



Batemans Bay Performance and Exhibition Centre
Working Group Inc.

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NEWSLETTER NO. 16 MAY 2011

Hello to all PerfEx Members. Apologies, but we've been a bit slow to get going this year for various reasons but on April 29th we held the PerfEx AGM for 2010. This is covered further on in this Newsletter. However my Report to the AGM which summarises the events of the last 12 months is included below.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE AGM

Introduction

The past PerfEx year has been relatively quiet as we have continued to work as part of the Eurobodalla Shire Council Cultural Infrastructure Sunset Committee where we are involved with Arts' infrastructure in the Shire as a whole, which, of course, very much encompasses performing and visual arts space in Batemans Bay.

Sunset Committee

The life of this Sunset Committee has recently received its second extension and we are now entering our 3rd year, although we don't meet very frequently. The release of the findings of the Eurobodalla Shire Situation Analysis of the Arts and Cultural Infrastructure Report completed by Conroy and Hillson, happened just after our AGM in April last year. In a nutshell, the recommendations were that each of the three centres, Narooma, Moruya and Batemans Bay should be served by individual arts infrastructures, whilst the construction of a Regional Centre was found not to be appropriate, given the diversity of each town.

Whereas Narooma and Moruya are mostly extending and refurbishing existing facilities, Batemans Bay was the exception, in that a new 'arts hub' was recommended as a 'matter of priority'. All of the Report's recommendations were subsequently adopted by the Councillors and the Sunset committee continued to refine and

define those suggestions. Almost without exception, it was agreed that both the 150-seat suggested performance space was too small and we have subsequently arrived at this point in time, at a figure of at least 300 seats. Also, the suggested gallery space has increased by 20% at this stage.

The Report mooted two possible sites for a centre in Batemans Bay; the Hanging Rock locality and the Community Centre site in Museum Place. During the year, Council's Planning Department put forward a strong argument as to why it would be preferable to locate the centre at Hanging Rock and although we did not necessarily agree and since Council will ultimately be responsible for the construction, operation and management of a centre, PerfEx is not in a strong bargaining position.

During the year, Council applied for a Federal Youth Grant of \$2,000,000 which would have enabled them to reposition the Youth Café and include a youth workshop space, as well as tying in with the extension of TAFE and University of Wollongong facility, all to be located at Hanging Rock. Despite confidence of success, Council failed to receive a grant. One of the main reasons for this is that they were not 'shovel ready' with plans and DA's in place. This means that as soon as Grants are available projects can be approved and built with the incumbent Commonwealth Government of the day able to take the kudos.

With the 'shovel ready' attitude in mind, Council decided to set in place a concept Master Plan for the Hanging Rock area. PerfEx has representation as part of a Sunset Committee set up to be a part of this process, along with other stakeholders of this area: the sporting bodies, University, TAFE, Library and adjoining residents. In February, Architects Graham Bell Bowman of Wollongong were appointed and PerfEx will have the opportunity to work with them to put forward our requirements. This will be very much a

concept plan as the finer details will not be needed at this point in time.

It is also worth noting that there is some doubt that there will be sufficient room for a Performing Arts centre within the space at Hanging Rock; but we feel sufficiently confident that Council are sympathetic to, and feel a responsibility for, providing for Batemans Bay's cultural needs, which would mean that an alternate site would need to be found.

Also noteworthy is that at a further Council meeting in February, 2011 the Councillors adopted the latest Arts' Infrastructure Sunset Committee recommendations for the funding for the continued support and development of the arts' infrastructure developments in each of the Shire's towns. The Eurobodalla Shire is becoming much more culturally aware, which is fantastic!

PerfEx has always been of the belief that to achieve a centre to properly reflect Batemans Bay's requirements, a professionally conducted Business Plan should be commissioned. To this end, during the year, we made an offer of \$15,000 to the Council, a sum which we could afford and which we considered would cover 50% of such a study.

Council has not taken us up on this, but has approved proper Business Planning for the Shire's cultural infrastructure; so they may accept our offer down the track. Incidentally, the offer was made on the proviso that such a study would be acted upon and not remain in a bottom drawer.



Website

www.perfex.org.au was launched in August and has proved to be a great asset. Instead of sending individual information to new members or interested parties we can just point them to the website. We are thrilled with the result and found our web designer, Max Carpenter, not only very easy to work with, but also creatively talented. Our email address is info@perfex.org.au.

We also have a folder about PerfEx on display in the Batemans Bay Library.

Members, Donors and Supporters

Currently, our financial membership stands at 65. We have also compiled a database of donors which took a lot of work. These are companies or individuals who have supported PerfEx in some way; it may be monetary, in kind, or even artists who have performed free of charge for us. We send them regular Newsletters so that they can keep in touch with our progress, having been generous enough to support us when we've needed it.

A further recent initiative has been to write to all organisations which have written letters of support in the past requesting use of their membership numbers to add to our own supporter numbers; this is to better reflect the actual support which PerfEx has in the community and will greatly assist when lobbying.

I would also like at this point to thank the Batemans Bay Arts and Crafts Society for their monetary support of a percentage of their raffle proceeds during the year.

