 2 Association under The Associations Incorporation Act 2009.

I have however performed sufficient testing and made enquiries of the relevant officers to be satisfied that the Financial Statement gives a true and fair view of the Association's financial position at 30 June 2015 and of its operations for the year ended on that date.

Dated this 15th day of September 2015.



**Richard A. F. England F.C.A.**

**Liability Limited by a Scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation**

**MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
AND REPORTS  
FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2014 TO 30 JUNE 2015**

**MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.**  
**OPERATING STATEMENT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

	<b>2015</b>
	<b>\$</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Blue Mountains City Council – Maintenance of Reserves	22,000
Membership (Note 3)	2,341
Website	909
ATO – GST Refunds	837
Rabbait	210
Market Day	22,039
Donation – Drinks for Party	150
Interest Received	616
Rural Fire Service – Grant for Signs following Fires	9,071
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>58,173</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Alan Gunn	1,369
Maintenance of The Reserves	
Mount Wilson Rural Contracting	10,765
Micah Fink	2,500
David Gunn	400
Finsure Insurance	2,339
C.W Print – Printing & Copying	1,027
ATO – GST Payments	1,341
Department of Fair Trading	205
Village Hall	143
Secretary Office Supplies	422
Oley Media Website	1,295
Remembrance Day Service	225
Adam's Shed – Spray for Weeds	186
Drinks – Christmas Party	404
Market Day	598
Bolt for Gate at Silva Plana	60
Australia Flora – Deposit for Waratahs	550
Bay Tree Nursery – Plants	95
Emma Leslie – Film for Website (Note 2)	13,000
Rural Fire Service – Grant expended for Signs following Fires	9,071
Bank Fees	142
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>46,137</b>
<b>Operating Surplus</b>	<b>12,036</b>

**MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.**  
**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE 2015**

	<b>2015</b>
	<b>\$</b>
<b>Assets</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Cash at Bank	19,485
Funds on Deposit	25,000
	<u>44,485</u>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>	
Freehold Land ( Note 1)	<u>1</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u>44,486</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	-
	<u>-</u>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>	<u>-</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<u><u>44,486</u></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>	
Accumulated Funds at 30 June 2014	32,450
Surplus for the Year	12,036
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u><u>44,486</u></u>



**MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

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**Note 1**

The Association is the owner of land at Mt Wilson known as The Marcus Clark Reserve. This land is shown at cost. The unimproved capital value of the land for rating purposes is \$350,000.

**Note 2**

During the year, The Association incurred expenditure of \$13,000 on the production of a promotional film to be included on the Association's website. This expenditure has not been capitalised in Balance Sheet, as it is considered for accounting purposes, to have no commercial value.

**Note 3**

Certain members of the Association have paid more than one year's subscription in advance. This income, which is not subject to refund, has been included in the annual income of the association which is consistent with the treatment applied to such income received in past years.

**REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS TO  
MOUNT IRVINE AND MOUNT WILSON FROM BILPIN AND ADDENDUM  
ON THE MEETING WITH OFFICIALS ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2015**

On behalf of the Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine Rural Fire Brigade, Elizabeth Montano has organised meetings, writing submissions, worked with emergency services and Hawkesbury RF brigades, with other MWMIRFB members conducting research on visitor numbers and advocated for this essential improvement to the safety of our communities and many visitors.

Following are:

- a summary of Elizabeth's report to the Mount Wilson Progress Association Annual General Meeting, and
- an update following the meeting with Louise Markus MP and BMCC and HCC representatives on 21 September.

**Summary of Report to MWPA AGM**

In August and December 2014 meetings initiated by the MWMIRFB, MWPA and MIPA led by Louise Markus MP, which included representatives from BMCC, at the August meeting and, at the December meeting BMCC (Deputy Mayor Chris Van der Kley and Councillor Don McGregor), HCC Mayor Kim Ford, State MP Rosa Sage, and representatives of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Roads and Maritime Services, MWPA, MIPA and MWMIRFB.

The outcome of that meeting was an agreement by BMCC and HCC to explore a joint bid to the State and Federal governments for funding to restore the route for use by emergency vehicles.

Subsequent to the December meeting, it was decided by the three Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine community groups that the Brigade would lead the campaign representing the Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine communities (noting BMCC has continued to maintain Bowens Creek Road).

A third meeting on Monday 21 September at which progress on the various action items given to the community (now, via the Brigade), would be reported on.

