

President's Report General Meeting 17th September 2020

The Covid pandemic has impacted almost every aspect of our lives, changing the way we think, the way we go about our daily lives, and how we travel.

The BCA has also been severely impacted. How we do business, provide services and entertainment to Bundanoon and environs.

We have lost most of our revenue required to operate, but this blow has been cushioned by a reduction in expenses. The Memorial Hall was closed, hirers cancelled events, Winterfest was cancelled, as was the Garden Ramble. We were effectively in lock-down, our business model had been turned on its head for 2020 and possibly beyond... in short this has been the worst 12 months in the history of the BCA.

But as they say "every cloud has a silver lining" and the 'down time' has provided us with an opportunity to accelerate our programme to establish new business practices, tidy up those that required attention, and improve the efficiency of our operations by integrating our financial functions into Xero.

Having said that, I must thank the current Committee and all the Subcommittee Convenors for their cooperation and the effort they have provided to bring about significant improvements to the workings of the BCA

The closure of the Memorial Hall resulted in the cancellation of the 2020 AGM. Last year's Executive and Committee Members remained in place, with the addition of a Secretary, in an acting role for this year – we will request confirmation of this by ordinary resolution during the course of September's General Meeting.

On the advice of the Dept of Fair Trading, we are permitted to defer this year's AGM until March 2021 and hold a combined 2020/2021 AGM. We propose to combine the 2020 AGM with 2021's.



Financial reporting requirements

Incorporated associations don't have to apply for time extensions to hold 2020 annual general meetings (AGMs) or submit annual summaries of financial affairs.

Associations may conduct their 2020 AGM when COVID-19 restrictions are lifted or present 2020 financial information to members at the 2021 AGM.

The Friends of Wingecarribee came into existence and the BCA was requested at short notice to endorse a letter written by them to The Hon Shelley Hancock, the NSW State Minister for Local Government. The letter was critical of the Wingecarribee Shire Council's performance and contained a number of demands, yet to be finalized. We were unable to establish what their objectives were, who was in their organization or its structure. Further, we were uncomfortable with their claim to becoming the 'voice' of the Southern Highlands. The matter was discussed thoroughly at our recent Committee Meeting, where it was unanimously agreed to withhold our endorsement until further clarity could be achieved.

What have we achieved.

- The new 'performance lights' were purchased with BCA funds and have been installed. These are state of the art, remotely controlled LED lights which provide far better control and more lighting options to all users.
- Emergency Services Advisory meeting was held in the Hall on 28th December, when an estimated 600 + attended. The talk given by the RFS, Fire and Rescue NSW and NSW Police provided some invaluable and practical information on what to do in the event of a fire.
- The following week, 4th January, Andy and Lyndell organised a further fire preparedness meeting. Senior members of the RFS and F&R NSW were on hand to answer all questions and provide further information. Buckets were made freely available to the residents to store extra water. Ironically this was the night the catastrophic fire hit Bundanoon.
- Fire Readiness Expo was held on 9th January. This brought together emergency services, welfare organisations, the Red Cross, and animal rescue groups. Advice on when to leave or defend your home along with discussions on dealing with the aftermath of a fire along with numerous queries were addressed.
- The Bundy Bushfire Bash Variety Show was arranged thanks to Josh and Dannielle Hewitt. It raised the unbelievable sum of \$20,050 for the fire-affected residents of Bundanoon and surrounding villages.
- A donation of \$5,000, instigated by Christine Rowell-Miller, the immediate past President, has been promised to the Bundanoon Garden Club in recognition of the part its members have played in the Garden Ramble over many years, and of 2020 being the 50th anniversary of the Garden Club.
- The BCA paid \$5,000 in instant cash grants to provide refreshments to Emergency Services Personnel and to buy feed fire-affected wildlife.
- The Wingecarribee Shire Council awarded a \$550 grant to purchase six 2-way radios. These will enable the stage manager to communicate with the team during performances. Thanks to Bruce Marshall for securing this grant.
- A state of the art Automatic Emergency Defibrillator has been located in the entrance of the Memorial Hall. AEDs are proven to save lives during those precious minutes until the First Responders from Fire and Rescue NSW arrive. Thanks to Andy Carnahan for his perseverance in negotiating the purchase and attachment of this AED.
- We are currently reviewing the sound system with a view to upgrading it to provide a clearer sound – watch this space.
- One of the unintended consequences of the Covid restrictions came to light when the Bundanoon coffee shops closed their sit-in areas and operated a 'take away service' only. This change placed an extra load on the rubbish bins provided and they became a great source of food and fun for the local bird population; the mess they left behind was unsightly. Ann Rocca responded to a call for help from Potters Pantry and liaised with WSC to resolve the issue, although Andy Carnahan's novel idea of bin lids with small holes deserves a mention for its simple ingenuity.

