

Friends of the Old Bega Hospital Newsletter #3

Not so much a newsletter this time but the President's report included below will give you an update on what's been happening.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The 2014 Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Old Bega Hospital Inc will be held at the Cottage, in the grounds of the Old Bega Hospital, 301 Old Princes Highway, Bega, on Tuesday 19 August 2014 at 2pm.

Agenda

1. Opening of meeting
2. To confirm the minutes of previous general meeting, the 2013 AGM held on 17 December 2013.
3. To receive from the committee reports on the activities of the association during the last preceding financial year
4. To elect office-bearers of the association and ordinary committee members
5. To receive and consider the financial statement and report
6. General business.

Explanatory notes

1. Article 29 of the constitution requires 5 financial members to be present to constitute a quorum. The constitution is available on the Friends website, www.obh.org.au.
2. The minutes of the 2013 AGM are at attachment 1.
3. The president's report is at attachment 2.
4. The office bearers of the association are set out in article 16 of the constitution. To be elected are president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and 3 ordinary committee members. Article 17 of the constitution sets out the processes for nomination and election.
5. The treasurer's financial statement and report are at attachment 3.

Attachment 1

Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Friends of the Old Bega Hospital Inc on Tuesday, December 17, 2013, at 3pm at the Old Bega Hospital cottage.

Apologies: Val Little, Becky Lupton, Jamie Forbes.

Present: Richard Bomford, Claire Lupton, Pat Jones, Eric Myers, Jay Ellard, Chris Rogers, Jeanne Gauld and Liz Seckold.

Minutes: Minutes of the meeting of Friends of the Old Bega Hospital on February 24, 2013, moved Pat Jones, seconded Liz Seckold. Carried.

President's Report: The President gave his report from the period of January 13 to June 30, 2013. Richard Bomford moved that his report be accepted. Seconded by Pat Jones. Carried.

Treasurer's report: At June 30, 2013, there was \$119.25 in the Public Fund and \$269.25 in the General Account. Moved Pat Jones, seconded Claire Lupton. Carried.

Election of officers and committee:

- President – Richard Bomford
- Vice President – Liz Seckold
- Secretary – Claire Lupton
- Treasurer – Eric Myers
- Committee members: Pat Jones and Jay Ellard.

Special resolution to adopt a new constitution: Liz Seckold moved and Eric Myer seconded that: Friends of the Old Bega Hospital Inc adopt the constitution at appendix 1 as its constitution. Carried.

Special resolution to adopt new objectives: Richard Bomford moved and Pat Jones seconded that: Friends of the Old Bega Hospital Inc adopt the objectives at appendix 2 as its objects. Carried.

The meeting ended at 3.35pm.

Attachment 2

President's report to the 2014 Annual General Meeting

In 2013-14 the Friends continued to focus on getting the main Old Hospital building repaired and returned to community use. While there was some progress, we are still a long way from actual building.

Constitution

The changes to the constitution agreed at the 2013 AGM were registered with the Office of Fair Trading and have taken effect. The Friends registered objectives are to encourage and support restoration, conservation, development and maintenance of the Old Bega Hospital as a heritage, cultural and community precinct.

Community events

We had two stalls at community events: the EdgeFM open day at the Old Hospital on 7 September 2013 where we provided tea and cakes, and the Festival of the Face community day in Littleton Gardens on 21 June 2013. Neither event resulted in much money (about \$120) or new members (none) but they did provide some exposure and experience. We will need more active displays if we are to get much value from such events.

Advocacy

On 10 September 2014 we wrote to Andrew Stoner, NSW Deputy Premier and minister responsible for crown lands, to ask that in undertaking its review of crown lands (then under way) the government consider mechanisms to fund projects such as re-roofing the Old Bega Hospital. To that time the government's principal response to requests for funding had been that the Heritage Grants program was unable to fund projects on that scale. We suggested that if the government was not prepared to fund the project, then other options should be considered, including transferring ownership of the Hospital building and grounds to a community trust. While the site remains in government ownership, donations are not tax deductible, and there is no saying that if the community restored the building the government would not then sell it. The estimated cost of restoration to lock up stage is about \$800,000 and the total cost of restoration would be likely to exceed \$1m, excluding fitouts for particular uses. The reply from the Minister's department said that 'it will be necessary to obtain funding from a variety of sources' 'subject to

appropriate arrangements' and that there were 'no current plans to dispose of the reserve', but gave no indication that the government intends to restore the building.

As a follow up to the letter we met with Andrew Constance, Member for Bega, on 13 December 2013. Andrew noted that the Community Partnerships Program was never going to fund the restoration either, because the grant monies had to be spread around over many small projects. He queried why restoration had not be funded by the Treasury Managed Fund, which funds the NSW government's self insured risks. [The answer seems to be that the Fund did not exist at the time of the fire.] He understood that Council had taken some interest in the site under the former general manager, but had no recent information. He did think that Council might occupy part of a restored building as an anchor tenant. He understood that Council and Crown Lands were talking about Council possibly taking over as trustee for the Reserve Trust, which manages the Old Bega Hospital for the government on a day to day basis.

