

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am pleased to report that 2012 has again been a busy and successful year for Mulgoa Progress Association. Some of the matters we have been involved with during the year are:-

- Detailed submission on '*Penrith of the Future – The Future of Penrith*' which is a Council commissioned collaborative report outlining an urban vision for Penrith prepared by French architects, Campement Urbain and world renowned artist, Sylvie Blocher. MPA was at odds with Council on a range of matters, particularly the Panther's River Link Project, and our input involved numerous letters, meetings and emails;
- Submissions, meetings and emails with Council and State Government putting forward a proposal for Government to purchase Fernhill and convert it to a working property to include Penrith's botanical gardens, an educational seat for horticultural and agricultural research linked in with the universities, art gallery, function centre, convention centre and restaurant. Although the visionary proposal was strongly supported by politicians, we were unsuccessful due to lack of state government funding and poor response time. The property has now been sold to private owners and will include some of the things MPA proposed as well as a world class equestrian centre;
- A number of meetings with Tanya Davies, State member for Mulgoa, community forum meetings and Community Cabinet Visit seeing Brad Hazzard, State Minister for Planning and Infrastructure;
- Submissions, emails and meeting with Council regarding the State Government's ill-considered initiative of inviting landowners to nominate potential development sites, seven of which affected Mulgoa and its near surrounds. In this instance, MPA fully supported Council's position for which they expressed appreciation. Ultimately the State Government saw sense and decided not to proceed with the proposal though such initiatives are always likely to re-emerge in the future;
- Comment and attendance at strategic planning and community forum meetings conducted by Council;
- Letter and recommendations to Transgrid regarding a corridor of native bushland which they have now handed over to National Parks and Wildlife. MPA also has a close working relationship with Mulgoa Landcare Group in such environmental matters;
- Submission, emails and discussion with Council regarding litter on Mulgoa Road. Council has now introduced a 'Litter Management Action Plan'.
- Receiving, reviewing, considering and commenting on development applications in Mulgoa Valley where it is appropriate to do so;
- Assistance to groups outside the area dealing with matters which could impact on Mulgoa Valley, eg proposed cemeteries at Elizabeth Drive and Greendale Road, Bringelly.

Mulgoa residents are largely unaware of the range of matters MPA deals with on an ongoing basis but our proactive role has ensured Mulgoa Valley remains in the best environmental and heritage condition that will benefit the lifestyle of all residents and protect the value of assets. These days, now that Penrith City is undergoing unprecedented transformation and growth, matters which MPA deals with include planning decisions by Council and State Government for Penrith City and its wider LGA since such changes will directly and indirectly affect Mulgoa residents. We all want to see Penrith as a vibrant advanced city which is well planned, architecturally stylish and the envy of Sydney. We don't want Council to allow major developer self-interest organisations such as Landcom, Panthers, Westfields, Lendlease, Stockland, Bunnings, Woolworths etc effectively (defacto) take control of planning outcomes that determine the appearance of our city, as has occurred widely across Sydney and Australia. If this should occur, Penrith will be sentenced to a long future of being yet another western suburb ghetto identified by its urban planning mediocrity, sameness, traffic congestion, low income demographic, racial tension and anti-social behaviour.

Through MPA's professional approach, research and consistency the Association has earned the respect of local and state government. Our advocacy is often forceful and even brutal at times however we have been very effective in having our voice heard and influencing outcomes. MPA's relevance and importance as a community organisation which serves the interests of Mulgoa residents and protects the rural and historic assets of Mulgoa Valley has never been higher or more important.

In concluding my report I would like to recognise the efforts of our executive committee in providing their time, expertise and intelligent exchange of ideas. On behalf of MPA I wish all members and Mulgoa families a merry Christmas and prosperous New Year.



**PRESIDENT**