

11 September 2019



**President's Report to the
67th Annual General Meeting**

Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc.
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Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the 67th Annual General Meeting of Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc, this year back at the traditional home of our AGMs.

Yet another busy year lies behind us in which we have involved ourselves in a wide spread of important local issues and have formed strong and more co-operative relationships with other local community groups likewise working to improve our environment.

I'm sure you'll be pleased to hear that I intend to keep my address quite brief this year. I do need however to mention a number of the more important issues that we have involved ourselves in as a Committee.

1. We joined with others to call for a ban on single use plastics to reduce plastics pollution of our Bay, in particular. This resulted in Bayside City Council passing motions to that end, starting with their usage and extending over time to Bayside in general.
2. We needed to act (yet again) to protect the Concourse Green from being compromised and degraded.
3. We successfully supported and spoke at Council in favour of a ban on cigarette smoking on all Bayside beaches and within all its coastal reserves.
4. We initiated a meeting with our two Southern Ward Councillors and sought to avoid the horrific bitumen treatment of the footpaths at the Beaumaris Concourse, requesting instead the more attractive pebbled concrete solution. This resulted in a specific agenda item in a General Meeting at Council, which narrowly failed to avoid the outcome which so many are now loudly complaining about.
5. We are keeping a watch on the Beaumaris Art Group building and the vegetation adjacent to it, mindful of Council's seeming determination to demolish it, apparently in the absence of an engineering report to justify the need for that demolition. I understand that Heritage Victoria and the National Trust have subsequently shown an interest in supporting the preservation of the current structure.
6. In October last year we held a very successful event at the Beaumaris Secondary College with a number of speakers talking to various aspects of the VPO3, which was also live-streamed via our Facebook page.

7. We worked over many months with Council, resulting in a successful, and unanimous, motion being passed towards the establishment of an urban forest throughout Bayside.
8. Likewise, over many months (and face-to-face meetings) assisting Council to beef up and better implement its enforcement practices to prevent illegal tree clearing.
9. As a result of this sustained effort of communicating how important protection of the VPOs is, Council itself initiated a change in requirements so that planning permits seeking to remove protected vegetation must go to a full planning meeting where there are 3 or more protected trees at risk, regardless of the number of objectors.
10. We attended meetings and walk-arounds with other local groups and the project managers concerning the Sandringham Public Golf Links in an attempt to preserve as much vegetation as possible within the redeveloped layout, and to achieve significant and appropriate replanting.
11. After years of effort we finally witnessed the withdrawal by the BMYS of its much disliked Beaumaris Marina plans, and have since encouraged them to be a more open, community-minded club to the point where unlike in the past, we now share open and co-operative communication channels.
12. Just this last Saturday our Committee ran a fully booked out event to encourage and educate locals on the how and why's of planting out nature strips with indigenous vegetation to assist biodiversity.

As you can appreciate, these projects require multiple follow up actions by your Committee members, and many, many hours of commitment whilst at the same time running businesses and/or looking after families. It is a statement of fact that without BCS members helping out by joining our Management Committee, very little would get done.

Over the past year and in no particular order, your initial Committee members were Caroline Lawton, Wendy Parker, Diane Rex, Geoffrey Goode, Shelley Durance, Titia Huggard, and myself. They were then joined by Elouise Dunn and then Ian Urquhart (who also kindly volunteered to take over the role of Treasurer from Diane Rex).

I would like to extend my deep thanks to my fellow Committee members not only for giving up their time for the benefit of our members and the wider Beaumaris community, but also for their fantastic support of me personally.

Speaking of which, I made the decision a few weeks ago to step down from the role of President to devote more time to my health, my family, and my law practice, in that order. It has been an absolute honour for a boy who grew up in and loves Beaumaris so much, to have been able to do what I can to give something back.

I also need to address a project which did not go as we would have wished. The firm we engaged to deliver a new website design came highly recommended, but we have been deeply disappointed with the resulting product, which has not functioned properly, and certainly not in the way we were assured that it would. This interfered with our ability to communicate properly with our members, and prevented much information being accessible through our web page. As a result, this has meant that it has become necessary to take one step backwards, in order to take two steps forward. That means, that as we re-progress the project, we need to revert in part to our old website to restore its functionality and accessibility, whilst we build around it thanks to a new IT provider who has agreed to sponsor us to that end. I am happy both formally and informally to answer any questions members may have about what has occurred, and what we are doing to address the situation.

I hope that you have noted that after somewhat of a resulting hiatus, we have significantly improved the level of communication with our membership over this past 6 months or so.

Looking forward, you can expect to be invited to a number of events over the next year designed to educate, assist and hopefully, to involve more members of our community in enhancing what we love about Beaumaris. You can also take it as given that we will keep pressing for stronger and more efficient enforcement of our VPOs, the establishment of an urban forest throughout Bayside, and restoration of our canopy trees in particular.

That concludes my President's Report for this past year, ladies and gentlemen. I'll now open the floor for any questions you may wish to ask or any issues you'd like to raise, after which I'll hand over to our Acting Treasurer, Ian Urquhart, to present his Treasurer's Report.

Gregory Mier
President