

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING MOUNT WILSON PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

**Held on Saturday, 9th March, 2013
in the Mount Wilson Village Hall, The Avenue, Mount Wilson.**

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

The meeting opened at 5.35 p.m. when the Chairman welcomed everyone and thanked the following people: The committee of the Mount Wilson Progress Association, the volunteer First Responders and members of the RFS, our locally based contractors Alan Gunn, Peter Raines and Jess Dellbridge, and Lithgow based Micah Fink.

The Chairman also noted the sad passing of Lynne Whan of Nooroo Cottage, Church Lane at home on February the 20th. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Lynne's husband, Dr Neville Whan and her family.

2. ATTENDANCE

Committee: Richard Beattie (President), Alison Halliday (Vice President), Libby Raines (Treasurer), Ted Griffin, Brian Abrahams and Kim Gow (minutes)

Other Members: Judy Tribe, Loretta Beattie, Mary Reynolds, Tim Gow, Deborah Griffin, Robin and John Leonard, Philip Beeby, Wendy Holland, Beverley and Graham Thompson, Mary and John Holt, Nancy Fox, Bruce Arnold, Susie Hope, Owen Haviland,

Visitor: Mark Bancroft (Mt Irvine Progress Association President)

Apologies: Cr. Michael Begg, Ron and Moira Green, Martin Barge and Anne DeSalis, Brian Carrigan (MtIPA), Graham Tribe, Alex Halliday, Jane and George Mayne, Linda, Peter and Beth Raines, Milba Kirk, Helen and Barry Freeman, Robert Chesney,

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

Libby Raines presented the following report:

Mount Wilson Progress Association Inc.

Statement of Accounts 1-7-12 to 31-1-2013

Working Account

Receipts:-

B.M.C.C. - maintenance	5,883.69
Membership	1,480.00
Booklets – The Story of Mount Wilson	55.00
Website - Repayments for Advertising	600.00
A.T.O - GST Refunds	1,043.00
Rabbait	33.00

Donations	220.00
Interest	<u>346.39</u>
Total Receipts:-	<u>\$9,661.08</u>

Expenditure:-

Alan Gunn	Maintenance of the reserves		11,198.00
Peter Raines	Walking Tracks and	} \$14, 118.00	1,840.00
Micah Fink	Road sides		1,080.00
Bruce McLintock	– Painting of the Flagpole		200.00
Finsure Insurance			1,450.00
C.W. Print	- Copying, Phone books and newsletters		757.20
A.T.O.- GST			695.00
Department of Fair Trading	- annual fee		51.00
Website			367.00
National Trust	– for advertising in Brochure		200.00
Service at War Memorial	11.11.12		200.00
Secretary	- stamps, office supplies		121.80
Survey Monkey	– to help with Survey		228.00
Bank Fees			<u>89.50</u>
Total Expenditure			<u>\$18,447.50</u>

Total receipts	9,661.08
- Total expenditure	18,447.50
=	8,816.42
+ Carried forward	<u>11,258.54</u>
	<u>\$2,442.12</u>

Bank Balance 1/2/2013 \$2,442.12

Fixed Term Deposits \$18,000.00

Money held for membership: \$920.00

Weed control: \$481.00

It was moved by Mary Reynolds, seconded Susie Hope that the report be approved. It was approved.

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

COMMITTEE MATTERS

Phone book

A new Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine Phone Book was produced in November by Graham Tribe working on the website information and creating the new format for the publication while Moira Green kept changes up to date and arranged the printing and distribution

Publicity

The Mount Wilson Village Map and Visitor Information brochure has been updated and reprinted. It lists the gardens open for inspection, accommodation, parks and reserves, and other local highlights. The brochure will also be published on the Mt Wilson/Mt Irvine website.

Other recent publicity about Mt Wilson has included a reference in *A Garden Trail – Blue Mountains* flyer, and articles in December and February in *The Weekend Australian* reported on the wonderful gardens of Withycombe and Merry Garth. There was also an article on Withycombe in *Australian House and Garden*.

Keeping Mount Wilson Looking Good

With limited resources, a lot of work is done throughout the year maintaining the public areas of Mt Wilson. Each year the Blue Mountains City Council provides some funds that the Progress Association spends as agent for the Council on the maintenance of the street trees and verges, the reserves, walking tracks and the weekly task of putting out all the bins in the parks and reserves for the rubbish collection. It is never possible to do all the work that needs to be done. Examples of work completed in the last six months include clearing the large arc walking track/firebreak at the back of Cathedral Reserve, and clearing the area about the War Memorial, replenishing the white gravel, planting new rosemary and painting the flag pole.

