



Chairman's Report to the Annual General Meeting.
2010 – 2011.

John V. Guy OAM.

Chairman

19th July 2010

It is a pleasure to once again report to you on the activities of Advance Morwell for the year ended 30th June 2011 - our 14th year of operation.

At the outset I would like to recognise and thank our Committee Members, Vice Chair – Howard Williams, Secretary Keith Brownbill, Treasurer Xiao Hua Reid, Projects Officer Max Williamson, Committee Members Graeme Sennett, Peter Ross, David McInnes, Lindsay Onken, Kath Medew, Beverley Lorraine and Jenny Rickwood.

I am pleased to report that all committee members with the exception of Jenny Rickwood have indicated their intention to continue on our Committee for 2011 – 2012.

We have continued to meet once a month on the first Tuesday of the month at i-Gain in Commercial Road and meetings have been well attended.

We have had a number of guests attend our meetings as a means of learning about proposed Projects and giving us the opportunity of expressing our concerns about developments within our town.

These include:

The HRL \$750m dual gas power plant. A commercial-scale demonstration project that will use combined cycle technology to reduce greenhouse emissions by up to 50 per cent and water use by 70 per cent compared with traditional coal-based energy generators in the Latrobe Valley.

The Local Member Russell Northe with whom we discussed such issues as:

Water prices: Can there be a charging system that gives a greater percentage weight to the amount of water used, and less to infrastructure?

Latrobe City: *The move by Traralgon group for secession.*

Hazelwood's Future: The 20% carbon reduction target. How can Hazelwood be closed by 2020 without adverse effects on electricity supply, loss of jobs, and rising costs of electricity?

Housing Subdivision in Morwell:

The housing development at Heritage Boulevard Estate,

Manny Gelagotis Chairman Committee for Moe,

The current policy of Council to narrow road pavements in Morwell (Church Street and Collins Street)

The Centenary Rose Garden Committee and their north end development proposal.

PROJECTS

Last year I commenced my report by declaring the completion of the Sir Stanley Savige Project, but as sometimes happens we received a number of reports stating that the signage was difficult to see especially when the sun was shining. Thanks to Max Williamson and the Officers of Latrobe City the backing of the sign was changed and this has solved the problem and the Project is now complete. This memorial enhances our town and honours a former Morwell resident, and a distinguished soldier and a great Australian humanitarian.

We have continued our banner project depicting various aspects of the development of the Morwell area and to date has erected the following banners throughout the town:

Panthers Office Apparel – Hazelwood Road – Roses

Morwell Trophy Centre – Power.

The Merton Rush Hotel Collins Street – Heritage

Church Street – Culture.

We are currently investigating a proposal to place another banner on the wall at the corner of Tarwin and George Street.

ROSE PLANTER TUBS

The Installation of Rose Tubs in the CBD is continuing with the initial preparation and installation of 25 tubs being carried out by Keith Brownbill and David McInnes and the planting being arranged and implemented out by Rob Pengelly.

We are most appreciative of the work done by Rob on this project and appreciate the willingness of the shop owners in the Morwell CBD in maintaining these tubs.

Another 15 tubs are currently in the course of preparation and these tubs will be placed in Commercial Road.

However there is a downside to this project in that shops close and change hands and what we need now are some public spirited citizens who are

prepared to adopt a section of the CBD and ensure that the tubs in their area are well maintained.

We intend to divide the streets into small sections are now looking for volunteers to ensure the future of this project. Rob Pengelly will I understand speak about the requirements for volunteers during General Business.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The program included activities in the CBD for pre Christmas celebrations, a one day Sale Day, a free barbecue in Legacy Place, a Peace sign in the Rose Garden, and banners erected on CBD light poles in Church Street. We assisted St. Mary's Church in the conduct of their carol service, which was well attended.

INTERCONNECTING RAILWAY BRIDGE

We started with good intentions to do something about the eyesore at the western entrance to Morwell but to date we have been unsuccessful. Ownership of the structure is the main impediment to any action that we may wish to undertake. Our concern is that as the years pass this structure will become a major hazard as it continues to deteriorate.

GIPPSTAFE BUSINESS AWARDS

This year we entered into an agreement with the Morwell Campus of TAFE to sponsor an award for a Morwell student in their Annual Award Presentation Night on the 17th February 2011.

ROADSIDE ENTRIES TO MORWELL

Approaches to Latrobe City and Vic Roads to better manage and present these entries have to date met with limited success. We continue to address these issues.

GATEWAY SIGNS AT ENTRIES TO MORWELL.

Again our efforts to have "Welcome to Morwell Signs" depicting the Rose Theme erected at the Western and Eastern entries to Morwell have caused us huge frustrations. Just when we thought that we had achieved our objective the Government changed its specifications for signs. We resubmitted our

design based on the new guidelines under the name “Gateway Signs” which have now been approved by Council and VicRoads. We have applied for a Community grant to cover the cost of Installation and the expectation is that the signs will be erected as soon as the Grant has been approved.

PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

We continue to be involved with the Council Committee for the Town Common Playground represented by Max Williamson, Keith Brownbill and David McInnes. Council has published a draft plan for the five year period 2011-2016 and Advance Morwell made a submission regarding the timing of the Access for All Abilities playground.

ROUNDABOUTS

You will no doubt have read recent News articles about the removal of the tree in the roundabout at the corner of Tarwin and Buckley Streets in Morwell. Our objective was to have annuals planted to the roundabout to add to the amenity of that section of the CBD. Council stated that this was not possible due to the tree root system and we responded that if that was the case we would prefer to have annuals.

ROSE AND GARDEN SHOW

We have again provided financial support to the Rose and Garden Show which this year was held at Kernot Hall and we congratulate the Committee on the success of this event and wish them every success with the 2011 Show.

COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

We were a major sponsor of the initial Country Music Festival held in Morwell in November.

BEV’S WONDERWORLD OF DOLLS

Bev Lorraine continues to attract and increase visitors to her Wonderworld of Dolls exhibition at Arlie Bank as well as doing work around the gardens to maintain the outward appearance of this heritage community facility.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is vital to the future of Advance Morwell and enables us to improve the fabric of our town and support other organisations in their efforts to conduct events in Morwell. Our current membership is 18 Corporate 66 Business and 51 Community – a total of 135.

ALL DAY PARKING ON NORTH SIDE OF TOWN

Following the increase in office worker numbers there is a strong need for all-day parking. Chairman John has asked Council to investigate all-day-parking needs, taking into account current and future development in this area. There could be a need for a wider investigation of a plan similar to the Traralgon Action Plan. Should we make a submission?

COMMERCIAL ROAD / JANE STREET BRIDGE CAR PARK

We continue to lobby council to achieve development of this area as an official car park and improve safety for both drivers and pedestrians.

MEMBERS MEETINGS

We have had one General meeting for Members during the year. Held on Wednesday March 16, with Russell Northe as guest speaker.



We have continued to lobby on your behalf to both Local and State and Governments on issues with mixed results, and we have made submission to council on papers that they have put to the community for comment.

I want to speak specifically about two important issues:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

You may remember me speaking in past years about Forum Meetings that we had with the Latrobe City council and the fact that before the last Council Election we were advised that due to council entering caretaker mode these meetings would cease.

We were also advised that there would be a review and that we would be consulted.

I have also previously reported that Advance Morwell continued to meet with Councillors Middlemiss and Loughed over matters of concern. However we have always advocated for a return to the situation where we were able to meet with all Latrobe City Councillors and other Town groups and to that end I commenced dialogue with the Committee for Moe and the Traralgon Chamber of Commerce to achieve a united front to Council requesting the reinstatement of these meetings.

We have to date worked through the Mayor Councillor Darrell White but have recently been advised that as Council are again entering caretaker mode so no further action can be taken at this time.

This has been a frustrating process and although Advance Morwell enjoys a sound relationship with Council we find it difficult to accept that elected Councillors are not prepared to have regular dialogue with their community organisations.

STATE GOVERNMENT

The major problem here is our failure to achieve a public meeting between the Government Representatives and the Morwell community regarding the closure of the Morwell Freeway Bypass.

The communication from the State Government regarding the technical aspects of this event has been deplorable. We made a request to the Police through Neighbourhood Watch for a public meeting which was refused without explanation.

We invited the Police Incident Controller to address tonight's meeting but she was unavailable.

We approached the local member and offered our AGM to the Government as a vehicle for communication to the Morwell community but last Friday when there was no commitment forthcoming we were forced to abandon this proposal.

We have been repeatedly told that there will be a meeting next week, that the design for the drain will be completed next week – but like tomorrow next week never comes and we are still not sure what is really going on with our

Freeway Bypass. In the meantime our Business Community, our infrastructure and our community continue to be inconvenienced.

UNTIDY FORMER HIGH SCHOOL GROUNDS

We continue to monitor the condition of the grounds and to bring the untidy nature of the grounds to the attention of the Government.

REVIEW OF LATROBE CITY COUNCIL ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

I have written to the Minister for Local Government and had a meeting with her regarding the secession request from Traralgon Residents.

Advance Morwell will be making a submission when the VEC representation review is announced towards the end of this year. I would urge each and every one of you to consider making a submission to this review.

YALLOURN ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

Max Williamson represents Advance Morwell on this committee, which meets quarterly to discuss environmental matters and development issues such as extension of the boundary of the Maryvale field towards Morwell and the proposed 600 MW gas turbine plant.

HRL DUAL GAS TURBINE PLANT

Advance Morwell made a submission to the EPA on the HRL application for a Works Approval licence for this plant generally supportive of the proposal but expressing concern about some aspects. The project is being opposed by environmental groups and a VCAT hearing is currently underway.

In closing I would like to offer my thanks to you our members who have supported Advance Morwell in the past and trust you will continue your support into the future.

Special thanks to our Committee Members,

To Bob Bridle for his work at Arlie Bank Gallery,

Rob Pengelly for his work and technical guidance in the creation and upkeep of our Planter Tubs and

To Richard Werner for the maintenance of our web site.