



We would like to extend a welcome to Katoomba residents and business people who would like to come along and participate in future meetings or as a way of keeping in touch with recent issues by receiving a copy of the monthly minutes.

For more information, please contact Vanessa Crump at info@katoombachamber.com.

Annual Subscription fees for membership of the Katoomba Chamber of Commerce & Community are \$250 for landlords; \$100 for companies; \$50 for sole traders; and \$10 for individual community members.

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www.katoombachamber.com CittaSlow Katoomba Blue Mountains www.cittaslow.org.au

NEXT MEETING – Thursday 10th July 2014

Ordinary Meeting opened at 6.15 pm, at The Library, Carrington Hotel, Katoomba.

1. Attendance and Apologies

Present: 12th June 2014

Michael Brischetto (M_B); Don Bone (DB); Carole Box (CB); Harry Box (HB); Margaret Brown (MB); Ada Buttrose (AB); Belle Buttrose (BB); Larry Buttrose (LB); Steve Coleman (SC); Tom Colless (TC); Jean Cowley (JC); Anton Curnow (AC); Chris Davidson (CD); Maxi Davidson (MD); Lui Friscioni (LF); Paul Innes (PI); Mark Jarvis (MJ); Michael Joy (M_J); Bob Kemnitz (BK); Christine Killinger (CK); Patricia Lane-Gonzalez (PLG); Jenny McLaughlin (JM); Paul McLaughlin (PM); Stephen Measday (SM); Tiriela Mora (TM); Gren Olsen (GO); John Richards (JR); Melissa Rosevear (MR); Inspector Peter Scheinflug (IPS); Pam Seaborn (PS); John L Simpson (JLS); Bill Swan (WS); James Tredinnick (JT); Maree Wood (MNW).

Apologies: Ian Bathgate; Vanessa Crump; Anne Elliott; Bruce Ferrier; Robyn McAdam.

2. Minutes from the ordinary meeting April 12th 2014

Proposed to accept: BK, seconded, AC.

3. Correspondence - MJ

1. The Chamber sent a letter of support to the Katoomba Marketplace Development. We received a good response from Catherine Maddox, Regional Development Manager of Woolworths/Masters. They want to become members of KCCC and she is to be the point of contact going forward.

2. Letter of support from Gai Horrocks, re the Anzac Memorial Project. She will purchase a plaque.

3. Letter of support from a local resident Lynton Phillips, re the Anzac Memorial Project.

MJ: Lurline St is a bit lacklustre and needs to be made to look better. A deadline of April 2015 is appropriate. We have got quotes for trees and plaques. Best tree is the flowering cherry. This project has the support of BM Tourism but not Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC).

PLG: This project requires significant engineering partly due to subterranean cables, and \$7,000 is not enough to cover the job. BMCC will end up with the ongoing asset maintenance cost. Such a project requires signoff from Councillors and there was too short notice for this meeting. However, the Council wants to work with the community.

PI: Perhaps we could ask businesses to sponsor a soldier who used to work for that business?

MJ: Ideally the project will fund itself as the local businesses and community get on board.

MNW: Wrote to our federal member of parliament Louise Markus about this project two months ago. She replied that

the Green Army could get involved.

MJ: We have a constant problem that the entrance to Katoomba is unsightly. This is frustrating and annoying, as the Three Sisters is the most visited attraction in NSW outside of Sydney.

MJ: Traffic management costs the Winter Magic Festival \$47,000, so needs support from the BMCC.

M_B: The traffic management cost blowout is because the RMS requires qualified crowd control staff, so the RMS who usually help the WMF aren't capable. There are two types of road closures: special event; and emergency. The RFS are qualified to do the latter but not the former.

4. Treasurer's Report - Bill Swan

Expenditure since last meeting:

- Research into local history by Paul Innes: \$75.
- Contribution to BIZNET for challenging the Lawson DLEP: \$300.

Income since last meeting:

- Membership fees collected: \$170.
- Sale of shopping bags to retailers: \$720. Most of this amount is from Scenic World.
- Wines of the West Festival income: \$8,500. This is the bulk of the figure, but a little more is due soon.

Current bank balance \$17,250.84

Motion to accept the Treasurer's report: proposed by TC; seconded by SM; carried.

