

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – 10th March 2023

We are now powering through 2023.

The cruise ship season is drawing to a close on April 5th with just four ships to visit us in the next four weeks. Overall, it has been a successful season after a slightly rocky start due to prevailing easterly weather conditions. Rumour has it we will be seeing over 40 ships in the 23/24 season.

Yesterday Burnie City council released its strategic background report to provide a comprehensive snapshot of current economic and social conditions and the challenges we face.

This twenty-year community vision and its Strategic Plan will be co-created by the Council and the Burnie community. [Have your say in our city's future](#). There are information sessions set for March 16th and 21st at the BAFC – details on the website.

Breakfasts have been well attended with Ark energy attracting a good crowd to hear about the exciting windfarm projects jut south of Burnie. Likewise, folks enjoyed the *Table Cape project* presentation by Justin and Cyndia with a few brave souls getting to experience flying over the tulip fields via the Virtual Reality headset.

This month we have two breakfasts planned – next Wednesday team members of the State Opposition, Anita Dow, Shane Broad and Janie Finlay who will be presenting "*Working for Tasmania's Economic Future*".

On March 29th BCC General Manager Simon Overland will be speaking to us regarding the development of the city strategic plan as mentioned above.

We had two new members join in February - Josh Whitely from APP which is a nationwide property and infrastructure consultancy headquartered in North Sydney with Josh working as a Project Director on large commercial projects. The second new member is Kayas Mahamud from Roorush Digital which is a digital marketing agency based in Devonport, offering customized solutions for businesses to achieve their online goals. Kayas is the CEO and looking to expand his business support along the north west coast.

A month after the public consultation ended, we still have no final decision on the location of our new courthouse. The overwhelming sentiment of the community in surveys we did via our membership and social media indicated the preferred site was on the corner of Wilson and Ladbrooke Sts. It will make a striking entry to our CBD if that location is chosen.

Governments need to get control over rising energy costs with members reporting increases in contract pricing by 200%+. Interest rate rises not only hit the financing of a business but are having an effect on discretionary spending by customers, especially in the hospitality industry as more families choose to eat in more often. The family savings made during COVID have gradually disappeared and we now appear to be in for a challenging few quarters with more interest rate rises forecast and 800,000 fixed rate mortgages coming up for renewal.

We are seeing construction companies “going under” in mainland states and we should expect that trend to happen here among smaller builders in the next few months according to local industry experts.

The A\$ has dropped 5% on the US\$ in the last month and if this is maintained we could face higher fuel costs in Q2 which affects everything we consume and also impacts inflation.

Business Tasmania has recently released *The Small Business Growth Strategy 2026* which sets out the priorities and objectives for government and the private sector to support small business growth in Tasmania.

Under this program, grants of between \$10,000 and \$50,000 are available to fund the delivery of new projects that align with the themes of the Small Business Growth Strategy 2026. [See here for details.](#)

Our next General Meeting is Wednesday March 15th at 6pm in the Burnie RSL Club and I urge you to attend. Our last two meetings have had very poor numbers which doesn’t help guide our operations, so I hope you are able to join us and make a contribution.

Best regards



Ian Jones – President

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