**RHCA - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 2016**

**Chairman’s Report**

RHCA has continued to play an important role in representing its members and the community in a range of issues and has been involved with key groups, the Red Hill Ward councillor Tim Wood, Mornington Peninsula Shire (MPS) officers, the Red Hill Ward Consultative Group, and Manton & Stony Creeks Landcare Group. Key issues for 2016 have included:

**Red Hill Community Park**

After a lot of hard work by RHCA, community members and Shire officers, the Official Opening of the community park took place on January 24th prior to Australia Day. Over 250 people turned up including Minister Greg Hunt, Hon Martin Dixon, Mayor Graeme Pittock and Cr Tim Wood. RHCA organized a terrific bbq and music from local legend Keith White. After a “Welcome to Country” address from Neale Austin on behalf of the Bunurong Land Council, other speeches and a ribbon cutting, everyone joined in while the children enjoyed the “playspace”.

Round 4 of the Green Army (via the Department of Environment and the Landcare Group) did more planting and mulching and this was followed by a Shire project to finalize the landscaped areas for some 2,000 plants with guards and mulching. The variety of plants will highlight the indigenous species in Red Hill. Community members participated in the planting sessions.

The funding from the Department of Land, Water and Planning for $148,925 was fully accounted for and pretty well matched by the Shire. The Shire incurred additional expense to improve the grading and surface of the carpark at Callanans Road.

The information shelter at the head of the Red Hill trail is due for its printed information panels that are nearing completion. This element will herald the last part of Stage 1 of the Red Hill Station Reserve Master Plan.

The Red Hill Op Shop declared it would pay for the costs of a shelter over the new bbq in the community park – a fine gesture from this organization that contributes extensively to the community.

**War Memorial**

2015/16 saw the completion of the memorial in regard to the surface finish, bench seating and a flag pole. The services for Remembrance Day and ANZAC Day were well attended. Preparations were in progress for the 50th anniversary of the battle of Long Tan, on Vietnam Veterans Day on August 18.

**Fire Safety**

The Shire has adopted the CFA and Emergency Services approach of “Get Out and Get Out Early” and there was no sign of any change from this policy for the 2015/16 fire danger period.

RHCA was involved with the specific concerns of fire danger near the residential area opposite the Red Hill school and local residents were vigorous in this matter. A lot of fuel reduction took place by Shire contractors.

The Shire’s implementation of the Fire Management Plan and Roadside Safety Strategy has shown little fuel reduction in the Arthurs Seat, Red Hill and Main Ridge areas and concern by local residents is increasing.

**Newsletters and Website:**

RHCA’s website at [www.redhillcommunityassociation.com](http://www.redhillcommunityassociation.com) has been kept up-to-date by Felicity Jackson and it let our members and the public know about our purpose, committee, our activities and issues and displayed our current and past Newsletters. Newsletters were done quarterly and distributed to members and the wider public. Articles were submitted to the Lions publication “Hill n Ridge”.

**Mobile Phone Coverage and NBN**

Mobile phone coverage has not improved in some areas and although Minister Greg Hunt declared in June 2016 that there would be 2 new towers to overcome blackspots - there is no sign of them.

NBN Co. and Ericsson met with RHCA regarding the programme for NBN in the area. The options available to locals (in the absence of fiber-to-the-node) are “fixed wireless” which is dependent on tower transmission or where that is not viable then satellite coverage. The programme is being continually extended in time and the current satellite coverage is very limited in availability and performance.

**Red Hill Ward Consultative Group (RHWCG) and RAM**

The Ward group provided a bi-monthly forum for a member or two of each community group within Red Hill Ward. The meetings enabled participants to raise issues that are local and those that are of broader concern.

Councillor Tim Wood introduced the RAM (Residents Association Meeting) bi-monthly meetings which enabled each association to present any issues that were then taken on board by the Councillor and Shire officers for later comment prior to the next RAM meeting. RHCA participated in all the meetings.

**Membership**

With excellent work by RHCA over the past year and communication to locals we have doubled our membership to 85 individuals and families. A good sign that RHCA is supported and our thanks go to Carolynn Massola, Secretary, for all her work.

**Looking Forward**

RHCA is trying to concentrate on matters that will help the community in a positive way, there are no fewer than 10 projects RHCA can involve itself in that offers good diversity for people who wish to be involved.

The major issues (in no particular order of priority) are:

1. The Coastal Towns Strategy (formerly the Coastal Villages Study) in which Red Hill is part of the pilot study due to commence in 2017.
2. Traffic Management Study – an issue which is becoming more critical around Red Hill Consolidated School, the Red Hill market days and around Red Hill South when tourism is at its peak.
3. Community based activities – for Australia Day celebrations (funding achieved), war memorial finalization and services and community interaction.
4. Fire Safety and fuel reduction programs along roadside verges in the residential areas.
5. Red Hill Station Reserve Master Plan – Stage 2 – for the station platform area and improvement of the Red Hill Rail trail.

RHCA looks forward to working closely with the newly elected Cr David Gill on matters of interest to our community and Red Hill Ward.

Committee members dedicate a lot of time to support the interests of the members and the community with their attendances at meetings, communications with MPs, councillors and Shire officers as well as communicating with our members and contacts.

I would like to thank the committee for their excellent work and efforts in keeping RHCA active and focused and willing to adapt to the changing priorities of the community.

Unfortunately Carolynn Massola will be leaving the role of Secretary. She has done a great job for us and we thank her wholeheartedly for her contribution. Fortunately she is standing for the committee.

Jenny McIlroy has also done a great job as Treasurer and also Felicity Jackson and unfortunately both are leaving the committee. People move on as their priorities need adjusting and we are very grateful for their work for RHCA and the community.

Kerry Watson, John Elderidge and Mark Stirling have been ever-willing to do the things that are essential to help the running of the Association.

On behalf the committee I wish to thank all the members for their ongoing support of RHCA and I encourage their involvement by joining the new committee and finding new members.

David Maddocks