

Wye River Separation Creek Progress Association AGM

22 January 2017

President's report January 2017

2016 has been a year I don't think any of us here will ever forget. To say it's been difficult is putting it mildly. First of all the fire and the devastation it caused. Then the massive clean-up, the loss of so many of our beautiful trees, the battles with insurance companies, BAL ratings and retaining walls, and then the deluge, the landslips and the repeated closures of the Ocean Road. It hasn't been easy. Our environment has changed and we are having to adapt to that change, which presents challenges for us both as individuals and as a community. We are not alone in this, as other communities who have endured major bushfire and other natural disasters have reported similar sentiments of loss and dislocation. We are each responding in our own ways, but the primary focus of the Progress Association is still to protect and enhance those features that make the built and natural environments of our townships so special.

Our AGM last year was the first big community get together after the fire and since then there have been literally hundreds of gatherings big and small, official and unofficial here at Wye, in Melbourne and work groups meeting at Colac and Geelong. The amount of work that has been done and the support we have received has been quite phenomenal, as have been the commitment of volunteers and the passionate involvement of many members of the community. This will all be talked about at the forum following the official AGM, but I'd just like to acknowledge and celebrate the renewed sense of community, the offers of help given and received and the working together, and the new friendships made and old ones strengthened. It's been wonderful to be part of it

The Progress Association has had a busy year. One of our key roles has been to keep everyone informed about events and decision-making in our community, and our email list has had a thorough workout. We have sent out 48 communications to our members this year, thanks to the wonderful work of our tireless secretary Matt Jackman. We also work closely with the other community groups and some of our committee have been very active members of the initial Bushfire Recovery Group and now the Community Resilience Committee.

The committee has met 8 times during the year and we have actively and regularly engaged with COS, DELWP, EMV and the other agencies involved in bushfire recovery. We have kept a close eye on community infrastructure and are absolutely delighted to see the Riverwalk finally become a reality with unimpeded public access to the river bank. Thirty years of effort have finally paid off! I'd like to thank Minister Neville for her personal commitment to making it happen. If you haven't already been up there please take a stroll up through the Big 4 and have a look. The new playground and beach furniture are other terrific assets for the community to enjoy.

This year we look forward to the re-opening of Paddy's Path, and encourage the work of Paul Greene, the tourism group and others to create new walking tracks and more things to do in our townships.

There has been a lot of concern expressed throughout the community about the extent of tree removal on both public and private land and the implications for landslip risk. We have shared those concerns and look forward to working with the Shire to maintain the trees at Harington Park and other land they own. We are also really keen to move forward to a period of revegetation, weed control and environmental restoration. We'll be hearing more from the CRC and the Council about the plans for this at the forum following this meeting.

I would like to say thank you to our hard working committee, in particular our Vice President Ian Angus for his sage advice and our Secretary Matt Jackman for the amazing amount of work he has put in,

keeping us in order, maintaining our website and sending out the emails. And the rest of you for your many and varied contributions, and the work you do for the benefit of our community.

I'd also like to say thanks to our members for supporting us and to encourage anyone here who is not a member to join. The Progress Association has been providing a voice for this community for more than 40 years and we're here for the long haul. But we are only as strong as our membership base and in this case it really is true the more the merrier. So please see John and Toni if you would like to sign up. And please get in touch with us during the year if there are issues of concern, good or bad.

Thank you for coming and I look forward to working and playing with you all this year.

Juliet Le Feuvre

President, WRSCPA

Questions from the floor

Paddy's Path will be re-opened in a few months by VicRoads

Community Forum

Deb Hocking - Chairperson:

Welcome. Respectful, robust discussions and would like to see continue

Wye CFA Captain – Roy Moriarty

Busy year ahead, 4 new recruits, 2 ready now, 5 new applicants

3 new vehicles last year, breathing apparatus training over 8 week course

New meeting and training room at rear CFA, \$100K grant plus fundraising, to be ready by 2017 Christmas

Generous and hard working efforts of fundraising purchased 2 vehicles & extension for meeting room to be available for community use when SLSC unavailable.