Bazmark/ The Great Gatsby Cleanup

The restoration of areas throughout Mt Wilson affected by multiple visits of the crews involved in 2011 and 2012 filming the Great Gatsby has been a major task. It was the regular disruption to filming caused by very heavy rain over months that affected roadsides, Cathedral Reserve and Silva Plana.

Most of the recovery work is complete but there are still some of the log vehicle barriers to be moved into the Avenue when equipment is available. The Council has to replace the Armco barrier torn out on the zig zag and some work remains to be done on Silva Plana. The sports ground recovery was the biggest task. The Progress Association contributed \$5,000, the amount of a donation by the film production company to the Association, to significantly improve the surface level and drainage with a 7 metre-wide swale on the far side. The grass that has been sown on the bare field is being allowed to grow and self seed before being cut.

Signage Restoration

A painter has been commissioned to clean, preserve and repaint all the wooden signs in need of attention throughout the village when dry weather allows. This will include the big signs at the bottom of the zig zag and Silva Plana as well as the many smaller ones.

The Clean Up Australia Day activities planned for last Sunday unfortunately had to be cancelled because of bad weather. Nevertheless, the rubbish skip was still filled to capacity.

Rabbits

There have been reports of rabbits in Mt Wilson Gardens in recent months. George Mayne keeps a stock of Rabbait that is available for purchase.

Foxes and large wild cats have also been seen. However there are not many wallabies around these days.

BMCC & OTHER AUTHORITY MATTERS

Liaising with the Council and other authorities and getting work done in Mt. Wilson is a major ongoing and often frustrating task for the progress Association. The major problem is that the Council does not have the financial resources needed to do much of the work it recognises needs to be done. But some work does get done and jobs do get on Council's lists, sometimes for months and years.

A recent example of good work is the roadside vegetation trimming, gutter clearing and grading on Mt Irvine Road between Cathedral Reserve and Mt Irvine. The careful hand trimming of ferns leaving the fronds facing away from the road has been an excellent job. A huge volume of cuttings and soil from the gutters and road sides has been piled near the top of Bowen's Creek Road. The crew doing that work has also been grading Bowen's Creek Road but most unfortunately during the recent heavy rain the road has been badly damaged by water and made impassable again. The Bowen's Creek Bridge has also been badly damaged and closed to all vehicle and pedestrian movements. (Some dramatic photos of the bridge were shown)

After a landslide below Wynstay there will be major work to do to build a gabion rock wall to support the Anniversary Walk.

The new roof on the Village Hall last year came out of Council's maintenance budget following long pursued lobbying by the Hall Committee.

There has been recognition by Council of the need for a management plan for the eventual replacement of the failing elms in the Avenue. A most professional arborist's report was commissioned by Council. The project is to be considered for inclusion in Council's capital works program.

Road reconstruction and sealing, especially of Farrer Road west, is unlikely to get Council's attention before unsealed roads in the lower mountains are done and the Springwood depot is closed in a few years' time. We have an assurance from our new councillor Michael Begg, who knows Mount Wilson well, that he will lobby hard for us on this issue when money is being allocated for road work in the upper mountains.

Outstanding work for Council

Current requests by the MWPA for work to be done by council include:

The Five Mile – (1) Repaint the faded white lines. (Council's response 1/2/13 – lines assessed "currently OK" and will be monitored for 2013/14 line marking program); (2) clear vegetation obscuring roadside markers - damaged and missing markers will be replaced the next time the verges and vegetation around the markers is slashed. (The original proposal was to spray around the markers).

Replace Armco barrier on zig zag. – (Council’s response – 1/2/13 – minimal safety risk, guard will be replaced in due course). Alison is following this up as the damage is unsightly and the cost should be coming from the Bazmark deposit.

Install asphalt gutter outside the Village Hall - (Council response 1/2/13 – resources currently unavailable – will keep listed for action.)

Other site specific work requested but remaining on Council’s to do list includes dirt road and road edge washaways to be graded, gutter clearing, and securing with a gate the council dump area at the bottom of the zig zag.

The Village Hall Stage two development will be addressed in General Business by Judy Tribe.

Community questionnaire and submission

Each four years following local government elections councils are required to update their plans. The Mt Wilson community contributed in November and December with the completion of a 26 question survey on views and information on local issues. There was a very high response rate of 66 per cent – 80 of the 120 questionnaires distributed. Thank you to everyone who helped with the survey, especially Tim Gow who managed the IT aspects of the work. The results were input for the progress Association’s submission, *A Vision for Mount Wilson – 2012-2025* as our contribution to Council’s Community Strategic Plan: Sustainable Blue Mountains 2025. The submission, which includes the results of the community survey, is published on the website. There was warm appreciation from Council staff for the submission.

