

From your Alderman

Just a few of the key issues that have come before Council in the last two months. Debates on where to build nursing homes or and how to conserve swift parrot habitat. Whether we still want to regard the car as king in the City. Subdivide bushland or keep the rim of the City's skyline as intact as possible. To declare Hobart nuclear free or nuclear friendly. To allow significant gun collections in residential areas. Whether Council has a greater duty of care to its workers and introduce wheelie bins to the possible detriment of some citizens' health and safety? Whether increased development should be encouraged where doubts exist about the safety of the land.

Underlying these and all the other decisions of Council is a debate over values and outcomes, constantly bubbling below the surface of our society. What do Aldermen understand by the City's stated values of leadership, equity, community involvement, responsiveness and quality when faced with decisions such as these? When values in society are shifting and changing also? How can Aldermen keep pace, yet still wisely lead?

Consider this example from the Minutes of a Hobart community group. The residents were trying to influence whether a piece of land would be used for commercial or recreational use and had spent quite a bit of time letting the Aldermen know what they wanted. The group agreed that the land was suitable for recreational and community development and worked hard to develop a plan on these lines. But they must have had some inkling their desires for the land would not be met. Enough to include in the Minutes of the day the following: "As a final consideration it was felt that, although the present City Council (owners of the land) may be persuaded to defer development, unless a plan was formulated by the residents of (the

area), there was no guarantee that their views and interests would always be sought. Aldermen change and attitudes of the H.C.C. could quite conceivably alter in years to come." Aldermen and attitudes did change. But not in the same direction with the land now slated commercial, despite its unsuitability for this purpose. What's happened? Sure, leadership was exercised by Aldermen in deciding what to do with the land. But other values (equity, community involvement, responsiveness) were lost in the process.

I am writing this because the debate in Council in the past few months has led me to strongly believe the democratic system used to elect Aldermen is unable to accommodate changes in societal attitudes and values. A lot can happen in four years. Once you elect Aldermen, they may already be out of date unless their understanding of citizens' values evolve over all the time they are elected. This is not to say they should swing with the wind, although some are quite good at it. Leadership includes a goodly measure of community involvement and responsiveness to changing aspirations. Would you agree? How well does your interpretation of the City's values match with the decisions of Aldermen today?

Best regards, *Alderman Eva Ruzicka*

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Fern Tree Community Association Inc., 8 Stephenson Place, Fern Tree. GST Registered. ABN 88 577 475 907.

The Fern Tree Community Association is a non-profit group set up to serve and represent the community of Fern Tree. Meetings open to all residents elect a committee each year to conduct the Association's business. Address all correspondence to: *The Secretary, Fern Tree Community Association, 8 Stephenson Place, Fern Tree 7054.* Find us on the Web at <http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/ferntree>

Fern Tree Community Association Inc. Newsletter

FEBRUARY-MARCH 2001

Recognise this place?



You'll find out more about this and other nooks and crannies of Historical Fern Tree at our Annual General Meeting — 8 p.m. Wednesday, 4 April 2001 at the Community Centre. Don't miss it!

See p. 3

Dates for the fridge door

Fern Tree Bushcare (9.30 am Fern Glade car park)
..... 2nd Sunday each month (next meeting 11 March)
Ridgeway Bus Stop working bee (10 am) 25 March
FTCA Annual General Meeting 4 April
FTCA Committee meetings (7.30 pm Community Centre)
..... 2nd Tuesday each month (next meeting 13 March)

Producing Fern Tree's Newsletter

It is now four years since I first took on producing the *Newsletter*. Besides being something worth doing, I have found it a lot of fun. I hope it's been as enjoyable to read.

As the voice of the Fern Tree Community Association, the *Newsletter* belongs to all the residents of our area. It's important that it reflects as wide a range of views as possible. I've sought to ensure this happens, but like anyone I have my own values and beliefs and it's inevitable that these will sometimes surface in the *Newsletter*. Like the Association itself, the *Newsletter* needs an overhaul every so often. Four years is long enough for one person to remain at the helm.

Our new Committee, to be elected at our Annual General Meeting on 4 April, will be looking among other things at production of the *Newsletter*. No doubt there are things we can do to improve the way we inform our members (you, the residents). A fresh approach from a new Editor will be a good start.

If you are interested in taking on this very fulfilling (and not too arduous) role, come along to our Annual Meeting — see note elsewhere in this issue — and put up your hand. You won't be expected to pick up from nothing — I would certainly be on hand to help out as necessary and you can be sure of good support from our Committee, our distribution team and the community generally.

