

Reports to the 2004 AGM (2)

President's Report

In this report I propose to:

- * Recognise the most important ingredient in our achievements this year and most years. This has been the commitment, energy and foresight of a large number of likeable people, our active members.
- * Outline the most notable achievements over the last 12 months.
- * Draw your attention to some threats looming on the horizon.
- * Suggest how we move forward towards 2012.

THANKS

On behalf of the Management Committee, I want to express our sincere thanks to those people who have contributed so positively to our successes in the last twelve months. This especially includes the members of the Management Committee but also includes many active members including some very new members. Those who come highest to mind include Bob Armstrong, John Buckingham, Fiona Campbell, Bruce Davis, Mark Dent, Edwina Doe, John Gray, Chris Hallam, Sue Ingram, Cynthia Jones, Robyn Kemmis, Jeanette Knox, Tony Larkum, Neil Macindoe, David and Fay Mander Jones, Ted and Alison McKeown, Margaret Sheppard, Liz Simpson-Booker, Steve Stewart, Judy Vergison, Jan Wilson, Hilary Wise and Andrew Wood.

My warm personal thanks go to Liz, who has kept me on the straight and narrow with gentle but disciplined foresight.

Our comprehensive web site is our front window to the world. Continued congratulations go to Cynthia for the updates and marvellous results she has achieved.

I am also aware that Bobbie Burke, Judy Vergison, Roeloff Smilde and

Ian Edwards are but a few of those who are generous in their contributions of time and effort. Thanks are also due to many others.

Apart from the great things we are doing for our community we also continue to enjoy the personal interaction. Membership of our band reinforces our sense of community, keeps us in contact with some great people and enriches our lives in the melting pot of diverse thought and attitude. It continues to be fun!

A SNAPSHOT OF THE YEAR'S INITIATIVES, ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Communication with the City of Sydney

The most momentous events of the past year have been the City of Sydney elections and the inclusion of most of South Sydney in our local government area. Congratulations to Robyn on being elected as Councillor.

Our initiatives leading up to and during the election provided insights into what each candidate and group stood for and allowed us to take a much more informed view. I feel that the committee and members are happy with the new Lord Mayor and progress so far. This happiness can be attributed in part to the effort we put in to understanding the process and communicating well with most candidates and Councillors.

I acknowledge and thank Robyn for her continuing efforts in ensuring that our communication with Council is of such good quality.

The loss of Marcello Massi at the Glebe Neighbourhood Service Centre is unfortunate but we are confident that the new incumbent, Jenny Underwood will keep up the service quality.



Progress on the Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan has proved invaluable in communicating with the City, the Chamber of Commerce and other stakeholders. Our very important partners in Glebe are very much aligned to our objectives and actions, as set down in this document.

'Partnerships to a Vibrant Community' is available on our web site. It is an open document and we invite comment from anyone interested in the future of Glebe. We enthusiastically encourage involvement of members in our activities, events and meetings, all directed towards achieving the goals outlined in our plan.

Bays and Foreshores

This highly active subcommittee (convened by Mark with major contribution by Bob and John) continues the charge on our most topical and important strategic issue. This is the establishment of the foreshore walk and cycleway from Bicentennial Park to the Sydney Fish Markets. Also the fight against plans for obscene developments on the other side of Rozelle Bay is strategically very important.

On an optimistic note, plans for the walkway and cycleway are well advanced. The subcommittee has been instrumental in making us feel that our long-held dream of being able to walk right around the

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foreshores is realisable. We must nevertheless maintain the pressure to ensure it is actually built in the next 12 months or so.

The Revival of Glebe Point Road

I am excited about the work that Jan Wilson has undertaken as the new convenor addressing this issue. Jan has also been the mover and shaker for the creation of two initiatives in Glebe. They are:

The creation of the Glebe Point Road revitalisation project - this project (a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and several other community groups) is still in its early phases but has potential for some exciting results that will make a huge difference to Glebe. Jan and Sue Ingram are committing much energy to this task.

The creation and operation of FLAGG (Forest Lodge And Glebe Coordination Group) - Jan's energies have resulted in much better communication with and by pretty well all the known community groups in Glebe. Jan is to be congratulated on this achievement.

Heritage

David continues as our expert convenor of one of our most active subcommittees. Our fascinating visit to Lyndhurst was just one of the heritage events this year and I especially thank Liz for organising it. Our congratulations go to David for his continued enthusiasm and action.

Thirsty Thursdays

This initiative continues under Edwina's stewardship. On the first Thursday of every month all members inclined to do so meet for a drink and dinner, commencing at about 7pm. The purpose of these sessions is almost entirely social. The conversation seems to range across everything except the important matters at hand! They are currently being held at the Nag's Head. Well done, Edwina!

The Bulletin

The Bulletin continues as an informative, professionally edited and valuable publication to the people of Glebe and to us. It remains the key instrument of communication between the Management Committee and our members.

Edwina (Ed the Ed) continues a fantastic job as editor extraordinaire of the Bulletin and now has at least 13 exciting editions published. Ed, at the same time, is continually lifting the quality. We're deeply grateful, Edwina.