Working on setting up Asset Protection Zone for Kennett River, similar to Wye.

New homes being built will provide water points for fire fighting is a plus.

Acknowledged efforts of all local community groups over the last 12 months

CFA Auxiliary – Christine Shaw

Acknowledge incredible work of volunteers for fundraising, & donations, including storage shipping container

CFA Fete beneficial for whole community and well-being, total raised Easter \$27,300, Summer \$20,000, which will go towards extension

In 2009 developed a list of 30 Community Volunteers, home-grown initiative that proved powerful tool in evacuating towns last Christmas. Presented this model at Emergency Management Conference, which generated interest all over Vic and Australia. Personally a great model and fantastic local initiative.

Community Resilience Committee - Di Sisely

Minister Neville apology, damaged arm and incident in Melbourne CBD

Positive stories and significant progress on the ground with year of construction and more to come.

Weed control and fire initiatives. Looking forward to year ahead.

CRC meet on a weekly basis, seeking comments on Draft Renewal Plan. Casual responses so far, written submission from John, open for public comment until 3 Feb. Summary of responses so far split into four main areas being;

1. Well-being – On-going support needed for those that lost homes, continuation of rate relief has been asked, improved wi-fi, broadband / mobile access (Sarah Henderson responded with 3 new local towers going to tender at Kennett, Separation Creek & South Lorne)
2. Planning Building and Fire – Enforce maintenance of vacant land, no designated safe place from fire, suggest storing water in hills, fire-preparedness walk and talk fire safety with neighbours – Peter Ashton. Restoration of local roads and need for adequate turning circles, consideration of safe walking tracks when blocks come up for sale.

3. Fauna Flora and Weed Group – Managing weeds a priority, re-opening Harrington Park, better use of facilities in Harrington, demonstration indigenous garden, set up seed nursery of local trees. Low key structure for walk between Wye and Sep
4. Tourism Business – Timber cutters history, centre for woodcraft & wood art,

More detail on website. Will pool comments together, take to leadership group, finalise plan in March, and then approach authorities for funding priority items.

CRC Committee Evaluation – Invite community reps to join in future planning, include Kennett River, SLSC, CFA, PA. Will evolve, 6-7 community reps with desire for continued government agencies access.

Next 12 months – Major drainage, road reconstruction, more retaining walls, traffic management as homes re-build. COS will take over more from EMV, project based reps from DELWP, VicRoads & OCC.

Moving forward, in Sept 2017, review plan & progress of CRC performance. In December another community plan including Kennett River to be presented in draft for comment. Local community plans can be put into the larger COS wide plans.

Joanne Tyler – Fauna Flora & Weeds Group – Re-planting / vegetation restoration reliant on funding, Priority weeds of rag wart and blackberries, fire has given opportunity for weeds to prosper.

Paul Greene – Tourism Business – Developing walking trails up old railway lines, update signage and mapping of existing walks and new walks since fires, investigating extension to Jamison Ck from Sep, bigger picture to link Great Ocean Rd walk between Apollo Bay and Cumberland River, assistance with Sarah Henderson and Steve Bracks to seek funding.

Question – Stop the disappearance of pylons. Answer - Ports and Harbours to contact over responsibility

Question – Signage should include Aboriginal History. Answer – Agreed

Question – Sep signage is below guardrail now, useful to lift. Answer – Will contact VicRoads to do.

Ian Angus – Planning Building and Fire – No power in Iluka and Bass, PowerCor seeking consensus whether to stick to cheaper poles and wires, or place underground at a cost. Answer required in a few weeks.

Christine Shaw – Wellbeing - #Wye I Love Facebook best photo, great initiative. Het from Lorne Hospital available to assist. Harrington and Bass Ave in Sep had some Welcome Back meals and street gatherings. New friendships formed and existing ones strengthened because of the fires.

