



Batemans Bay Performance and Exhibition Centre  
Working Group Inc.

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## NEWSLETTER NO. 26 JUNE 2016



Dear PerfEx Members and Supporters

What a busy 6 weeks it's been since our last Newsletter sent on 4th May when we expressed concern about the Eurobodalla Shire's Expressions of Interest regarding the Redevelopment of the Batemans Bay Bowling Club which was inviting Private Investors to look after the Arts and we flagged that we needed to gather strong community support.



### COMING TOGETHER OF THE ARTS AND CULTURAL GROUPS AS A UNITED VOICE

As a result, Arts' groups have united together like never before in the history of PerfEx. We can all see a glimmer of light at the end of the arduous Arts' Venue tunnel and everyone wants a piece of the action!



*Arts' and Cultural group leaders outside the Bowling Club Monday 16th May*

This was evidenced by the very successful gathering at the front of the Bowling Club Auditorium on the morning of Monday 16th May when 32 Arts' and Cultural representatives, (mostly Presidents) from 13 organisations came together to show a united voice. The subsequent article and photo in the Bay Post outlined our hope that having been nearly 50 years without a dedicated Arts' space, that Council talk to us about using the existing facility until such time as it is redeveloped. All of these organizations and more,

also wish to ensure that the eventual Master Plan reflects and includes our needs and vision.

Future meetings are planned, as needed, and the Churchill family of the Bay City Cinemas has kindly offered us meeting space. At this point we'd also like to thank the many individuals and organizations who have submitted their own EOI's to Eurobodalla Shire Council. Well done to you all!

We also all fear that we would be losing community land if it's sold off. This is land which the community feels it owns. Whilst it is in the hands of the Eurobodalla Shire Council, it is ratepayers land. But if sold, we could **never** afford to buy back this wonderful gateway entrance position to our Shire. We feel it essential that it stay in ratepayers' hands if at all possible.



### **COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS' MEETING AT THE SOLDIERS' CLUB**

Taking all these concerns into account, the redevelopment of the Bowling Club is bigger than just Arts and Culture and PerfEx felt that all possible stakeholders needed to come together to have their combined wishes put forward in the Expressions of Interest document; a strong community stand for both the interim and ongoing use of this community site. Aware that the deadline was 10th June, quick action was needed, so a meeting was convened by PerfEx at the Soldiers' Club on the evening of Tuesday 31st May. 56 people attended from the business and tourism sectors, from arts and culture and the Indoor Aquatic Group; all of the people likely to be affected by the re-development of the built precinct.



*Bowling Club Community Stakeholders' Meeting at Bay Soldiers' Club Tuesday 31st May*

Paul Biddlestone, CEO of the Club was to have facilitated, but had to call in sick on the day, so special thanks go to PerfEx supporter Anthony Mayne, resident and Management Consultant who stepped in at the last minute. The aim of the night was to arrive at agreed dot-point proposals, the simplest format for a one meeting submission. The first dot-point was for the interim use of the current Bowling Club; the second for our Master Plan vision and the third for the Aquatic Centre vision.

There was plenty of participation from the floor and by the end of the night, we had confirmation of the dot points, plus additional whiteboard information, together with 9-pages of Minutes, typed stoically and almost word perfectly by PerfEx Member Fran Moorfield. A fantastic effort!

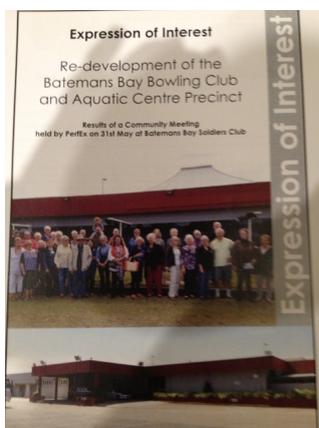
The ensuing congratulatory emails showed the participants were appreciative of having been given a forum to voice their opinions.

Interestingly, 55 of the 56 attendees were against Senior's Living accommodation on the site as all felt that it was entirely inappropriate alongside a possibly noisy Performing Arts' venue.

A Press Release and the above photo appeared in the Bay Post on Wednesday 1st June.

In the days following the meeting, the white board information collected from the meeting was correlated into the dot point documents and, together with a copy of the actual signatures and contact details collected from the attendees and a transcribed Excel Spreadsheet of same, was submitted to Councils EOI's on 10th June.

A copy of this and can be found on our website [www.perfex.org.au](http://www.perfex.org.au)



## **PERFEX EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST SUBMISSIONS FOR 'THE GATEWAY'**

Yes, we thought that "The Gateway" is a great name for the site and put it in our submission!

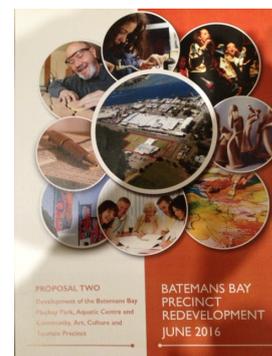
Following the collation of the Community submission, it was heads down to continue the work on our own submissions for the Expressions of Interest due in on Friday 10th June and special thanks to Secretary Sue Mackenzie and Marketing Officer Vanessa Hurst for the long hours put into producing such comprehensive proposals. Remarkably, Sue and I are still friends despite late nights of working and arguing the point!

