

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – April 2023

The year seems to be flying by - the cruise ship season ended recently and was the first season back after the COVID pandemic so there was a lot of uncertainty around and we had to adapt the arrival process due to *Makers* not being available.

There were teething problems, but they were to be expected. The weather pre-Xmas didn't help as La Nina gave us predominantly easterly weather that prevented several ships from berthing but since Christmas we have had no cancellations.

The pop-up markets in the Civic Plaza have been a big success and the passengers have enjoyed Mayor Brumby and Deputy Mayor Giovanna welcoming them. Already there are over 40 ships confirmed for next season so it will be bigger and better. A big thanks to all the councillors who attended and the large volunteer workforce.

Kudos to Justin McErlain for the creation of the *DiscoverBurnie* app – around 56,000 downloads since October provided cruise ship passengers with all the information they needed for their visit. We plan to expand this over the next few months so it is even better for next season plus will be able to help locals also.

I attended a statewide Chamber Alliance meeting in Campbelltown yesterday – the issues we face with staffing are being felt right across the state and energy cost rises are forcing some businesses to close - the state and federal governments need to address this issue sooner rather than later.

The Minister for Small Business, Madeline Ogilvie met with us and spoke regarding the recent data hack on the Education department – she emphasised that any business of any size is vulnerable to attack and the hackers are highly organised and professional. We discussed strategies to reach out to small businesses to help them protect their businesses – we will jointly develop a plan to deliver more cybersecurity awareness and training to this very vulnerable sector.

Burnie City Council has extended the period for you to provide input to its 20 year strategic plan - click [here](#) to have your say!

Work is starting on the \$20m redevelopment of the Burnie Arts & Function Centre and is expected to take until mid-2024 to complete. There will be no public access to Civic Plaza for the duration of the construction period.

Late last month our long running battle with the government regarding the location of the new courthouse came to a conclusion. The site on the corner of Wilson and Ladbroke Sts was selected and hopefully we can get some action on the site by the end of this year. I thank BNW members, Council, Anita Dow and community groups for supporting our efforts to keep this facility in the CBD. It

will provide a great entry way to the city and create a lot of employment during construction.

Our breakfast networking sessions continue to be popular; with Simon Overland of Burnie Council and Chris Clarke of Decem speaking to us in the last month. These sessions are livestreamed and can also be viewed on our website at [this link](#). This site has all our breakfasts as far back as 2019!

Thanks to our Admin Officer Katelyn for loading all these onto our website. We also have our [media articles](#) loaded now too.

I hope to see you at a meeting or breakfast soon!

Best regards



Ian Jones – President

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