

Woodgate and District Residents Association Inc.
2025 Annual General Meeting

Presidents Report

Wow when I was putting this together I realised just what a big year this has been and the one ahead looks just as exciting.

Grants: Only one applied for last year.

- We were successful in obtaining a Federal Grant for \$1,000 for tools and a storage shed to aid the Volunteer Garden Group.

Membership Growth:

Membership continues to grow with another 19 new members in 2024. Membership cost a one time only fee of \$5.00 which means:

- members are covered under the WDRA's volunteers insurance when working on Association projects or activities
- Enables voting rights at Community Meetings
- A growth in membership reflects the health and viability of the Association within the community
- It assists with Grant Applications

Woodgate Community Connect: Our official FB Page.

- **New Administrator:** I would like to officially welcome and thank Lorraine Elsmore whose knowledge of FB has proven invaluable. Lorraine has taken the pressure off me as full time administrator and for that I am so grateful.
- **Growth:** Members have increased from 2.5k this time last year to 3.3k this year and interest remains high.

Volunteer Hours: A conservative estimate taking in meetings, administration by executive committee, projects and community volunteer support we would average annually in excess of 1800 volunteer hours.

Hall Rentals:

Once again the hall is proving vital to the community with bookings everyday of the week.

- The Woodgate Interactive Learning and Discovery Group continue to book the hall as regular users with a permanent booking for 3 Tuesdays per month and also run kids craft activity days throughout the school holidays which have proven popular with locals and visitors alike. Their skill in organising and running special events such as Tunes and Tucker, Mini Markets and Christmas in the Park have all turned into much anticipated community events.
- The monthly Just Books book sale. The hall has proven a valuable venue for the sale and storage of books and a source of good reading material for the Community Library

box in the park which Di maintains. In addition the 2024 book sales totalled over \$6200 all of which was returned to the community. What a wonderful effort by a few dedicated volunteers.

- Private bookings also increased with the venue attractive for parties, family reunions, weddings and Corporate events. The hall looked beautiful decked out for three individual weddings with the bridal parties and guests amazed at the facilities we have here on offer. The generous donation of 18 tablecloths purchased for one of the weddings was a great addition to our asset pool and will provide a source of revenue going forward.
- Added exposure and functions not only assists our revenue but also the economy of the community at large as guests often require accommodation and dining options.

Clean up Woodgate Day: In association with “ Clean Up Australia ”

This past year we carried out a cleanup of **Woodgate Road** in April collecting around 25 bags of assorted rubbish. Five of those bags John Trevor collected in the vicinity of the roadside garbage bins on Frizzles Road. John deserved a medal given that all the while he was there he was harassed by Plovers that had a nest nearby. In September we again joined the **Clean Waterways Event** and later in September the **Clean Reefs Event** where due to the tide we concentrated our efforts at Theodolite Creek both on the Ocean and River side, along Theodolite Creek Road and the boardwalk linking Lorikeet Avenue and First Avenue. Thank you to all the residents who volunteered.

This year's event will be after the Easter Holidays.

Projects:

- Our major project was to purchase and install four new defibrillators and relocate the one from inside the hall to an external wall. These defibrillators located at Theodolite Creek, Second Avenue, Woodgate Community Hall, Banksia Park and Walkers Point was achieved in under twelve months due to the generous financial support of the Woodgate Community Bus, The Woodgate Community Events, Just Books, the Woodgate Tennis Club and the WDRA who each funded an individual unit. All of these units have been registered with both the QAS and BRC. In January there was an incident where a gentleman suffered a suspected heart attack. A defibrillator was quickly retrieved to the home in preparation should it be required while they awaited the ambulance. Thankfully it wasn't required but the family are very grateful that it was available and so easily accessible.
- Storage: Incorporated with the purchase of the lawn locker we also engaged the “Town Tradesman” Chris to build shelving in the storage room which allowed for permanent hall users such as the Beach Fit Exercise Group, Thai Chi, Yoga, Karate, WILD and the Wednesday Leisure Group to have their own space. This also assisted in maintaining a level of presentation for when this space is opened up for private venue hire. In addition we had floor to ceiling units built into the office space that now provides a permanent, clean, dry space to store the chair covers offered for hire for private events.

WDRA Support for other Community Initiatives.

- Support for **“It’s in the Bag” Share the Dignity**. As organiser Susan Coleman advised at the December meeting;
 - Across the Bundaberg area 467 bags were shared,
 - 142 of those almost a third of all donations came from Woodgate,
 - 305 bags through the Bunnings campaign
 - And another 20 being donated directly.
 - The charities requested 745 bags so bags from Maryborough, Hervey Bay and the Sunshine Coast helped to fill the requests.
 - **Share the Dignity has hit a milestone with 1million bags being filled since the Charity began in 2015. That is 1million women and girls who have received the gift of love and hope.**
 - We are grateful to everyone who donated through the WDRA. I am sure this will continue to be a cause that we lend our support to as sadly the need for help seems to be growing. Its never too early to start collecting and donations can be left at the Hall at any time.

- **The WDRA’s ongoing Support of the Goodwood State School.**
 - \$250 from the WDRA and a \$250 personal donation by Bill Trevor supported the once a week Breakfast Club at the School.
 - Funding and presentation of an Achievement Award (selected by the teaching staff) at the Annual Concert and Awards Night.