The Association Committee is currently evaluating the submission’s recommendations for initiatives and will request meetings with council staff and councillors to advocate for work to be done on the maintenance and capital improvements required in Mt Wilson.

Endeavour Energy

Power outages during bad weather and power shutdowns for maintenance work have been fairly frequent during the past six months. The good news with Endeavour is that the golden elms on Mt Wilson Road were much more carefully trimmed during their most recent haircut than had been the case previously. The bad news is that the latest advice from Endeavour suggests bundled electrical cables will not be installed in the area of the golden elms in order to further minimise the way the trees are pruned.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

Fine sunny weather on 11 November 2012 saw a good turnout at the improved grounds at the War Memorial and later at the Village Hall to remember those who served and died in war in the defence of Australia. The event was organised by Brian Abrahams, Ron Green conducted the service and Alison Halliday gave a talk on two of the men commemorated on the memorial, Tom Kirk and Tom Scrivener.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

The annual Mt Wilson Progress Association and Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Rural Fire Brigade Christmas party was brought forward a week last year to 24 November. The earlier date to kick off the party season worked well with more people able to attend than in some recent years and everyone seemed to have a thoroughly good time. The party this year will be held on Saturday 30th November 2013.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine Community Website and *The Mounts*, the community newsletter of Mt Wilson and Mt Irvine are regularly praised for their comprehensiveness, depth of information and up-to-date standards. There are few small communities that enjoy such excellent local information sources. Many people contribute input to the site and the newsletter but neither would be the success they are without the diligent regular ongoing work of Graham Tribe and Tim Gow.

UPGRADING THE VILLAGE HALL

A huge amount of effort has been put in over many years by the small team on the Village Hall Committee to get the Hall upgraded to a contemporary standard. Council will have no other funds to contribute. There may not be much time to retain the Council's current allocation for the building. Donations will be very important.

To get the hall up to standard it will be tremendously helpful if the community can dig deep into our pockets to donate funds for the building.

This is the first time in a long time you are asked to make a substantial donation for the Mt Wilson community. The original construction of the hall was made possible by fund raising and generous donations from the village in the 1940s and 50s. Now the issue is urgent because of the possibility of losing the presently committed council funds.

It is up to us through our donations to make sure that the \$30,000 to \$40,000 in the council rates we have all paid stay here in Mt Wilson and we have a better hall to show for it.

Business Arising from the Report

4.1 The markers discussed in the Council's outstanding works are slowly being covered by vegetation and are impossible to see. It was suggested that we as a community do the spraying ourselves. Richard Beattie undertook to discuss with the committee the feasibility of doing so. He cautioned that we should not unilaterally do this work.

4.2 There have been a large number of road washaways due to the recent rain storms. There is a bad area on the left of The Avenue as you approach the Church. We are urged to be careful when driving along any road that has suffered damage.

4.3 Submission/Survey – We will aim to seek meetings with staff and councillors to discuss the findings.

4.4 There is continuing concern about the number of power outages recently and members feel that work done by Endeavour energy has slowed down recently. Contractors have, however been working last year replacing poles in Mt Irvine.

4.5 The tree behind the War Memorial is not looking good at the moment. The leaves at the top are very brown. We will watch this but it will be very sad if we lose it.

4.6 There is a concern that the contractors in the villages are not observing the speed limit. The police have noted that they have been prioritising hotspots and have not been able to come and set up a speed camera in Mt Wilson

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

Judy Tribe gave an update on the Village Hall. The Village Hall jottings accompany these minutes.

The very good news is that the Development Application for the Stage 2 Renovation of the Hall, the new toilet section, has been approved. The next step is to secure funding.

We currently have \$60,000 which is the amount that was not used for toilets in the campsite. This money will be held by Council but not indefinitely.

Council will also make a grant application for \$50, 000. This leaves a shortfall of \$50,000 which we will need to raise ourselves.

Fundraising suggestions were;

- Set up a Fundraising Committee
- Open Garden Day
- Request Donations. – If each household donated \$500 we will have enough.

Some families would be happy to donate more, and others, whatever they could manage.

It was decided that we should approach members of the community to make a donation to this worthy project

6. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The meeting closed at 6.40 p.m.

Signed as a true record

Richard Beattie.

President