Wye SLSC – Deb Hocking

Since fires - great support from many, tradies, Andrew Hack, Peter Latham stepping up etc. Improvements made with First Aid Room built from \$25k donation from Lorne Op Shop. CFA Funding improved the kitchen, Federal Grant achieved the flooring, Big 4 continues to sponsor the nippers, generous Rapid Labels donation, Hamlan Homes, \$2k from New Years Day tin raffle.

Core Business of SLSC for safety in water appears more swimming between the flags this year.

Since fires, SLSC are the heart of a community, non-exclusive important valuable asset, de facto town hall. Post on Facebook this week where a former member helped someone in need in Melbourne tragedy using skills learnt at the Wye SLSC.

Estuary Watch – Yvonne Sheppard

Operating since Oct 2012, meet 1st and 3rd Sunday each month. Good database has been gathered, uploaded on CCMA website. Big rains in Sep 2016 gave beneficial flushing of lagoons, significantly different river records from previous 12 months. Citizens scientists for the community.

Water Watch – Yvonne Sheppard

Record at 2 sites near bridge and at the big tree upstream of Big4. Test for acidity, turbidity and phosphate levels. Volunteers are audited twice per year, have passed the tests so all good.

Monitor macro-invertebrates with types found indicating health of river depending on tolerances of species to pollution. Water is of quite good quality, beware of snakes, pick up any rubbish you see, stop wastewater sullage discharging into river.

Question – Do Water watch conduct E-Coli Tests? Answer – No EPA do this, results available on their website.

Otway Coast Tourism – Paul Greene

Secured \$160k for local tourism. Post on Wye Sep Connect

Community Garden – Peter Latham

New members most welcome, meet 11am Wednesday's.

Question – Poem on Pat Harrington – Copies at door for those interested.

Member for Corangamite - Sarah Henderson MP

Update on Activities:

NDDR Funding – \$8.9m Emergency Clean-up, Retaining Walls. EMV delivering, COS manage

\$1.15m Category D Funding hard to get for retaining walls and further road stabilisation.

\$4.5m from State for road funding.

Great Ocean Road program – Rex Brown great agitator that helped secure further \$25m with matching from State, which brings total of \$100m to improve road, plus \$53m for landslips.

Completed re-build of Separation and Boggaley Creek bridges.

There will be a Great Ocean Road Summit for the next phase of tourism to be held in mid-Feb to look at car parks, picnic tables, \$ for tourism etc. Keen to sign off on communities desire before releasing and announcements.

18 new telecommunication towers across Corangamite to go ahead, including 3 in South Lorne, Separation Creek, and Kennett River.

NBN – Still waiting on advice on system type. Fixed wireless preferred over satellite. Here to fight for the best outcome for this region.

\$25k for Kennett River community hub, \$7k for Wye SLSC Floor.

Defending home owners over AAMI insurance policy over full re-build. 1 outstanding claim from Wye still to be resolved. Anyone else with insurance issues please contact Sarah Henderson to fight for you.

\$25m Jobs Fund for Corangamite and Corio electorates. John Gorman -President of Apollo Bay Chamber of Commerce has nominated.

Acknowledge Victorian CFA volunteers who helped change the Fair Work Act to protect their role in the community.

Questions

NBN access for other providers? Answer - Telstra has best regional network, ACCC looking at enabling other providers to access all towers, difficult fight.

Speed Issue on mobiles, more people using it, the slower it gets. Answer – Lorne and Apollo Bay have 4G upgrades, Invested \$120m to drive Telco's, importance in community engagement, Fight with Telstra on-going.

When is Great Ocean Road Summit? Answer Sunday 19th Feb in Lorne. \$15m still to spend of initial \$50m upgrade on Great Ocean Road.

Is re-vegetation funding available? Answer \$1.15m for retaining walls and associated site works to stabilise the hills could be used. \$40m Jobs Investment Funds, hard to get smaller funding items from Federal level.

