

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT – JULY 2021**

July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Isn't the year just flying by!

COVID continues to dominate the headlines and so far we are fortunate to have avoided any outbreaks but one fears we can't do that forever. The lockdown has just been extended in Victoria and will affect our economy as tourists stay home and manufacturing slows down. We probably need to write off the next few months until we can get our vaccination rate at an acceptable level.

Meanwhile locally we just had to postpone the hydrogen industry forum set for Thursday, as many of our panellists can't get into the state due to COVID.

Simon Overland from Burnie City Council recently provided us with an overview of the Hirst Projects report relating to the proposed new Burnie Cultural Centre. I believe the end result will be an exciting step forward for Burnie in that it will be a very contemporary facility, more inclusive and save a million dollars a year.

I particularly like that the plan is make the facility more inclusive so more of our community will use the building on a regular basis. The addition of activities for children and a café expands the use of the building and there are plans to have displays that will appeal to a wider range of visitors – so those families struggling for something to do on a wet afternoon will have a place to go on a regular basis. At a public briefing last week, the arts community seemed to be not so pleased, and dialogue will continue in this public consultation phase.

The Council requested a briefing on our activities and future plans which we provided last Tuesday. Feedback was very positive, and we have engaged with the Director Corporate and Commercial, Bel Lynch to plan future expenditure.

We have commenced work on the mobile visitor information centre with the ordering of a 20' shipping container. Due to COVID not going away we are now testing non touch technology for the use of computer screens – there are two major technologies, and we have both on trial in our office. How does this work I hear you ask? It's called a gesture-based interface. A camera is mounted above the screen, and it detects your fingertip entering the vertical plane and that constitutes a touch to the screen, albeit your finger may be 10cms from the screen surface. It's like a scene from that Tom Cruise movie *Minority Report*.

The *Renew Burnie* project is moving along nicely with the vast majority of shops in both arcades now occupied. We recently lost *Placard & Pose* due to a relocation of the owner; but *Belle Epoch* (designer furniture) will be opening this Wednesday evening.

I was talking with one of our manufacturers over the weekend and his business is booming – he just received close to a million-dollar order that he wasn't expecting – we don't hear much from our manufacturing sector as mostly they just get on with the job and don't spend a lot of time blowing their own trumpet. As a sector it has developed into a world class unit and will continue to grow. As a side note: I hope that Elphinstone is successful in their bid with South Korean company Hanwha for the armoured personnel carriers; that will provide work for many advanced manufacturing companies in the region.

We are really fortunate at the moment – there have been several high quality people with amazing skills and experience have surfaced and want to be part of our team. Most of these have moved to Tasmania in the last 1-2 years for the lifestyle that NW Tassy provides and as they are remote workers, we end up with world class personnel contributing to our projects. It makes my life a lot easier.

Next month on the 18<sup>th</sup> we have our Annual General Meeting – if you want to nominate yourself or someone else for a position on our Executive please email me for a nomination form.

Following our meeting Wednesday evening please join us for a meal in the RSL bistro.

Best regards



**Ian Jones** – President

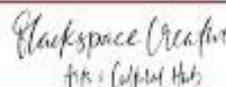
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