Finance Improvements

- The Treasurer, Peter Brown, has completed a significant amount of work to fully integrate the Subcommittees into Xero. This reduces the effort required to produce

accurate accounts and it allows the Subcommittees direct access to run their own accounts and print financial reports.

- We have purchased 2 Square/phone units which allow patrons to pay at the point of service by credit card. This not only provided improved services, but will play an important role in the new cashless society.
- We are establishing a 'BCA Credit Card' for use by the Subcommittees to assist with their purchases. This will avoid the use of their personal bank accounts or credit cards.
- Half yearly finance report, excluding the \$37k grant, shows a net loss for the first six months of \$7k approx. Given the current situation, this is an acceptable result. A full set of finance reports was included in web link supplied for the General Meeting.

Business Improvements

- We have instigated a new cloud-based filing system for the BCA. Currently, hard copies of documents are stored in multiple locations, thus making them hard to track down and easy to lose. The cloud-based filing system locates all document in a central place which will be easily accessible by any authorized member, from any location which has a phone or internet signal. Thanks to Andy Carnahan for championing this project.
- Controlled document system. Significant documents, such as our Constitution, Procedures, Finance Forms and Instruments of Delegation are confirmed as the current version and given an issue number, and then they are filed in the new system. This will ensure that everyone requiring a document or form will always have access to the current version.
- We registered the BCA as a NFP organization with Microsoft and were granted a free license worth up to \$1,000.
- After being closed for many weeks, the Memorial Hall was re-opened with a limit of 20 people. A recent clarification obtained from Services NSW has allowed us to increase the number to 50. We are cautious and will operate initially on 40 seated people plus an allowance for people required to run the event. We have completed our Covid-19 Safety Plan as required. We take the safety of our Members and Patrons very seriously.
- There has been a substantial increase in Committee activity as we conduct the modified BCA business and implement improvements. To accommodate this we have maintained a rigorous meeting schedule of face-to-face or Zoom meetings. To expedite business the Committee have adopted an online voting system for routine or minor items. This system works well, saving time and effort. The results of these routine items are entered in the Minutes of the next Committee Meeting.
- Having severe restrictions on social gatherings, the importance of maintaining contact with our Members was never so important as now. To help overcome this we have increased the number of Newsletters, Committee Updates and other notices to our Members.
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Sub Committees

- Melting Pot Theatre has run an on-line Crash Test Drama No 3 and is preparing for CTD No 4, which will be a blend of live audience and on-line. MPT ran a 'Poetry Slam' event in two parts. This was a first for Bundanoon – and certainly not the last.
- Winterfest was cancelled for this year; under their new Convenor, James Fulford-Talbot, they are planning a spectacular event for 2021. They have been successful in securing a Commonwealth Bank Bush Fire Recovery Grant of \$37k – well done, James!
- Arts Bundanoon has a new Convenor, Pamela Jane, who has taken the reins from Greg Slater. Greg and Neil have left Bundanoon to live in Tasmania. Good luck to you both!
- Under difficult circumstances, the JCG produced both Winter and Spring editions. Congratulations to Christine Janssen and her team for the production of two great issues. The BCA offered the JCG full financial support, should it be required, to ensure this valuable publication did not fall victim to the dreaded Covid virus. Local businesses recognised the value of the JCG and added their support to the success of the last two editions, so our thanks are extended to include them as well.
- Lyn Morehen has completed a major upgrade to the Welcome Pack information sheets with the help of Andy Carnahan and Lyndell Giuliano, and they are now presented as a printed and bound booklet. They look professional and must provide Lyn with a great deal of pride when welcoming new residents to the Village.
- There is a treat in store. Lyndell Giuliano is producing a spectacular calendar for 2021 in association with local artist, Sonja Bowden. They are in the final stages of preparing the calendar, which will definitely become a collectors item.