- **Support for the children, Parents and Guardians of WILD** who encourage and promote volunteering as an activity into their curriculum. Once a term for one hour the children and parents join me to participate in gardening activities around the hall and Community Park gardens. The children are enthusiastic participants, and to date they have assisted in weeding, mulching and watering the gardens. They learn the value of giving back into the community, working together as a team, how to allocate tasks, follow instructions all while enjoying themselves.

- **Weedbusters** a subsidiary group of the WDRA continue to work tirelessly to control the weeds and invasive garden species that threaten the dunes. They have also through Heather continued to lobby the BRC to undertake a spraying program so that we can meet the goal of cleaning up the Eighth Avenue walkway. A small group of dedicated volunteers that are real community champions.

- **The Committee has continued to lobby the previous State Government re the Walkers Point Boat Ramp** and as many of you are now aware the new State Government has committed \$3m to the project with a completion date due the end of this year.

- A recent meeting on site with the State Minister for Transport, Stephen Bennett MP, Councillor Bill Trevor and Operational Staff from the Department of Marine Safety (whom I believe played no small part in this outcome) was most beneficial.

- It was refreshing to actually have a face to face meeting with decision makers, to be able to show them first hand the issues affecting the community and to see that they not only listened but heard what we had to say. Just a quick example of that; I mentioned the impact the Annual Fishing completion run by the Woodgate Hotel has on the community through visitor numbers, economic benefits etc. Immediately the Minister and the gentlemen from Marine Safety agreed to look at a temporary launching ramp should the new ramp not be operational by late September.
- As President of the WDRA and on behalf of the community I feel confident that at last our community voice might be heard.
- **Memorial Wall:** Our committee will meet with Bill Trevor prior to once again taking this up with Council. The proposition that this may be a Community Funded Project may have to be considered.
- **WDRA WEB Page and Local Business Directory:**
- I am currently in the in the process of updating the information across the webpage.
- **Numbers for directory.** We have 86 local businesses registered on the Websites Business Directory. We need to grow this number.
- **Planned Projects for 2025:**
- **The History Walk: A WDRA Funded Project.**
 - Good progress is being made in collecting and co-relating information.
 - Planning and costings of the proposed History Walk will commence in March
 - Drawing up of the overall plan and a draft for presentation to Council to begin once costings have been finalised.
 - My aim is to have a formal presentation to Council no later than June this year.
 - Availability of Grant Funding to be investigated.
 - Like a snowball this project has grown and I am currently in the process of taking it to the next level and formally correlating into a book. The end is in sight.
 - *Whilst our first presentation to Council in 2023 had the support of elected Councillors, the progress was stalled following a meeting with the CEO, Head of Environment and Parks and the Supervisor of Parks in Woodgate. All of these positions have now been filled by new people and a change in Council has also occurred requiring us to start over.*

Support for a Cairn to be built to mark the sinking of the SS City Of Melbourne .

- Historian George Hatchman, with personal ties to both Childers and Woodgate, has enlisted the WDRA Management Committees help in his bid to have BRC approve this proposal.
- Together we are endeavouring to gain written support from other Historians linked to this ship from across Australia. Ongoing, and looking positive.
- As the first request was denied by Council due to sensitivity around the transporting of Kanaka labour in the late 1800's to the area I have engaged with a representative from the Bundaberg Region Kanaka Association and a direct ancestor in regard to support. They are currently reviewing my request.

- This will be an addition to the History Walk if Approved.

Support for and Investigation into an Over 50's Style Accommodation for Woodgate.

- Following on from the December 2024 meeting a small sub committee drawn from the 2025 Management Committee will work with Stephen Bennett MP and Councillor Bill Trevor to raise support/ interest from within the community whilst Stephen and Bill will look into possibilities, opportunities, land availability and so much more within their respective jurisdictions. A form is available at the Post Office to collect signatures.

Some in house achievements by our Management Committee.

- The undertaking of a full review and an upgrade to the Constitution Document to better align it to meet today's Association's position within the community and to meet all current legal obligations.
- We undertook the development of a Policies and Procedures Document in line with legal and Governance obligations.
- Thank you to the Committee for your input and a special thank you to Roslyn Rieke who took on the job of editor in chief to ensure that we had everything covered and put a professional polish on the documents.

In finishing I would like to make a couple of acknowledgements:

- I would like to thank Councillor Bill Trevor for his ongoing support and always making himself available if I have questions and attending every Community meeting. I know residents who attend appreciate the information Bill presents and his readiness to engage with people to help with individual concerns. We are very lucky to have Bill represent us in Council.
- I acknowledge the BRC for their support and willingness to engage with our committee especially Jesse and Aaron and the staff at Venues and Facilities and look forward to a working relationship with the Mayor, CEO and other Heads of Departments that may be new to their role in recent times.
- I would also like to sincerely thank the residents who make the time to attend and actively engage in the bi monthly Community meetings. Thank you.
- Just a little touch of history. As we go into 2025 we mark the 67th year since the inception of the first Residents League as it was then called. Thank you to all the volunteers past, present and future who will take this organisation from strength to strength.
- Lastly I wish to thank and acknowledge the WDRA Management Committee for your continued dedication and support. Each year we continue with a strong team not just in numbers but also with a diversity of skill and experience that allow us to work for and support the community in so many ways.

Thank you.

End Report
Pauline Greer 8 February 2025