Two proposals were completed by the skin of our teeth by the due date of Friday 10th June! We are very proud of those documents,

probably more so of our second, which was the vision for the Master Plan. It ended up at 18-pages, but I think we'd honed our skills after the first.

We must give thanks here to Jeff Morgan, the Eurobodalla Strategic Planner in charge of the Expressions of Interest. He has been extremely helpful and accommodating at all times. Along with fellow Strategic Planner Mark Hitchinson, they facilitated a viewing of the old Bowling Club site for us. Jeff also invited us to put in two submissions; one for the use of the existing building as well as our vision for the Master Plan.

As mentioned, our proposals can be viewed on [www.perfex.org.au](http://www.perfex.org.au)



Briefly, our interim use of the Bowling Club proposal, suggests that the current auditorium would be used not only for performance, but for events and large conferences, even weddings as the current commercial kitchen could be leased to cater and a coffee shop open for use by everyone. Visual artists are excited about the potential gallery and workshop spaces, even the prospect of giving art classes to our youth. The many art forms will be included, with a special display for our aboriginal heritage. A retail space is planned selling top quality art, handcrafts and quality produce which would all be attached to a Tourist Information Centre, which we are suggesting be relocated, allowing Council to sell the existing Visitor's Information site. The museum wants display space and storage, U3A wants meeting rooms; film makers want studios and work spaces; Adult Education want hospitality and hands on tourism spaces. Council could consider the possibility of selling the Community Centre site, if sufficient meeting room spaces can be catered for. Some alterations will need to be made, but local builders have expressed an interest already in helping us.

We envisage a facility abuzz with people of all ages and abilities using the centre on a regular basis, catering for their cultural and artistic needs. The existing greens are ideal for outdoor entertainment, markets and festivals.

The second proposal sets out our vision for the Master Plan; an iconic building for the gateway to the Shire with state of the art inclusions for the performing and visual arts, whilst catering for M.I.C.E; (Marketing, Incentives, Conferences and Events) placed as we are, only 2 hours from Canberra, equidistant between Melbourne and Sydney, in a stunningly beautiful location. We endorse Council's suggestion of including a Visitors' Centre as tourism and the Arts go hand in hand. In fact research shows that Arts' and Culture feature near the top of tourists' preferred activities.



L-R Vanessa Hurst, Jeannie Brewer and Sue Mackenzie handing hard copies of all three Expressions of Interest Proposals to Jeff Morgan at Council Chambers on the afternoon of Friday 10th June.

### VIEW OF THE COUNCILLORS

It is no secret that a minority of Councillors have not been in favour of us and are a little slow to realize the importance and necessity of the Arts for the Community. However, I have to say that we are feeling more positive of achieving our goal than we ever have in the past. There seems to be a widely held acceptance now that it would be foolish not to at least use the old Bowling Club building in the interim with its ready-made auditorium, even though it's not up to scratch for all types of performance. Plus there's enormous scope to provide for the needs of so many in our cultural community.

I'm pleased to report that some Councillors are already saying, let's talk about it. But congratulations must go to Councillor Liz Innes who has been the first to go public on the matter and I quote her from an article in the Bay Post last Friday 17th, "I want to make it clear that, in my view, this is a community site and we want to put it in the hands of the community to set the direction of the site. This is not a Council site, it is held by Council on behalf of the community". She goes on to say "I fully support getting performing arts in there in the meantime".

She also successfully moved a motion to Council last Tuesday 14th – 'That Council receive a report on the potential of a sunset committee to investigate opportunities for the development of the Batemans Bay Mackay Park Precinct'.

So let's hope something positive comes out of this for us.

We do have Local Government elections coming up in September and I urge you all to vote for those Councillors who openly support and even encourage us. We are reliant on their support for any progress and I cannot stress this enough.



### THE PERFEX ENCOURAGEMENT AWARD ASSOCIATED WITH THE GRACE PALEG DIGRESSIONISTS' EXHIBITION

On a lighter note, at one of the many functions held to celebrate our wonderful 'River of Art', and full credit to all coordinators and entrants, PerfEx gave an Award to a 'talented and enthusiastic' pastel student of the inimitable Grace Paleg. In its inaugural year, Grace chose Ebony Allen as a very worthy recipient. This Award is

made possible through the generosity of PerfEx Members Marion and Henk Roubos-Bennett.

The fun, well-attended event was very ably opened by the Eurobodalla Arts' Co-ordinator Indi Carmichael. PerfEx Member Dougie Bindon-Howell was as gracious as ever in his introductions; our local Arts' community is blessed indeed to have the warmth and generosity of the likes of Dougie and Grace in our midst.

Many thanks also to Grace for the unexpected \$90 donation to PerfEx from the gold coins collected from visitors to her Gallery during the 'River of Art' week..



Two Committee Members are currently quite unwell; Jan Draper has just undergone surgery and Noreen Ralston-Birchall is awaiting hers. We wish them both full recoveries and hope they'll be back on board very soon.

Our submissions are in and we're taking a breather. We're working on updating our website (it may be a couple of days before the Proposals show on line); and may even have a Blog in time to come; PerfEx is moving into the modern era; it just all takes time and expertise! Anyway, you won't hear from us again until after we've heard from Councillors or the Strategic Planning Department of the Eurobodalla Shire Council as to any success which we may have had.

So in the meantime, we wish you an enjoyable winter in our glorious Eurobodalla Shire.

Jeannie Brewer and the PerfEx Committee

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