\$330m building better infrastructure fund for jobs creating infrastructure and community investment stream. Matching \$ are not required. Only for Regional Australia, including Geelong. Closes 31 March, COS can assist applications with letter of support.

Colac Otway Shire – Mayor Chris Potter

New to council, new mayor

Acknowledge Cr Stephen Hart, and Sue Wilkinson CEO

Looking forward to \$ spend on Great Ocean Road, and pleasure to see positive approach and commitment of volunteers for the re-settlement of this community.

Wants to represent the whole Shire, many new councillors elected, committed to a new level of community engagement. Will be producing 6 high level strategic documents in 1st half 2017. Important to respond to Draft resettlement plan for Wye/Sep that can feed into COS plan, move forward together for everyone.

Colac Otway Shire – CEO Sue Wilkinson

New mayor, 4 new councillors, 3 returned. Huge Agenda for councillor inductions over 8 weeks, that included this area.

All Councils required to produce a 4 year plan, overarching strategic document, plus a health and well-being plan.

Need to feed local comments into Council's Community Plan, contribute via hardcopy, online or email direct to Sue. Reform on sustainability to meet needs of the community, fleshing out a sense of place.

Local developments – Retaining walls and hydromulching, appearance of interim black pipes for drainage and landslip issues, tenders in Feb for large drainage works throughout townships.

Tree planting in March, keep tree loss to a minimum on public land, plan for on-going maintenance in area required.

Development approvals – 20% of homes lost have permits to re-build. 40 applications currently in system to be approved.

Economic Development – Great initiative to get biggest bang for buck, increased focus since fires on importance on this area from various agencies.

I have been appointed to Great Ocean Road Tourism Board, Australia day celebrations in Apollo Bay on Thursday.

Community Intention survey starts this week seeking community views.

Drainage – Tenders for the design of drainage being called

Harrington Park – Normal maintenance, path at top not safe, on work plan to reinstate. Some trees in Harrington need to be removed for safety.

DELWP – John Givion

Priorities – Inland tracks opened and functional, but need more work since fires

Paddy's Path – VicRoads to finish further up-hill stabilisation, then restore the path in next few months

Assisting with Renewal Plan

Weed Control – manage initial infestations since fires

Working with COS on Planning and Building – what works and what doesn't, here for long haul

Keen to trial night bombing for fires with aim to incorporate into statewide policies which could leave a National legacy

Wye River Road opened to all traffic, further tree work in longer term. Dollar Track still closed.

VicRoads – Not present

Otway Coast Committee – CEO Anthony Alfirenko

Appreciative of agency support since fires

Part of Weeds Consultative Committee

Stabilising bank at rear of caravan park

Great initiative of tourism support from Federal Government Great Ocean Road forum

Need infrastructure to support high visitor numbers

Otway Coast Committee – President Andrew Buchannon

Many broader initiatives with CRC and community support

Paddy's path very important to restore

Thankyou to DELWP staff for commitment to this area

Question – Toilet on foreshore is disgusting. Answer - \$ needed for upgrade

Question – Improved signs needed to toilets for larger groups / buses

Answer – Sarah Henderson – Need applications for \$ upgrades at Federal level, need a plan to bring to the table. Wants a 'Toilet Block Revolution' along Great Ocean Road.

Question - Need for one body to coordinate the upgrade. No funding for stand alone toilet blocks, lack of equity in decision making. Answer Sarah Henderson - Opportunity in Building Better Regions funding opportunity.

Regional Managers Forum – assist in decisions over the last 2 years. Additional re-current funding is needed to maintain any new infrastructure.

Andrew Hack – Appreciate support from Health Foundation with a pool of \$ separate to the government from marathon given \$80-90k back to community overall. \$4k to Wye CFA and \$4k to Wye SLSC.

Meeting Closure – Deb Hocking

Thankyou for coming

Need to continue to support others.

Should not forget permanent residents who will be living through continual construction noise and disruption for quite some time each and every day.

Community BBQ followed

Provided by COS – Thankyou.