Nor should you be put off by the technology sometimes employed in publishing these days. While it's probably now necessary to have access to a computer and word-processing or publishing software, the most important attributes of our Editor will remain a love of this community and an ability to write clearly. — *Peter Boyer*

New bus timetables available

Metro has brought out new timetables for Fern Tree, Huon Road and South Hobart services. They are available at the Fern Tree General Store or by contacting Metro Tasmania.

Work on Bus Stop 25

Ridgeway residents, there will be a Working Bee on the Tagg Memorial Bus Shelter on Sunday 25 March at 10am to paint the shelter following recent repairs. Please bring your own paint brushes, wire brushes, ladders or trestles if you have them. queries — *Torquil*, tel. 6239 1570

Clean-Up Australia uncovers some roadside surprises

Fern Tree did its bit for Clean-up Australia day on Sunday 4 March. We had 17 helpers, including some from South Hobart and Kingston. One of our veterans, Squeak the Pony, again took part, this time without the cart.

We covered most of Fern Tree's roads as well as the Pipeline Track and Fern Glade Track and the Springs.

As in past years we found a wide range of cast-offs including plenty of the usual chip and hamburger packets, bottles and cans, tyres, and household items such as cushions. We found that if we ventured a little distance down roadside embankments we could uncover a lot of hidden material going back a long way, including some quite old bottles.

There were some surprises. We found a bong in one of our residential areas. Down the bank off Huon Road between the Tavern and Brown's River we discovered a number of guideposts, some of them unused, and a road warning sign, possibly relating to the recent work on the Brown's River crossing.

The total amount collected filled 15 large bags and weighed around 300 kg. This may have been a bit down on previous years.

Many thanks to our team of helpers. A job well done. — *Dave Roberts*.

Chance Meetings

Contributed by Tom Errey

I came out of the Manhattan coffee bar in Murray Street fumbling still with small change I'd been given. Just outside the door I lost control of the coins which spilled onto the pavement, some of them running on their edges in various directions. It was late and very few people were about, but as I stooped to round up my errant coins a passer-by joined in, gathering up several of them for me. I was still straightening myself up when his hand stretched towards me with his collection, and as my gaze followed up his arm to his face, mutual recognition occurred. It was Erwin Feeken, my friend the cartographer, once of Fern Tree but long resident at that time in Canberra.

Erwin came from Germany in the 'fifties with his wife Gerda, and lived on the Huon Road near the bus terminus, when he worked for the H.E.C. He and I met on the Fern Tree bus, found common interest and did a lot of walks together in the Wellington Range. Now he'd come to Hobart to see some very complex geological maps through the production process at the Mercury-Walch plant, the best in the country for such work at the time. He had had an intention to look me up, although unsure where I worked. We agreed that our re-meeting the way we did was some coincidence.

But it wasn't the only coincidence involving me and other folk either in or associated with Fern Tree. One of the more remarkable ones concerned my first wife, Nancy. After World War II, I was still in the Australian Army, but in occupied Japan. Nancy came from Adelaide to join me there in 1947, and when at the end of that year I was assigned to work in a Military Government unit (a U.S. formation), in a city named Takamatsu, we were part of a very small expatriate colony of 'Allied Personnel' and their dependants. It included two British officers only.

One of them, a Captain Crompton, turned out to be an English cousin of Nancy's — the Adelaide Cromptons set up a huge olive plantation on the foothills there, but the country

was unready then for such a venture which proved uneconomic. The other officer was a Major Grover, and here comes the Fern Tree link! Nancy and I — with two children — returned from overseas to Adelaide in 1949, and soon after — demobbed and looking for a place in Tasmania, I found a cottage in Fern Tree so the family was reunited here. And a mere couple of years after that, when a young English family — the Grants — came to live near us in Summerleas Road, it turned out that Norah (Mrs Grant) was sister-in-law to that same Gerry Grover we'd known in Japan. Ken and Norah Grant lived in this neighbourhood for around forty years until a move to Kingston in fairly recent time.

On a back-packing trip to Europe six years ago, Robin, Tad and I one morning took a bus across the Umbrian uplands in Italy from Gubbio to Perugia, and were just entering the latter town when through the bus window we espied by the kerbside four familiar faces. These were of the Bonner family, the parents and two young children, who had built a house in Summerleas Road and lived there for several years. We had no way of drawing their attention then, but planned to tell them of the recognition upon our return to Hobart. Sadly for us, that wasn't possible, as we were duly to discover that some time after our own expedition set out, the Bonners had migrated to Paris! Perhaps, when we spotted them in Perugia, they were still on their way to their new base. These were, incidentally, the only Tasmanian folk we recognized in our five-month wander overseas.

As is often remarked: 'it's a small world'. Yet it carries an awful lot of passengers, and it's still a startling thing suddenly to be looking at familiar faces far from the scenes where we expect them to be.