These are: seeking the views of emergency services regarding their assessment of the value of an emergency vehicles access route; seeking views and support from Hawkesbury RF brigades and conducting research into the risk to life and property affected by the combination of the current one road in, one road out via Mt Wilson Rd and the inability to use Bowens Creek Rd and Bowens Creek Bridge and Mt Irvine Rd for emergency access directly between Mt Irvine and Bilpin.

In addressing these action items:

The MWMIRFB put a submission to the Blue Mountains Bush Fire Management Committee through its fire trail sub-committee in February 2015. This led to a response which notes the dangers of full public access along the route but also noted that if funding was available, support for the route for emergency vehicle access purposes would be considered. As this first response did not address all the issues raised, further work is ongoing with the BMBFMC to obtain a more definitive statement of support. The NSW Ambulance Service has conducted a risk assessment relating to patient, ambulance personnel and volunteers which strongly supports the restoration of the route for emergency vehicles. Senior personnel from the NSW Police Rescue Local Command have given informal support noting various instances in which the route would have been useful in the event of the unavailability of Mt Wilson Rd and aerial support. Work is ongoing to seek formal support and further statistical evidence. Work with Hawkesbury RF brigades has led to two strong letters of support from Mountain Lagoon and Kurrajong Heights Brigades. The captain of the Mountain Lagoon Brigade attended the meeting on 21 September to demonstrate support and the value of the route to the Hawkesbury. Work is ongoing to encourage other Hawkesbury brigades to publicly indicate their privately expressed support. To demonstrate the risks to life and property raised by

current access arrangements, observational studies and interviews have been conducted with a wide range of users of the area and residents. In summary, between garden visitors, nut farm gate customers, school and TAFE groups, canyoners, bushwalkers and others it is conservatively estimated that over 38,000 people visit Mount Wilson and Mount Irvine along Mt Wilson Rd each year, many of these visiting in peak times.

(Omitted from the oral report at the meeting was reference to a meeting with Trish Doyle MP, Member for Blue Mountains, in July 2015, at which Ms Doyle agreed to seek opportunities to raise this issue with state ministers. Ms Doyle has been provided with material since then and will continue to be informed and requested to assist.)

#### **Update after meeting on 21 September 2015**

Elizabeth Montano and MWMIRFB Captain Beth Raines attended this meeting, again convened by Louise Markus MP. Deputy Mayor Chris Van der Kley and Councillor Don McGregor of BMCC, Mayor Kim Ford from HCC and Mountain Lagoon RF Brigade Captain Tim Bourke also attended.

The work done by the MWMIRFB since the December 2014 meeting, as reported on at the MWPA AGM, was discussed (extensive supporting material having been previously distributed to all attendees). Tim Bourke spoke to the significance of the route for Hawkesbury brigades and communities for both firefighting and hazard reduction. The high degree of relevance of this project in the Strategic Partnership between the two Councils and Penrith Council was again noted.

No significant work had been undertaken by BMCC and HCC to further the agreement reached at the December 2014 meeting to work towards a joint bid for funding. This was disappointing, particularly as several contacts had been made with both Councils in the months leading up to the September meeting seeking advice on progress and providing further material to assist the bid.

The meeting discussed how this can be progressed including working further with the bush fire management committees of both the Blue Mountains and the Hawkesbury and other emergency services to determine how the need for emergency vehicle access can best be met. At this stage and in light of potential funding sources, both councils indicated that the most likely approach they will support is for the route to be made a fire trail. Brigade representatives emphasized that to ensure community needs were met, that any solution would have to include tied funding to ensure that restoration work was done to allow vehicular access. Ms Markus repeated her encouragement to the two Councils to work together, her commitment to work with State and Federal governments for funding sources and to continue lobbying efforts.

To continue our work, the MWMIRFB will maintain its joint efforts with Hawkesbury brigades to support them to make a submission to the Hawkesbury Blue Mountains Bush Fire Management Committee and Hawkesbury Rural Fire District. We will also continue our work with NSW Ambulance and NSW Police Rescue. We are in ongoing discussions with the Blue Mountains Bush Fire Management Committee to get greater clarity on its position. Deputy Mayor Van der Kley is Chair of that Committee. He found our advice at the September meeting very helpful in determining how that committee can take a more definitive position. We will also seek lobbying support from the various visitor groups we identified during our survey.

No date has been set for the next meeting with Louise Markus, BMCC and HCC.

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