Treasury

Heart-felt thanks are due to Bruce, Andrew Wood and Alison for the successful management of our money accounts over the last 12 months. Bruce's departure overseas was ably covered by Andrew with Alison generously attending to the detail. We thank Alison warmly for taking up this tricky task and we hope we haven't stretched the friendship. I also understand that Fay has again contributed to this effort.

Other Project Team Achievements

Environment

Andrew continues to ably convene this subcommittee and pursue those issues according to our environmental policy. Earlier in the year, Fiona Campbell ably assisted Andrew, with both members well qualified for this task. We thank you both for your efforts and enthusiasm.

Planning

Neil continues to so ably manage our planning interests and issues. His monthly reports to the Management Committee are always full of objective information, interest and focus. Our responses under Neil's guidance continue to be comfortably consistent in their thrust and ideology.

Neil's achievements this year have included leadership in the resistance

to the Abbey development, the Slipways and boat storage in Rozelle Bay and our effective objection to numerous other undesirable developments. He has also effectively coordinated our communication and actions on planning issues with the City.

Membership

Robyn must be congratulated on the huge difference she has made in attracting a large number of very welcome new members to the Society.

It was only twelve months ago that our numbers were around 240 or less. They now stand at significantly more than 300. This extraordinary increase can largely be attributed to the hard work and focus that Robyn brought to bear on this issue.

Memberships are one of our most important sources of new blood, enthusiasm and greatly needed funds and we will continue to strive to increase our numbers.

With Robyn's elevation to the Council, we are now searching for a new membership convenor so if you are interested in people and would like to get involved, we would love to hear from you.

Traffic

Our traffic convenor, Chris Hallam, continues to keep us informed on and lead our resistance to the ever-increasing imposition of undesirable traffic in our streets and related issues. Chris's expertise on traffic issues is invaluable to us.

We also thank Steve Stewart for his contribution to traffic issues in 2003.

Infrastructure

Margaret continues to monitor and report on problems with our public facilities. She is in regular and close contact with the City. We thank her for her conscientious attention to detail and her regular reports.

Parks & Open Spaces

Ted has been leading our action and convening this subcommittee in the interest of our parks. Just one of this

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year's achievements was the well-managed consultative meeting with the City on the redesign of Foley Park.

John Buckingham's continued strong interest in changes at Bicentennial Park has also been very valuable.

Our thanks go to all involved on this subcommittee.

Glebe Society History

Jeanette continues to pursue our own history and we thank her for her continued interest in this task.

NEAR AND PRESENT DANGERS

Although we have achieved much in recent years, I draw your attention to some sleeping and waking tigers. I believe they are threats to our community towards which we must remain vigilant. We must continue to act pro-actively to minimise these dangers. The most threatening issues include:

Traffic Changes

Most of us are very uncomfortable about the outcome of the opening of the Cross City Tunnel yet our bureaucracies act as a sponge to our concerns. Nothing encouraging seems to come out. We must focus on this more over the next 12 months.

The Continued Decline of Glebe Point Road

The decline of commerce in GPR has changed from concerning to drastic. An unfortunate sign is also the encroachment of the bland multinational franchises onto our unique Victorian patch.

We will continue to draw our partners' attentions to this threat and work energetically for a new future for Glebe Point Road and its adjacent commercial streets.

Bays & Foreshores

The clouds of poor quality and inappropriate medium and long-term

development continue to hang over Blackwattle and Rozelle Bays. The chief danger here is that government may just ignore residents and acquiesce to the demands of commercial and industrial stakeholders. We need to continue to send strong signals and fight undesirable development every inch of the way.

Discomfort with Local Government Commitment

On the whole, the City is to be congratulated on the initiatives it has taken since the election of the new team. Continued attention to graffiti removal, rubbish collection, street cleanliness and maintenance is welcome.

However, one of our important tasks remains that of keeping the City on its toes and steadily continuing to increase its commitment to our objectives. A key concern in this regard is the apparent lack of progress on the Blackwattle Bay walkway and cycleway. At this time last year we thought it would have commenced construction by now! There is also no sign of the Broadway upgrade commencing and this could now be some way off.

Robyn's role in helping us manage the process of communicating with the City has been invaluable and we continue to hold our high expectations for very high levels of support for our projects and great achievements in our suburb.

THE WAY AHEAD

In my presentation last year, I asked this assembly 'What is your personal vision for Glebe in 2012?'

I continue to suggest that this is an important question for you to answer for yourself and for us. I believe that it is by you seeing clearly in your mind's eye what you want in eight years' time that we all have the greatest collective chance of achieving it. Please tell everyone about the way you see Glebe's future at every opportunity. By this means we will always have a strong pulling force on

our motivations and actions.

I also outlined some principles that I believe we should cherish. I underline them again here.