5. DLEP

MJ: The DLEP relating to the Lawson industrial area has too many restrictions, and so business and employment suffer. Of course there shouldn't be any high-rise development, but it's not an environmentally significant area so there needs to be some middle ground otherwise businesses will be driven away. Unfortunately a lot of people have to commute out of the mountains for employment.

6. KATOOMBA THEATRE COMPANY

MJ: There have been a lot of negative letters in the press. KTC is important to the town. We need to support Larry & Belle. The KTC are already running wonderful classes and I have never heard a coherent argument against having a theatre in Katoomba.

M_B: I am a director on the KTC Board and there is plenty of support from the business community. Most of the board didn't know each other before coming together so any suggestion of a self-centred clique is off the mark. At last month's BMCC meeting there were 14 expressions of interest in the hall: one to design and construct; and 13 to use it. If KTC manage the bookings they will not use it more than 25% of the time for themselves, so there will always be at least 75% of the availability for the community.

M_B then passed around drawings of the proposed theatre.

M_B: The hall will only ever be a small theatre due to space limitations. There is a minimum of 145 seats and a maximum of 200 seats when putting on productions. If the hall is hosting lectures or conferences it could house up to 240 seats. Thus the KTC will not be going after big productions as the largest performance space is 100 sq.m. There will be plenty of storage space, and professional equipment such as lighting will be available for all as long as it's managed by

professionals.

TC: What deadlines do you have?

M_B: None yet. The old library is available as a community hall right now for the next 6 to 9 months. We would like to find a way so that there is no cost to council – perhaps getting government grants. Or maybe crowd funding?

LB: The amount needed is \$250,000 to \$300,000, which is no more than the cost of a small miner's cottage. Plus the theatre is an asset that will generate income. Other regional theatres have cost significantly more.

MD: Have there been any rentals yet?

LB: Two, but the facility is very limited at the moment. The KTC have to do readings at The Carrington because the theatre is not ready.

M_B: The WMF rented it for 4 hours @ \$32ph.

LB: The BMCC may conclude that there isn't enough demand, but that would not be correct.

AC: What is the next step?

M_B: BMCC staff are being very helpful, but the long-term strategy is yet to be finalised.

LB: The town will get a theatre for next to nothing. KTC will manage the facility for free until there is enough cash flow to employ someone.

BB then introduced Jimmy Tredinnick who is an actor, singer, dancer, and Theatresports champion. Recently he has been teaching and performing improv.

JT: Improv is a useful skill to learn. It's tons of fun. There are to be weekly drop-in classes at the Carrington Hotel starting Monday 30th June. There is a youth class from 5pm and an adult one from 7:30pm.

JT made flyers available to the meeting.

LB: The old library will make a fantastic theatre space, but the configuration can be changed so that other events can take place there.

7. WINTER MAGIC FESTIVAL

M_B: This year's festival will be held precisely on the winter solstice 21st June. There will be extra road closures beginning at 4am. Most roads will reopen at 6pm, although the top end of Katoomba St will reopen at 8pm. Waratah St from Lurline to the new supermarket will be closed. Last year feedback from taxis and buses regarding the road closures was positive.

Fireworks will be from the Carrington roof at 6pm.

Art Street has already started. Victor Peralta is co-ordinating.

All stalls have been sold.

The theme of this year's festival is "Phoenix Dreaming". The Carrington Hotel will be decorated in the style of Hogwarts from the Harry Potter series.

There is a new organising committee this year. Costs keep on rising, whereas revenue is stagnant. There will be donation buckets circulating on the day.

8. FILM

M_B: The BMEE set up a Blue Mountains industry cluster 16 months ago. They discovered that creative industries are very important to this area, with 8% of people who work in the mountains being in this sector.

One of the sub-components is the film and animation workshop. From 60 people they got three major projects straight away.

1. Tourism promotion.

2. Animation of Lotte Doll who is an 8-year old who is the opposite of Barbie.

3. Feature film: Cul-de-sac which is a film made by John Simpson and Michael Joy shot in the Blue Mountains. It tells the stories of men's issues using improvised actors and won various awards. The film was made on a community-based co-operative system. Cul-de-sac is a character-driven drama about aging. It is set in a fictitious area such as Leura/Katoomba and is about what happens when nothing is said. The actors know little in advance about what is ahead.