Fundraising

After five fundraising events in 2009, we agreed that 2010 had to be quieter for our own health and sanity! As a consequence, we held only one fundraising event in the year, selling tickets to one night of the Bay Theatre Player's production of 'Cabaret' in November.

However, I am thrilled to announce the imminent birth of the PerfEx Social Committee with the coming together of a group of fun-loving individuals with the aim initially of holding small, enjoyable events, primarily to broaden the PerfEx public profile, whilst raising funds as a consequence. This has been an ambition of mine for some time, so I'm especially thrilled that Meredith Malcolm has agreed to co-ordinate this group, at least for the time being.

Committee

Finally, I want to say a special thank you to the dedicated and enthusiastic PerfEx Committee members, Dave Harding, Carmel Brophy, Bob Kolderie, Noreen Ralston, Judy Malonyay and Peter Boys, although unfortunately Peter has still been too unwell to attend meetings. We wish him all the very best of good health for this coming year.

We're a very 'bonded' committee and always thoroughly enjoy our meetings. Despite this, Bob Kolderie has decided to up and leave us this year, due to family commitments and other interests.

Bob has taken his role as Treasurer very seriously and I thank him for the dedication he has given his position over the past two years, with special acknowledgment for building and maintaining the members' and donors' databases, which will make it far easier for our next Treasurer. We wish Bob well and are sorry to see him go. It's almost like losing a member of the family!

Liza Swaine resigned as Publicity Officer during the year, again due to family commitments. I thank Liza for her expert turn of phrase whilst she held that position. Unfortunately, we have been unable to replace her, which has not affected us so far, but an increased public face would be welcome in 2011.

2010 was a year of vindication for our organisation evidenced in the findings of the Situation Analysis Report. Further, it was a year of consolidation of the strength of our organisation and the respect which we have gained, not only in the community, but within the Shire. I believe that PerfEx is viewed as an organisation representative of Arts and Culture in Batemans Bay – a big reputation to uphold, but we have worked hard to get to this point. Well done to our members and everyone else who has played a part. May we build on this reputation in 2011.



AGM

The PerfEx AGM was held on 29th April.

Bob Kolderie and Peter Boys had indicated that they were resigning from the committee but the remaining committee members were happy to continue with their roles. Jan Draper, a new member, was nominated and accepted the position as Treasurer and Public Officer in place of Bob; Jan is a very welcome addition to our Committee.

Bob reported that at the end of 2010 PerfEx had financial assets totalling \$21,485.

MEMBERSHIP

Since the inception of PerfEx the membership year has run from July 1st to June 30th whereas the financial year has been the calendar year. To

correct this anomaly the decision was taken at the committee meeting following the AGM to make the membership year the calendar year also.

Current members will have paid their membership fee for 2010/11. This decision means that members will get an increased membership of 6 months this year and will be asked to rejoin prior to 2012. It's not often you get something for nothing!

We are also arranging for direct credit to our IMB account which will be much easier for those who use internet banking. Details will be forwarded with the renewal request in a few months' time.



SUNSET COMMITTEES

Hanging Rock

The most recent Hanging Rock Sunset Committee meeting was held on 10 May at which Terry Graham of Graham Bell Bowman Architects presented some suggested concept plans which include a Performing Arts Centre! It was wonderful to see a building actually on paper, although only a footprint at this stage. More details are to be worked through and, before a centre is finally built, a business plan will be commissioned. Prioritising the projects for all stakeholders will be a challenge for Council. But this is an exciting project for Batemans Bay.

Cultural Infrastructure

The next Cultural Infrastructure Sunset Committee meeting will be held on June 2nd.



PerfEx SOCIAL COMMITTEE

I mentioned the imminent birth of this committee in my President's report and can now announce the arrival of this group comprising Meredith Malcolm, Jan Draper, Chris Kelly, Robyn Edgar and Elizabeth Lambert. It's great to have a bunch of enthusiastic ladies sharing the aim of promoting PerfEx and I get the feeling they're going to have a lot of fun in the process – this is the goal. A fun 'People's Choice Wine Tasting' night is planned for late Winter/Spring with details to be shared as soon as they are worked out.

If anyone wishes to be part of this team, please let us know.

Also, if there's anyone with writing skills out there who would like to take on the role of occasional Publicity Officer, please put up your hand. We are down a committee member too, if someone is dying to join our ranks.....

Thank you all for the continued support.

RIVER OF ART

The 'River of Art' begins this week, with some great exhibitions and events planned for the Eurobodalla, which I'm sure will be well supported, although I'd love to see Batemans Bay arts organisations playing a more prominent role another year, even before we have our own centre. The Arts generally are playing a much more important role in the area, which is fantastic!

If you know of any organisation which would like to be a part of this in future, or any time they might need arts' assistance or information, they can contact Monika McInerney, the Eurobodalla Council's Cultural Officer on 4474 1061 or Andrew Gray of the South East Arts Region (SEAR) on 6499 2286. These officers are here to assist you.

Wishing you all 'a not too frostbitten winter'!

With all good wishes from the PerfEx team,

Jean Brewer
President

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Please feel free to contact any of us should you wish to discuss anything, have any ideas or suggestions. Don't forget to keep up to date at www.perfex.org.au