

20 September 2018



**President's Report to the
66th Annual General Meeting**

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Ladies and gentlemen good evening and thank you for joining us at our 66th Annual General Meeting, this year held at the iconic Beaumaris Bowls Club - which incidentally is a mere couple of years younger than us!

As usual, it's been a frenetic year for your Committee, and one of considerable change in how we go about functioning and communicating to best meet the objectives set out in our Constitution. More particularly, we have made it our focus to set in place tools that will allow us to both engage with and involve our members more often, and further cement our place in the wider Beaumaris community. You can expect the momentum on that front to snowball the further the year progresses, including engaging with our local teachers and school children.

Over this past year, and I believe for the first time, we have filled the maximum permissible number of places available for volunteers wishing to serve on your Committee. Thirteen in all and believe me the extra numbers have certainly been needed. Over the *next* year, subject to any additional nominations (which of course we would welcome) it's likely we'll revert to a more historically familiar Committee size. In addition to thanking those members who will be continuing to serve with me on Committee – Caroline Lawton, Wendy Parker, Di Rex, Geoffrey Goode, Shelley Durance and Titia Huggard, I want to expressly thank those who have given so much but are stepping off Committee as of tonight.

So, in no particular order ...

Jamie Paterson as Treasurer has transformed our record-keeping, communications and been our main interface with the developer of our new website.

Annie Price has brought her energy and advertising industry expertise.

Shirley Prager, who has focused her efforts on combating the plans of the Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron to construct a massive marina in Beaumaris Bay and significantly extend its present footprint over our unique fossils field.

Scott Timlock, who stepped forward and had a critical role in our successful Campaign 2002, *Keeping the Concourse Green and Concourse Bushland intact*.

Virginia Mosk, who threw herself energetically into Committee affairs and is continuing to help in the background.

I particularly wish to acknowledge and extend a thank you to our retiring Secretary, Chris Costley. Chris has been outstanding, and his insight, efficiency in preparing minutes of meetings, strategic advice and guiding influence at Management Committee meetings will be sorely missed. He has however assured that he will be back and we're delighted to hear that. In his absence, the ubiquitous Geoffrey Goode has stepped up as always to fill the role.

Our “*de facto*” Committee member, Chris Sutton, of course continues to deliver his vital contribution to BCS in advising upon and drafting our objections against inappropriate developments, engaging with Bayside City Council, presenting at VCAT and so on, and so on!

In respect to myself, surviving a life-threatening health incident in January this year, and with little improvement by July, led me to indicate it would be best for me to step off Committee to devote myself to managing its consequences. More recently though my care factor and a desire to finish the job got in the way of my better judgment, so you’re stuck with me for another year I’m afraid!

One of our major and longest-running campaigns “[Saving Beaumaris Bay from a Huge Marina](#)” has seemingly been lying dormant for many months. Behind the scenes however much significant work has continued. Associate Professor Vicki Kotsarilos (also known as Karalis), who will be presenting to you shortly, has been integrally involved and especially so in the submission for National Heritage Listing of Beaumaris Bay. As such, I’d like to accord her the honour of making a special announcement tonight.

Our [Reducing Beaumaris foreshore’s over-abundance of signs](#) campaign has recently resulted in Bayside City Council rationalizing and reducing its signage at Ricketts Point. However, other submissions to Council for [re-naming and re-zoning of various small reserves](#) has not resulted in discernible progress, and will need our persistence.

Unlike last year however, it’s been internally where much of the action has taken place, which I’ve already alluded to. The challenge in the year ahead for BCS is to ensure that we build upon the many hours devoted by Committee members this past year towards reinvigorating and restructuring how we function as a Committee, and how we communicate with you, our members. We want to make sure that you see clear value in your membership, in being kept informed of what’s going on in Beaumaris, and know we are fighting the battles you want fought.

In addition, our BCS Constitution had its 21st birthday this year, but it’s now ageing rather than coming of age. As some here may recall it was hoped it could be reviewed, and suggested wording changes submitted to you within the past year. Given other commitments though, that just hasn’t been possible, but we plan to present recommended wording to you for your consideration in the coming year.

Externally-speaking, the protection intended to be provided by the [VPO3](#) (that’s Vegetation Protection Overlay of course) covering Beaumaris and Black Rock has been a real focus this past year. A number of our Committee, including Wendy Parker, who has primarily driven the agenda, have attended meetings with Bayside City Council managers and officers to press Council to ensure adequate education of community, developers, arborists and planning officers about the VPO3, its stronger enforcement, and its proper interpretation. Whilst progress from Council has been glacially slow, almost to the point of being illusory, they completely understand our perspective, in detail, and we will persist.

We have recently begun publicizing a free, major event with a number of speakers we are running on 11 October, at 6:30 pm. It’s about the VPO3 and it’s being held at the Beaumaris Secondary College and for those who see irony in that given what occurred there in the last couple of years, I want to explain why. We always supported the school itself being built. We wanted it to be the best it could be and yes, retaining more vegetation and space for the school itself would have been better. We cannot change the past.

We fought incredibly hard, but now its history. We have to work in the here and now, and show leadership. Nothing like [the replanting](#) that was promised has occurred and much that was planted has died for lack of maintenance. Against that reality the school has specifically reached out to us and wishes to work with us on regenerating as much as possible of what was lost, for the future. That also includes being involved in helping them with the environmental studies of the children where we are able, and protecting the Long Hollow Heathland. We only have two choices. Get involved and help the school community, or not. In our judgement, not was never an option. We are dealing with our children, and what our community's school will look like in a hotter Beaumaris. I hope you agree.

This focus on seeking the best outcome has also extended to a number of meetings and consideration of plans as regards the redevelopment of the Sandringham Public Golf Links bordering Cheltenham and Reserve Roads – which is also [covered by a VPO3](#). Geoff Goode, Di Rex and to a lesser degree myself all spent time in consultation on this project's design, fruitfully we hope. It now proceeds to the planning application stage at Council over which we naturally intend to remain watchful.

In the coming months our focus will also turn to the [Beaumaris Community Centre and its Beaumaris Community Oval](#). Watch this space - or perhaps more poignantly, I urge you all to keep a watch over *that* space. The attack upon our local natural environment and public open space continues and will do so I expect until the engineers and some sports club lobbies have no more supposed 'greenfields' to dominate with infrastructure.

So, ladies and gentlemen that concludes my report on events during Beaumaris Conservation Society Incorporated's 66th year. I'll now invite any questions before handing you over to the retiring (very retiring) Jamie Paterson, who will then deliver his Treasurer's Report.

Gregory Mier
BCS Inc. President

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