John Simpson was introduced to the meeting.

JS: NGO's have implored us to screen the film across the country, particularly in country towns. What then usually happens is that other organisations cluster around the event and get conversations started. We received a beautiful letter from Quentin Bryce, as well as hundreds of letters from women who connected with the content.

Films normally need millions of dollars before they can start, but we had a film up and running in four days. We use a co-op method which approaches people who may have an affinity with the film. The goal is not to make a profit. Everyone involved has a share in the project proportionate to the time they put in.

We received a good write-up in the Sydney Morning Herald.

We use local professionals, plus young people who can learn from the experienced ones. Most filming happens in Sydney. People can get involved in sponsorship but while cash is OK we prefer goods and services such as food, accommodation, office space, etc. At the moment we are looking for a small office from now until the end of October 2014. Local businesses will be called upon to see if they are interested.

Pre-production starts in six weeks. All actors are local.

9. POLICE REPORT

MJ: First a CCTV up-date. There are new cameras up and down Katoomba St with a new antenna on top of the Carrington Hotel. It has taken a long time but it is worth it. Other projects are waiting on the cameras. Not everyone is convinced of the efficacy of CCTV in crime prevention but the general consensus in Katoomba is that they have made a big difference. Plus they have been used to solve crimes. Also to prevent crime the KCCC supports Midnight Basketball, murals (within the bounds of good taste), and any initiative that gives youth an alternative.

MJ introduced crime prevention officer Melissa Rosevear and Inspector Peter Scheinflug from the local police.

MR: Effective business crime prevention requires everyone to work together. Blue Mountains Police (BMP) are on Facebook to: post upcoming events; track missing persons; report traffic collisions; prevent crime; provide crime summaries; request assistance in identifying people; etc. To find our Facebook page just search for "Blue Mountains Local Area Command".

MJ: Is theft from cars a major problem?

MR: It is trending down, but it happens in all towns.

IPS: Vehicles left unlocked are a big problem.

MR: I am available for a free security consultation. Business security is underpinned by safe principles:

1. Natural Surveillance. Don't cover more than 15% of the front windows with posters to enable people to see in and out clearly. Reinforce the glass so that it is shatter-resistant. Shelving should be no higher than chest-high to discourage shop-lifting.

2. Space Management. The street number should be displayed on the front of the premises plus the business name to assist police and emergency services. Signage should be visible at night from police car spotlights. Install security lights front and rear. Avoid leaving the rear door propped open which gives offenders another entry point. Educate staff. If it is a cash-based business consider an anchored-down safe. If there is an ATM choose the location wisely to avoid ram-raids.

3. Access Control. There should be adequate signage throughout the store. Clearly display the security measures as a deterrent, e.g. "These premises are alarmed". Install a duress facility, i.e. a holdup alarm. The sound of an alarm often scares off perpetrators before they can get anything.

4. Maintenance. Repair damage, e.g. broken windows, as soon as possible. Graffiti should be reported to the police then removed immediately. Taking a photograph is a good idea. Clear out rubbish. Don't leave ladders where they could be used for access. BMCC are trialling graffiti removal kits. They are hand-held devices for use on smooth surfaces. Shopkeepers can use them if they are a resident of the Blue Mountains.

Robberies are relatively infrequent in the Blue Mountains. Victims should do exactly as the robber says. Staff and customer safety is paramount. Do not initiate conversation with the robber. Remember a description and relate it to police.

MR passed around a BizSafe security information booklet and left some at the front. In it is a robbery form. It also explains how to deal with a phone threat.

MR: A citizen may arrest a shoplifter at the time of the offence but not later. For a theft from a shop to have occurred the offender must have passed the cash register on their way out of the shop. If the cash register is at the back of the shop the offender must have left the shop. When confronting the offender announce what you observed to have occurred. You can request to search them and most will comply. Reasonable force is allowable but do not get into a fight. If you have apprehended a suspect you can distract them with a form to fill out. Contact Katoomba Police on 02 4782 8199, or the Police Assistance Line on 131 444, or in an emergency dial 000.