In November 2103 Council considered a proposal to rezone the Hospital site from special purpose to private recreation. The President of the Friends addressed Council in a private capacity to object to the proposal, saying that public recreation would be a more appropriate zoning. Councillors explained that the difference between public and private was one of terminology rather than intent, and that they preferred private recreation zoning because it provided more options, including allowing a cafe or restaurant, where public recreation allowed only a kiosk. Council adopted the private recreation proposal. The Friends considered objecting further through the ensuing State level processes. Further investigation confirmed that there is a state wide problem with the 'public' and 'private' terminology and that the matter is more one of appearance than substance, and decided not to pursue the matter. It has since been finalised.

On 30 January 2014 the Friends and the Trustees met with Karen Fowler and Linda Barr from Crown Lands. Crown Lands confirmed that they were interested in Council taking over the trustee responsibilities, and saw advantages for the Hospital because Council would have access to funding and administration skills for licences, insurance and legislation. It was queried whether Council was, or had been, talking about commercial interest in the site, including by Bega Cheese. The crown lands review was still in progress, and recent Commonwealth funding interest has concentrated on Eden port developments. It was agreed that the Trust should continue to seek a quantity survey to determine the costs of restoration, as that would be useful no matter what the future management arrangements. Crown lands is not keen on formal plans of management for crown reserves because they are too restrictive for day to day management.

The Friends contacted Bega Cheese, which said it had no intentions for commercial involvement in the site.

On 17 March 2014 the Friends met informally with Council Mayor Bill Taylor. Bill said that Council supported restoration of the Hospital and its continued use for community purposes. It was not, however, interested in taking over the trustee role for the unrestored building, and does not have the money to restore the building itself. There had been discussions about using the site for a visitor centre but they have not progressed. There are 14 halls and community spaces in Bega and there needs to be a plan for them - they are expensive to run and maintain. There is a need for better indoor and outdoor exhibition spaces and the OBH might fulfil part of that role. Bill said that Council should be able to support the Trust or the Friends in seeking restoration funding through the Commonwealth's Regional Development Australia fund. And that there might be opportunities for Council to use some of the space in a restored OBH: we should talk again on that.

Strategy

The Friends objectives are to have the OBH used for community purposes. While commercial or government uses of part of the site could be compatible with that, and add to the viability of the site, a wholesale transfer of the site for such purposes, even if it resulted in restoration of the buildings, is not part of the Friends agenda. The Friends put together some elements of a strategic plan, covering heritage, arts and community uses and tenure, under heading such as

description, context, value, vision and actions. The document has not been completed.

The Trust is seeking a quantity survey to get a better idea of the costs of restoration. In April 2014 the Friends sent out a survey of community groups to try to get a better idea of the likely users of a restored or further developed site and the likely financial returns. That survey has not yet been completed, but indicates that there is potential, with one or two significant proposals as well as numbers of smaller users.

Next steps will be to complete the community survey, talk to Council about possible Council use of the site and prepare and get support for a funding proposal, probably for Regional Development Australia funds.

Communications

The Old Bega Hospital website, www.obh.org.au, continues to be updated. We put out one newsletter.

Membership

At the end of the financial year we had around 28 members. Renewals became due on 1 July.

Attachment 3

Financial Statement and Report

Financial Report

The Friends have two bank accounts - a general one for memberships and day to day expenses; and a Public Fund account for donations. The Public Fund is subject to special conditions under the Friends constitution, with a long term view to it becoming a fund to which tax deductible donations can be made. At present there is no mechanism for making tax deductible donations to the Friends.

The major change to the finances in 2013-14 was the receipt of \$30,894.80 from the Fundraising Committee associated with the Old Bega Hospital Reserve Trust. That represents funds raised from the community by the Fundraising Committee since the 2004 fire, and was the result of many market days, cake stalls, raffles and other fundraising activities. The funds have been put into a term deposit and are part of the Public Fund.

Other income was from memberships fees, donations, and interest.

The principal outgoings were charges levied by the Office of Fair Trading for incorporated bodies. \$52 was charged for lodging the annual financial return. \$44 was charged for registering the changes made to the constitution and objectives at the last annual general meeting. Other outgoings were for bank fees.

We obtained a tax file number so that we do not have to pay withholding tax.

Financial Statement

General fund

Opening balance 1 July 2013	\$269.98
Income - memberships and interest	+\$60.13
Expenditure - fees	-\$98.00
Closing balance 30 June 2014	\$232.11

Public Fund

Opening balance 1 July 2013	\$119.25
Transfer from Fundraising Committee	\$30,894.80
Donations	+\$217.10
Interest	+\$0.09
Closing balance 30 June 2014	\$31,231.24

of which \$30,894.80 was in a term deposit and \$336.44 was in the Public Fund bank account.