



Batemans Bay Performance and Exhibition Centre
Working Group Inc.

PerfEx mission: "To bring to completion the construction of a centre for the performing and visual arts, to meet the current and future needs of the Batemans Bay Community"

Newsletter *June 2019*

Quite a long one so get comfortable and settle in....

First: Our **AGM - at the Batemans Bay Community Centre**

10am on Wednesday 26th June

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- AGM and call for committee and general members – 26th June 2019, 10am BBCC
- Update on BBay Community Centre petition and council meeting of 28thMay2019
- Going forward – our tasks
- Raffle for a Grace Paleg painting! (At the AGM)

Hi all.

While the intention and funds to build a theatre Arts complex in the Bay are now a reality, there is still much to do to ensure it:

- does not become a 'white elephant' and that
- we do not trade other community assets for it.

We therefore need members and support to ensure we are able to continue to contribute and be at the ceremony that opens it, holding our head with pride.

AGM - at the Batemans Bay Community Centre on the Wednesday 26th June at 10am

We will have our **AGM in June** and welcome all members of the community to attend, whether members or not. At the meeting you may just listen, or join up and participate in any voting. It will be held at the Batemans Bay Community Centre on the Wednesday 26th June at 10am when all positions are vacated and re-elections held. Tea and nibbles will be provided.

We will be looking for extra committee members, especially those with web skills, media and business connections, a love of the Arts, organisational skills, community commitment and a passion to see the proposed Arts facility up and running well.

We will also have raffle tickets on sale for a painting donated by **Grace Paleg**, our well known, award winning painter and committee member.

Please note: This is the last newsletter for those who have not renewed your fees.

Update on BBay Community Centre petition and council meeting of 28thMay2019

On the 28th May Councillor Mayne presented the petition put out by PerFex to keep the BBay CommCentre asset and its functions. There were several speakers to the petition and time for extensions and questions were given to us. There was also quite an amount of discussion by the councillors in their section of the meeting which indicated that they (appear to) at last be taking our concerns and point of view into consideration. There is no guarantee they will keep the centre. A motion was passed to defer such a decision until all the tender prices are in. When that will be, and what the parameters of the tender process are to be are yet to be decided. We are still in Nebulous Land, waiting for the mists to clear.

One comment that was uncontested was that the council do not have a current, viable business plan (yet they have secured \$52million!) for the project. This is of ongoing concern.

It is also of concern that the descriptions of the inclusions, of the Arts Centre in particular, keep changing – from no mention of the Visual arts at all, to a recording studio; to only dance, rehearsal and theatre, and some meeting rooms. We are seeking to clarify this, as you can imagine.

Community centre overlaid on one of the recent concept plans (thanks to LP) – not much room for anything else if they are going to duplicate or better what we already have. The GM assures us we have more seating in the proposed new centre, but it does not look like it!



The presentations by myself, as President of Pefex, Alan Russell representing Meals on Wheels and David McLachlan representing the Chamber of Commerce in the Bay, and (partial) recording of

Councillor Mayne in his 'tabling' speech, can be heard on the council website (though I find the Council website overall is very out of date in relation to almost anything to do with MackayPark!) <http://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/inside-council/project-and-exhibitions/major-projects-and-works/batemans-bay-mackay-park-precinct-redevelopment-proposal>) or at: <https://www.beagleweekly.com.au/allthenews/page/2>

You can also see various articles, points of view and comments from community on the Beagle site in relation to this issue. <https://www.beagleweekly.com.au/single-post/2019/05/28/Is-Council-becoming-rattled-->

Thanks to all who signed, wrote emails, comments and who turned up in support, either to the presentation of the petition to Councillor Mayne at the community Centre prior to it going to the admin section of Council, and then to the Council meeting for its presentation there. We are glad to see we **are representing a real concern of the broader community and not just the ARTS.**

Our Tasks

1. On the first part of our task we will continue to give input and liaise with Council on the final **form** of the **plans** (Concept 'D') and **inclusions** of the Arts facility in the Mackay Park facility. **This is a critical role to achieve our mission.**
2. Liaison with council and community to ensure **no loss of community services and assets** as a result of the development at Mackay Park
3. Update/renew/rebuild the Perfex website
4. Update Perfex logo and letterhead

Tasks in detail:

1. Input to final form of plans for Mackay Park project. I have requested a Sunset Committee meeting to discuss this. A collation of the feedback to the three concept plans is now available on the Council website at available at <http://www.esc.nsw.gov.au/inside-council/council/meetings/2019/april/ordinary-council-meeting-30-april-2019/Batemans-Bay-Regional-Aquatic-Arts-and-Leisure-Centre-Survey-results.pdf>

I agree there will be many wonderful things about the Mackay Park facility and it could be a vibrant Arts and Pool Complex but there are still many things to clarify, such as

- inclusions,
- dimensions,
- management type (leases, etc)
- time frames
- affordability of use.