1. Everyone living or working in Glebe should share in our successes but also appreciate their own responsibility to help make them happen.
2. Let's have fun! Let's celebrate one of Sydney's most diverse communities as we go.
3. Power, for us, resides in networks, patience, determination, good communication and a sense of humour.
4. Let's understand, see more of and involve the young people of Glebe.
5. We must negotiate with governments with a blend of political savvy and expectations of the highest standards of service from their offices.
6. The small and vulnerable amongst us must be shielded from the big and powerful.
7. We must demand direct representation in open government and insist on good management and professionalism in local government.
8. Our world is precious. Environmentally friendly solutions are not negotiable.

These principles are distilled into our goals in our main strategy document.

I also ask another question:

Perhaps Glebe's most untapped resource is its artistic community. Can we do more to celebrate our artists, musicians and writers? Is this one of the keys to the revival of Glebe Point Road?

Let's continue to move forward together and create even more successes! Let's pull our partner organisations in close and strive with them so that we actually experience the pictures of Glebe in 2012 we see in our heads. It will be an exciting, rewarding and enjoyable ride!

- Andrew Craig

Infrastructure Defect Reporting

Action during the past year has included responding to a request for information to the Manager, Civil Engineering Services, concerning the status of the third stage to improve the streetscape in Glebe Point Road. It was noted that stages one and two had been completed, that the plan had been agreed to and it was understood to be fully funded. The reply stated, inter alia, that these upgrades were Leichhardt Council projects, and that the funding for the continuation of the upgrade was not transferred to the City of Sydney at the time of the relevant boundary change. Several major boulevard works are in the investigation and planning stage, and, in due course, the projects group will be considering Glebe Point Road improvements. Given that Council is planning for the provision of street furniture to be effective and to minimise clutter, I suggested that consideration be given to the use of slim-line litter bins, which would take up less room on the footpaths, and so allow more pedestrian space than the current round bins. This suggestion was rejected for various relevant reasons.

Specific requests regarding infrastructure defects have been met with prompt action, either, for example, in the form of a barrier to the unsafe, uneven half of the steps leading from Boyce Street to Wigram Street, and some repairs to the path, or a reply explaining why action is being deferred. Incidentally, the steps have not yet been repaired. Various sections of roadway and laneways have been resurfaced, as part of the City of Sydney's proactive program. In general, it seems that repairs to a small section of a footpath or roadway will be achieved in response to notification of that defect, and hence reporting such defects continues to be relevant. Resurfacing of a large section of a footpath and gutter requires a lot more hand work than does resurfacing of a road, as large machinery can be used for the latter. This explains why a laneway was resurfaced in less than

a day, and the footpath beside it, which will take approximately one week, has yet to be done.

- Margaret Sheppard

Glebe Point Road Revitalisation

When Glebe was annexed to the City of Sydney Council in 2003, there was a new opportunity to address many of the issues which different groups and agencies in Glebe had been attempting to work on in the past. In order to move from issues to actions that could be implemented, a community workshop was planned.

The Glebe Point Road Revitalisation Workshop was held on Saturday 8 November. The workshop resulted from a meeting between the Glebe Society and the Glebe Chamber of Commerce. The Workshop presented an opportunity to bring together the various groups that had worked on their specific issues. There was representation from the Department of Housing, Police, Glebe Youth Service, Chamber of Commerce, businesses, Community Action Groups, the Glebe Society, Metro Rail, the City of Sydney Lord Mayor, Council employees and residents. The aim was to share ideas and develop a priority for actions. Participants were asked to take responsibility for further action.

Four areas for strategic consideration were identified:

- * Urban design and space
- * People and safety
- * Culture and the arts
- * Traffic and transport.

These four areas constituted a strategy for making Glebe a vibrant and safe village. The actions were driven by the creative and commercial input by residents and business people.

With the amalgamation of councils that occurred in February 2004 and the subsequent election of the City of Sydney Council, there had to be

new focus to the project. The new council has a stated philosophy of 'a city of villages'. Glebe is already perceived as a 'village'. This is strongly reinforced by the Glebe Society's Strategic Plan 2003 and the actions resulting from the workshop support this philosophy.

In order to move forward and combine actions in a holistic approach, it was decided to work towards a cultural event that could involve the different groups in Glebe. Approaches were made to Council, via our resident councillor, Robyn Kemmis, in order to gain support for our project. This resulted in a meeting with Robert Domm, General Manager, Ann Hoban, Manager, Cultural and Community Affairs and Robyn Kemmis, whereby the GPR Revitalisation Project was given seed funding of \$5,000. A professional group, Play Consulting, has been contracted to work with the Glebe project team. They have excellent experience in creative and community events. They initiated and promoted *Esquisse* in Surry Hills last year, which has been a proven success, and which has continued to bring a return to the community of Surry Hills. To support ongoing action, a City of Sydney Community Grant Application has been submitted for consideration. Planning has commenced for Phase 1, a launch to take place later this year. The aim of the launch is to gain support of the business sector, community groups and residents in Glebe. In addition there will be strategic opportunities for fostering sponsorship for the next phase. This launch will then drive the cultural event, which will be for the people of Glebe and visitors.

The initiatives that have happened to date promise exciting times ahead for Glebe. There will be many opportunities for the people of Glebe to be involved.

- Jan Wilson

Disclaimer - Views expressed in this Bulletin are not necessarily those of The Glebe Society Inc.

