



WALKERVILLE
PROGRESS ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER MARCH 2010

NOTICE:

Annual General Meeting - Walkerville Hall

Easter Sunday: 4th April 2010

Time: 4.00pm

SUMMER 2010

Since the last newsletter nothing much has changed at Walkerville with regard to communications between ourselves and the foreshore committee [WFCM] who are responsible for most of the things that affect our experience at Walkerville

To their credit the WFCM have completed the playground upgrade in the camping ground, the public toilets at both “north and south “are in good order and well kept, the fire systems have been upgraded with dedicated fire tanks provided above the camping ground and at the hall. The carpark marshals did a great job in managing the traffic at Walkerville South for couple of weeks after new year.

Generally speaking a very happy time was had by most families over the holiday period with very good weather and average fishing.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Although there hasn't been much in the way of communication with the membership over the last 12 months there has nevertheless been a significant amount of letter writing to the DSE etc.regarding issues of representation and accountability. The end result of these letters [copies can be read on website....letters] is virtually zero. The DSE and the WFCM continue to ignore anything we say and have proved to be accountable to nobody, they send irrelevant generic replies to our letters, suggest meetings which never take place and generally treat the WPA with the same contempt as they do the Boat Club and probably anyone else who corresponds with themthey are either incredibly clever or incredibly stupid to behave the way they do in this day and age of accountability, transparency and process,..... only time will tell.

As the DSE appoint the WFCM and it is the foreshore activities we are primarily concerned with, then we have hit the proverbial “BRICK WALL”. The DSE don't give a damn about what we or anyone else outside their organization says. They will continue to appoint their local landholder friends to administer their unwritten policy of “do nothing”..or as close to this objective as you can, lest people start enjoying themselves too much at Walkerville and overwhelming the place.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Our” statement of purpose” says we were set up toprovide a forum for all users of Walkerville/promote modest improvement of amenities/promote transparency of process/reject inappropriate and insensitive development/reject inappropriate restrictions/hold responsible authorities to account/hold general meetings, and provide regular newsletters.

None of the objectives have changed and we do most of the things we set out to do, unfortunately we have most of our eggs in one basket....”the DSE”...who are not interested in anything we have to say. Where we haven’t complied over the last 12 months is in communicating with our membership via newsletters and holding enough meetings.....the primary reason for this shortcoming is that we aren’t getting anywhere, sending out continuous newsletters saying we are getting no response seemed like a time wasting exercise.

At this point in time we need to rethink who and what we are.....”YES”...we are a forum for all users of Walkerville, but we are “NOT here“ to initiate projects or physically involve ourselves in the implementation of these projects, as our membership is “broadly based’ and not local and we don’t have the financial resources.....our job is to promote and encourage positive improvements that the users want.

Our “rules of association” need to reflect who we are...it is not practical to hold several general meetings a year and post regular newsletters. This is an “electronic age” and the best for the WPA to communicate with its members is in an “electronic forum” Our current website is a “one way” instrument and we need to make it a two way instrument to better reflect a broader opinion on issues that are important to all sorts of people.

To this end the WPA website should become the focus of our activities by redesigning the website to incorporate feedback activity.....in other words a “WPA BLOGSITE” where anyone can post their comments [provided they are not libellious or offensive] thus providing an electronic forum on various issues.

MEMBERSHIP

The criteria for achieving positive outcomes in line with our objectives will not be measured by the number of members we have who are spread over a wide geographic area, but rather by the volume of inputs and comments of those who are interested in our objectives...the WPA therefore will have both MEMBERS and SUPPORTERS in the new model thereby encouraging debate without necessarily placing the burden of membership on people.

Both Greenpeace Australia and the Wilderness Society have very small memberships and wide “supporter bases” from which they generate community support .We need to recognize that there will be many people who do not wish to be members of our association but nevertheless have valid opinions about what’s good for Walkerville. We must therefore encourage the use of our electronic forum with the invitation of membership to these users but not a condition of use .

The cost of running an electronic organization is small and requirement for membership fees is nominal and more of a voluntary contribution.

AGM.....PROPOSED CHANGES TO RULES OF ASSOCIATION

At the AGM it is proposed that the following changes be made to the “RULES’ as to the number of meetings and newsletters ,and the manner in which notice is given as a result of the introduction of our interactive website.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

Clause [g] be altered to read “provide an AGM at Walkerville at Easter each year, plus any special meeting called by the committee as a result of membership input.

Also

The number of newsletters to read...”as required”.....as most debate will take place for anyone to look at on the interactive BLOGSITE

RULES OF ASSOCIATION

Clause 12...2...to read notes of meetings will be sent by electronic transmission to the members last known email address.

Clause 25..1...to read “the committee to meet as required at such place as the committee may determine.

Clause 26..1...to read.” electronic notice of all meetings will be sent to all members 10 days prior to meetings”

Clause26..2...the word “written “to be replaced with...”electronic”

CONCLUSION

After 4 years the WPA has been instrumental in promoting and bringing about some modest but worthwhile improvements at Walkerville which wouldn’t have been done otherwise. All our attempts to improve transparency and accountability at the DSE and the WFCM have been fruitless and they are just as unaccountable and contemptuous of public opinion as they have ever been.

Maybe a more active two way electronic forum on the WPA WEB/BLOGSITE will be a better way to go in the future. If nothing else it is a more viable and manageable association with minimal involvement for the management committee, they can respond to community comments rather than try and initiate them.

Its up to you at the agm on Easter Sunday to decide which way you want things to go, the new BLOGSITE won’t be up and running for a couple of months so in the meantime

communicate through my current email address: steve@thegrahamgroup.com.au
If you cant make the agm we would still appreciate your feedback.

Steve Graham

President WPA

Website: www.walkervilleprogress.org

Postal: PO Box 109, Tarwin Lower Victoria, 3190