At present there are changing iterations of what is to be in the centre – recording studios, rehearsal and dance rooms, a meeting room, a function room, NO full kitchen and a 'cupboard- size gallery' space.

There is much talk about the theatre and its viability but of greatest concern at the moment is the apparent lack of accommodating the Visual Arts community in the new facility.

2. Batemans Bay Community Centre – petition to keep this asset and its functions



On Point 2, a **petition** was raised in February, delivered to Council on Tuesday the 15th May 2019 and tabled at the council meeting of 28th May 2019 to keep the building and services of the BBay community centre. It gained 1001 signatures.

There were 1001 signatures on the pages, 1000 or so voices raised in outrage at the prospect of losing a facility built by community funds, serving core community activities and adding benefit year round.

In fact the petition represented some 9% of the local Batemans Bay area population or 6.2% of the wider Bay area (though probably it is closer to 12.5% of the resident population, considering some 30% of our houses are holiday homes), even including visitors who have signed.

I am pleased to say I do not know 90% of these people who have signed. The petition gained a life of its own, fed by the outrage of people that council is 'taking away' such a community asset; ignoring local community wishes and history; condensing traffic and taking away public toilets that are set back from the foreshore.

Losing the Community Centre is of great concern to us as the new proposed facility does not yet replicate or improve on the Community Centre, with its dividable hall, large and small meeting rooms, a rentable office and a commercial scale kitchen (relied on heavily by Meals on Wheels who, Council admits, will **not** be accommodated in the new centre) and flat surrounds. It spreads traffic, has the only public toilets away from the foreshore and enables easy usage, even in high tourism times.

Without it, business, cultural and community pragmatics will be congested into the CBD and its problematic traffic flow, let alone the other aspects that make it valued:

- 112 community groups used the Centre last year;
- there is a youth café;
- dance classes;
- a food and crafts market;
- social outreach events,
- activity classes, and
- more.....

It:

- is easily accessible (no major highway to cross and out of tourism hot spots),
- spreads the local traffic in peak times away from Beach Road and highway;
- has plentiful parking; and

- has a carpark between it and the Museum that can easily be sectioned off for outdoor markets, festivals and events.
- has clean, safe public toilets, the only ones away from the foreshore (i.e: tourist sections)
- brings positive community activity into an area that may otherwise be problematic, especially with a large liquor outlet to open soon close by
- has the Water Gardens flowing on from it
- there is green space that could be made into community gardens
- it is quiet.

The alternative council facilities (Mackay Park football pavilion, Malua Bay hall and the Hanging Rock football/convention centre) do not have the same range of facilities in the one place and are quite isolated from other services, whereas the present community centre is near Baylink, the Govt Services office, Adult Ed, Katungal, the Museum, the carwash and various commercial entities within easy walking distance.

We note, too, that this part of town badly needs people moving in and out to keep its vitality, especially now Target has closed down and an alcohol outlet is moving in nearby. Ideally the whole blank area (BigW's ?sites) would make a lovely **Peoples Concourse**, with cafes and shops under and plazas amongst nice accommodation to bring vitality, beauty and 'sharing/plaza space' – something the Bay is very short of.

- The Mackay park proposal is still not finalised but concept plans to date neither replicate nor improve on the USABLE space of the Centre,
- does not assure affordability for the local community;
- does not address reducing traffic congestion in the CBD, and
- the disposal of the BBCommCentre would eliminate public toilet facilities in the inland section of town (all other public toilets are in the town are close to the foreshore: Bridge Plaza, Stocklands, near Starfish Deli, Albert Ryan Park, the Marina).

It is worth noting that even more community groups than the present 112 currently using the Centre would use the Community Centre were it to have wifi and suitable up to date technology.

3. Update website

An ongoing need for any organisation in today's technology world is a vital and updated website.

We are in the process of refreshing and somewhat reorganising the site (for instance grouping the historical information) and will let you know when it is fully up to date again.

4. New Logo

We are in the process of developing a new logo – one that is fresh and vibrant, and yet keeps the sense of the original. The draft is both a play on the old logo (see top of the letterhead) and on the double theatre masks of comedy/tragedy – a most fitting allusion. (to be sent soon)

We also explored simpler versions such as: 

At present we have two logos, the letterhead and the website logo.

See you at the AGM!!!!