Play Group meets weekly

For the smaller folk of Fern Tree, Play Group meets at the Community Centre at 10 am every Monday.

Bring some fruit and \$2.00 for coffee or tea. There are plenty of playthings to amuse small people, left over from the Kindergarten days. An enjoyable morning is guaranteed for all.

Summerleas Road update

Users of Summerleas Road will have noted that the Kingborough Council has re-routed about 200 metres of Summerleas Road, widening a narrow section that has a very steep drop-off on one side, and removing the adjacent tight S-bends.

The feedback received from users has been universally complimentary, not only for the improvement in safety but for the neatness with which the work was done and effort that was put into minimising the loss of trees. The Executive has written a letter of appreciation to the Kingborough Council.

As previously reported, the executive has been pressing for about 18 months to have work done on specific sites on Summerleas Road. It has also sought to have warning signs plus a 40 km/h speed limit imposed from Huon Road to the Brown's River bridge.

The Traffic Standards Branch of the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources responded last year by installing *de-restriction* signs on most of the gravel section, effectively raising the speed limit to 100 km/h. We protested that this move added to the traffic hazard presented by the road conditions.

Following our protests, the Traffic Standards Branch decided to prepare a Road Safety Audit of Summerleas Road, which commenced with an examination of the road last September by officers from the Traffic Standards Branch, the Hobart and Kingborough Councils, and representatives from the Fern Tree and Summerleas Community Associations.

Just before Christmas, we received an email from the Traffic Standards Branch apologising that they had not yet finished writing the report, and would resume in mid-February.

In those seven weeks, there were at least four accidents involving cars leaving the road and going over a bank. That has been reported to the Traffic Standards Branch.

In the meantime, please report any accidents anywhere on Summerleas Road to Mike Emery on 6239 1518, or to any committee member.
— Mike Emery

O B I T U A R Y

Glen Jennings

Glen McNamara was reared in South Hobart, where her family took a strong interest in school and local affairs. She married Ian Jennings, a geologist with the Mines Department, and they subsequently reared their children, Paul and Meredith, in Fern Tree. The family was resident in Summerleas Road for around forty years.

The Jennings garden was well renowned for its rhododendron display and Australian native plants. Glen took these interests seriously and was an active member of the Rhododendron Society and the Society for Growing Australian Plants.

Ian and Glen were highly esteemed and held in affectionate regard by many, a couple who lived quietly but whose support of their children and others was truly steadfast.

They moved to the Kingston area several years ago, after Ian retired. Sadly, Ian died a few years afterwards. Then, late last year, Glen was diagnosed with throat cancer: the illness developed quickly and she passed away on 6 January 2001, survived by Meredith, a sister in Western Australia, and a brother. A farewell gathering was held at the Springs a few days later.

This quiet, warmhearted and dedicated lady lives on in the hearts of many friends.

— Robin Errey

Rented accommodation sought

Greetings! My name is Monique Germon and I have fallen in love with Fern Tree. I am looking for somewhere to rent up on the Mountain. The real estate agents in town do not seem to be of much help so I have decided to look myself. I am 25, I work at Eumarrah Wholefoods, love gardening, and as the owner of a home in Sydney am well aware of the value of a good tenant. If you are considering leasing your house, give me a call on 6234 3229 (work) or 6224 2996 (home), or email monelisz@hotmail.com. Thank you. — Monique Germon

Old photographs, new faces at our AGM, Wednesday 4 April



Photograph of Fern Tree Hotel c. 1900 supplied by Karlene Fone. Copyright Beattie's Studio

Old photos will be a theme of our Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 4 April. Residents are invited to dig out any old Fern Tree/Mt Wellington photos they may have tucked away in their cupboards and bring them along for all to see. Historian Gwenda Sheridan will give an illustrated talk about historic Fern Tree. Incidentally, if you can help Gwenda locate any new sources of information, including letters and photos, ring her on 6229 6765. Also at the meeting will be Greg Hind (Hindsight Photos), who will be displaying a selection of prints from his large collection of glass plates.

We will also be electing a new committee. Anyone living in Fern Tree is eligible to nominate for the committee. Being a committee member is an excellent way to get to know the community. New faces in the committee are very welcome — it keeps the association fresh and relevant to our changing community. — Torquil Canning

NOTICE

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Fern Tree Community Association Inc. will be held at the Fern Tree Community Centre, 8 Stephenson Place, Fern Tree, beginning at 8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 4 April 2001.

All residents of the Fern Tree area, including Neika, upper Summerleas Road, Fingerpost/upper Strickland Avenue and Ridgeway are invited to attend.