Strategies to prevent shoplifting:

- Layout and design of the store.
- Place the counter near the front.
- Restrict access to behind the counter.
- Establish policies and procedures for the staff.
- Bag-searching is allowed. Most customers will comply.
- It is allowable to ask customers to leave their bags outside.
- You can deny entry to anyone. It is private property.
- Keep staff up-to-date with procedures.

- Staff should lock up their personal possessions.

TC: What is the police attitude to graffiti?

MR: Graffiti is a crime that should be reported to the local station.

MR made some fridge magnets and business cards available to the meeting.

PLG: Katoomba RSL will be conducting armed holdup training for \$90.

10. CLOSURE OF KATOOMBA RSPCA

MJ introduced Steve Coleman to the meeting.

MJ: RSPCA is a not-for-profit organisation that has many demands on their services. Bendigo Bank is a sponsor of the RSPCA, but no local vets are members.

SC: Thank-you to Mark Jarvis and to the chamber for the opportunity to address you. I feel like public enemy number one. In 1991 I started as an inspector for the RSPCA covering the Mt Druitt to Lithgow area. After regular promotions over the ensuing years I was appointed CEO of RSPCA NSW 7 years ago.

Animal welfare is up to its neck in emotion. Everyone has an opinion and all are respected. It's hard to be an expert in animal welfare as there is constant change. It is impossible to care for every animal across the state. Demand is going up and unfortunately costs are also going up. Historically the RSPCA has always been reactive, i.e. adding inspectors and sheltering capacity. However, if we double the existing resources it would still not be enough. We need to understand the "P" in RSPCA. "P" = "Prevention". We need to get preventative. Annual revenue is around \$41 million, coming equally from bequests, fees, and donations. I have decided to cap sheltering costs as the public will always lean on us. Animals are better in a home than a kennel.

What is the future of the RSPCA?

Five years ago I decided that we would not add any more inspectors, or more sheltering capacity, in an effort to invest more funding in proactive education. Any increase in capacity always gets filled up. The plan is to move from reactive strategies to preventative strategies which target hot spots, and also focus on human welfare. The next 5-year plan starts in July 2014. Charitable donations are plateauing as more organisations compete for the public's charity dollar. The operating budget is less.

The council pound has been run by the RSPCA and this has muddied the waters. Closures are always tough to sell to the community. The three lowest volume shelters are to be closed: Tweed Heads; Dubbo; and Katoomba.

Volunteers are always welcome. Thanks to Bob Kemnitz who volunteers his time to the RSPCA.

Animals are constantly moved across the state and we are constantly trying to improve euthanasia rates. We sell pets but not at a profit. Pet Barn is one of our outlets. Animals are de-sexed, micro-chipped, and vaccinated. Petitions and Facebook pages don't run shelters – cash does.

We get \$160,000 from our contract with the council. \$60 million is spent on NSW shelters annually. An alternative to shelters is volunteer foster carers who can care for animals in their own homes, i.e. they give time rather than money. Katoomba shelter is being closed down as the least worst option.

Credit to Silvia Ford who was one of the originators of the Katoomba shelter in 1979. However, times are different now. Regulatory responsibility is out of control.

\$12 million needs to be spent at the Yagoona facility. The State Government under Barry O'Farrell gave \$7.5 million.

What is the future for the RSPCA? I have studied similar overseas groups. We need to operate as a business, as we can't

rely on volunteers only. Shelters aren't the whole solution. People who rage about closures generally aren't the ones who make regular donations. Katoomba shelter will close in six months. Local councils, vets, and the RSPCA need to work together on targeted campaigns which have produced massive impacts. The RSPCA can't work on this alone. The aim of the RSPCA is to make themselves redundant.

MJ: I call upon local people to foster animals. Most residents in the mountains have a back yard so there is plenty of scope here.

11. GENERAL BUSINESS

(a) Tom Colless has done more sterling graffiti work.

(b) The Leura Harvest Festival was well received. Credit to Anne Elliott, Pam Seaborn, and the Leura Village Association.

Meeting closed 8.39 pm

Next meeting Thursday 10th July 6.15pm – Carrington Library - all welcome.

Signed by President, Mark Jarvis



Minutes by Treasurer, Bill Swan

Date 7/7/14