**The Bouddi Society Inc.**

Annual General Meeting – 7 May 2018

**Management Committee's Report for 2017**

On behalf of the Governing Committee of the Society I would like to report to members on what we believe has been another active and productive year in the pursuit of the Society’s goals: to encourage, promote and enrich the cultural life of this wonderful community that we are so lucky to be part of.

Once again the Society engaged in a number of events and activities that provided entertainment in a variety of modes, continued its important activities in documenting the area’s history, and, through the Society’s charitable wing, the Bouddi Foundation for the Arts’ extraordinarily successful grants program, furthered in a practical way the artistic development of many committed and gifted young people of the Central Coast. As a committee we believe that the health of our organisation and its continuing viability is dependent on it being well-rounded and balanced in its activities. This is attained, we believe, by addressing the past through our publications and historical photographs collection: the present by providing a variety of entertainments to our members and the public; and the future by investing in the development of the next generation of young people who will ensure that the cultural life of our community is safeguarded and improved.

But as an organisation we must also ensure that we are functioning effectively and efficiently. Therefore, your committee instituted two reviews on aspects of our governance. Firstly, a sub-committee looked at the issue of membership and as a result the process of annual membership was streamlined. Secondly, it is five years since the new constitution was adopted and a second sub-committee reviewed the rules and a number of anomalies, redundancies and inadequacies were identified. The recommendations arising from both these exercises and adopted by the committee are now put to members for ratification at today’s Annual General Meeting.

As for the activities themselves, commencing in March and working through to June, Robyn Warburton uploaded the Bouddi Collection of historical photographs to the world wide web, 2,500 fascinating and precious photos of our historical heritage now available to be viewed by everyone.

In April as part of our ongoing ‘Sunday Afternoon by the Bay’ events we screened the evocative Australian movie ‘The Oyster Farmer’, filmed around Broken Bay and the Hawkesbury and instantly recognizable to our audience. The atmospherics of the occasion were greatly assisted by the provision of trays of Ferg’s Empire Bay oysters washed down by a specially brewed stout from the Kincumber mini-brewery, Block and Tackle.

Another screening of historically and environmentally significant films was held in June. These two films, ‘A Singular Woman’, on the life of Marie Byles, and the quaint 1930’s travelogue, ‘Peninsula Paradise’, were well received.

A change of pace was provided in September when the ‘New Empire Ragtime Band’ swung into authentic renditions of early twentieth-century jazz tunes. Although a number of factors meant that the event created a small loss on the day, the committee was still satisfied that it was worth it in terms of the provision of varied cultural experiences for our community.

In September we had a bittersweet occasion when we held our last auditions for woodwind scholarships to the Central Coast Conservatorium of Music. These scholarships predated the creation of the Bouddi Foundation for the Arts and, since 2010, the Society has awarded over twenty scholarships to help young woodwind students with their tuition fees. One of those students was Elyse Faith who first stood up in front of us at Wagstaffe Hall when she was eight. A two-time winner of our scholarships, Elyse went on to excel in her music degree in Melbourne, where she graduated with honours, and is now proceeding with a Masters Degree in Music Performance at the prestigious Royal Academy of Music in London.

However, the Bouddi Foundation for the Arts is now the Society’s principal means of supporting young artists, including musicians, and it was felt that the woodwind scholarship program was redundant. The committee reluctantly took the decision to cease the program, although we had had a productive and enjoyable relationship with ‘the Con’. We anticipate that the relationship will continue through the Foundation’s grants program.

And, in East Gosford, the Regional Art Gallery staged a retrospective of the works of Russell Drysdale from December 2017 to February 2018. The Bouddi Society, through the efforts of Robyn Warburton and Joy Park, contributed material to the gallery that we had assembled for our own celebration of ‘Tas’ Drysdale’s centenary in 2012.

The Bouddi Foundation for the Arts, under the leadership of John Bell, continued to grow in strength. In addition to generous endowments from John Bell, Graeme Anderson, Philip Walker and the Casey family there has been a gratifying increase in donations from local community members. Some of this must be attributed to the increasing profile of the Foundation helped by the Bouddi News and the Penisula News and. the publicity given to grantee success stories such as Jordan Richardson and Imogen Sage

In 2017 thirty-two young artists applied for grants from the Foundation. In November, at its now traditional presentation day at Wagstaffe Hall, the Foundation presented 17 young artists with grants totalling $22,500. Four of those brilliant grantees performed for the packed and enthusiastic audience before the ABC radio personality, James Valentine, and the ever-reliable and downright funny Greig Pickhaver in his guise as HG Nelson, rounded out the day’s entertainment.

Peter Park, as editor of the Bouddi News, has lifted that publication to a new level. We hope you are enjoying the new format in full colour. It is a little more costly, but well worth it in terms of impact in communicating our message.

When I opened this report I remarked on the privilege and pleasure it is to be part of this community. Community harmony is one of the objects of the Society and we enjoy the interaction with and cooperation of other community organisations, both cultural, social and environmental. We interlock and we support each other which is a great way to bind our community. Space doesn’t allow me to mention them all, but a special acknowledgement must be made to the Wagstaffe to Killcare Community Association which is always helpful, unfailingly supportive, and, quite often, called upon to be tolerant.

Finally, the Management Committee would like to thank the Society's members for their ongoing support and I personally would like to thank all the committee members for their hard and cheerful efforts.

Phil Donnelly

President

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7 May 2018