Order of business

1. Minutes of the previous AGM
2. Annual reports
3. Election of officers and ordinary committee members
4. Appointment of auditor
5. Other business: Includes proposed amendments to FTCA Constitution (see page 4)
6. Guest speaker: Gwenda Sheridan on Historical Fern Tree

Proposed changes to FTCA constitution for discussion at AGM

One of the agenda items at the Annual General Meeting on 4 April 2001 will be consideration of suggested amendments to your Association's Constitution. A sub-committee has reviewed the Constitution with a view to updating and streamlining it as our core reference document.

Following is an explanation of changes, leading to the motion expected to be put to the AGM. The subcommittee believes that the amendments should be seen more as revision than as substantial change.

Please note:

- Members wishing to see proposed changes in more detail may do so at the Fern Tree Store, where there is a copy of the Constitution with draft amendments clearly marked.
- An Association member with legal training is checking the amendments to ensure they comply with incorporated association rules.
- There will be opportunity for discussion of the draft amendments at the AGM when the motion has been moved and seconded and prior to voting.

Explanation of amendments

(Figures in brackets refer to Article numbers within the Constitution.)

- 1 For gender neutrality, *committee-member* (2:1) replaces *committee-man* throughout the Constitution. Likewise, *helshe* and *his/her* replace *he* and *his*.
- 2 The Association's property is referred to as the *Community Centre*, as it no longer functions as a kindergarten (4; 5:1:3).
- 3 Membership of the Association and *arranging a proxy vote* (6:1, and 6:5 – now transferred to 19:2) have been procedurally simplified.
- 4 Interest rates payable – where applicable – have been standardized (7:3:2).
- 5 Eligibility for appointment as auditor has been defined (10:1).
- 6 Remuneration of an auditor (12:4:4) is not a matter for the Association to fix, but the Association and its Committee must at all times manage the financial affairs of the Association prudently (9:5 et al).

- 7 The number constituting a *quorum at all general meetings* has been set at a more realistic level (15:2).
- 8 With a view to increased transparency and openness to the business of the Association throughout the year, and acknowledging poor attendances at some recent general meetings, the subcommittee recommends three changes to meeting rules:
 - # Articles 24 and 27 have been adjusted to provide for *residents (irrespective of age) to request or be invited to attend any committee meeting* as an observer (27:12). As at present, community groups may still request observer status at any committee meeting (24:2 is now 27:11).
 - # It is proposed that a second (September/October) *general meeting* no longer be mandatory, but that provision continue for holding special general meetings as required or requested.
 - # The number required to *requisition a special general meeting* (13:2) has been aligned to the number required to have a quorum at such meetings.
- 9 Committee meetings are validly constituted if there is a quorum and if at least two of the office-bearers are present (27:4).
- 10 Rules relating to *sub-committees* have been made more consistent (29:1-4).

MOTION: That the Constitution of the Fern Tree Community Association be amended as in the copy which has been made publicly available for perusal, as follows:

- i That the language used throughout the Constitution be gender-free (Article 2:1 and following);
- ii That the property of the Association (Articles 4; 5:1:3) be hereafter referred to as the Community Centre, superseding the term Kindergarten;
- iii That membership of the Association (Article 6:1) is deemed to be effected by eligible residents signing the Membership Roll (Register) available at all general meetings of the Association, and that signing of this Register

- permits participation in and voting at respective general meetings;
- iv That notification of a proxy vote (Article 6:5, transferred to Article 19:2) must be properly received before the start of the meeting to which it pertains, that the member assigning voting rights must have attended one or more general meetings within the previous two years, and that the person carrying the proxy vote must be a member or eligible to register as a member at the meeting to which it pertains;
- v That interest rates payable – where applicable – be set at not more than 2% above the current Commonwealth Bond rate (Article 7:3:2);
- vi That appointment as auditor shall be of someone ineligible to be a member of the Association and independent of any of the Association's financial interests (Article 10:1);
- vii That "and determination of his remuneration" be deleted from Article 12:4:4;
- viii That the quorum at any general meeting is set at ten members (Article 15:2);
- ix That observer status continue to be granted to prescribed community groups (delete Article 24:2 and substitute Article 27:11) and that individual residents may also request or be invited to observe (Article 27:12);
- x That the number of general meetings (other than the Annual General Meeting) of the Association per year is no longer stipulated (Article 13:1:2);
- xi That all general meetings other than the A.G.M. shall be known as special general meetings (Articles 13 and 36);
- xii That a minimum of ten members is required to requisition a special general meeting (Article 13:2);
- xiii That the latter phrase of Article 27:4 be substituted to read "which number must include at least two of the officers specified in Article 23:1"; and
- xiv That the wording of the rules relating to sub-committees (Article 29) be substituted, as shown, for clarity, and that co-opted members of a sub-committee be also entitled to vote within the subcommittee



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If you have any new suggestions we're happy to hear them.

Thank you for your continuing support.