

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT – DECEMBER 2020

December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Well, 2020 is almost done and thank goodness for that! It's been difficult for all of us, but we can be thankful we have survived and life is getting back to normal as Europe and the US are still experiencing dreadful effects of the virus; hopefully the vaccines can help them arrest the pandemic.

In Tasmania we have tourists arriving again and hospitality venues getting back to normal. I just hope we can continue to contain the virus to quarantine locations.

Our last few weeks have been very busy getting ready for the launch of *Burnie 2.0* on December 4<sup>th</sup>. This program is our plan to revitalise Burnie and restore the city to its former glory, attract more tourists to visit plus make locals proud to live here.

It's great to see owners in the CBD giving their premises a freshen up; kudos to the owner of the 7BU premises and Steve Kons for adding a lick of paint to the call centre.

We have engaged with *Renew Australia* to start the *Renew Burnie* project and have completed our two introductory and planning workshops. This initiative will attempt to match social enterprises and creatives with vacant shops in the Plaza Arcade and City Square. Premises are supplied on a rent free, 30 day rolling license basis. The concept has been successful in many places around the nation and the goal is to create vibrancy through activity to attract increased foot traffic and ultimately full rental for the shops.

Another part of Burnie 2.0 is our *Living History* project. During November we established a pop-up cinema in one vacant shop. Old movies of Burnie were well received, especially one focussed on APPM.

We have also set up Santa's Grotto and workshop in two shops at the Wilson St end of Plaza Arcade. Cyndia Hilliger teamed up with Debbie from Bonita to make a truly memorable venue for Santa to visit and meet our local children. I believe it is the only multi-day venue for Santa in the city and has been well patronised so far.

For our retailers, there has been a slight increase in shoplifting reported recently. This week via Crime Stoppers Tasmania we will be distributing a handbook to help retailers be more aware of the risks in their shop.

I am encouraging people to shop locally this year; the use of internet shopping has rocketed during the COVID period but mostly that creates jobs overseas or in warehouses in Sydney and Melbourne. If you want to shop online don't forget to look at [cradlecoastmarket.com](http://cradlecoastmarket.com); shop online with local vendors.

This Wednesday's breakfast features a true Tasmanian success story, Cape Grim Water. Mike Buckby is Manager of the rain farm and responsible for collection of suitable rain, marketing, and sales of product to premium restaurants, cafes and hotels throughout Tasmania.

This Friday evening around 9pm sees the turning on of the lights on the Norfolk Pine tree next to the Anglican Church in Mount St. It is a [ticketed event](#) due to limited numbers allowed by COVID. Justin McErlain has worked very hard with Council staff to get this project up in a very compressed timeframe.

Last week we were advised we had been successful in our grant application to establish live camera feeds of the platypuses at the Emu Valley Rhododendron Gardens. The grant for \$19,000 was facilitated by *West by North West* and we sincerely thanks Tom and Georgie for their efforts. We got good media coverage on 7News when we met with Minister Jaensch at the gardens to announce the grant. Planning has commenced and we hope to go live in February.

I was pleased to attend a regional forum advising the Premier's Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council (PESRAC) two weeks ago. A very solid half day with representatives from business and government around the region. One of my recommendations was to accelerate the completion of Project Marinus as it is key to unlocking projects such as Robbins Island wind farm and Batter of the Nation.

Wednesday night will be our last general meeting for the year, and I hope you can join us for a drink and/or a meal afterwards in the RSL Club. I will be taking a few weeks off to visit family in Melbourne and Port Macquarie but am handcuffed to Outlook at all times.

I wish you a joyful and safe festive season – see you next year!



**Ian Jones**

President

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