

MINUTES

Ballarat Performing Arts Community Inc. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY NOVEMBER 18, 6:30PM – BPAC 1861 Hall.

Attendees/Present: Michael Whitehead, Beth Lamont, Matthew Heenan, Tim Ryan, Lyn Broadstock, Susan Pierotti, Leanne Britton, Julian Williams, Robyn Kinnane, Laura Hudson, Geoffrey Coverdale, Sue Podger, Lorinda de Regt-Penn, Jeff Moran, Millie Koenders, Tess Kelly, Alison Trevenen, Peter Nethercote, Tim Gay, David Collins.

Apologies: Luke Tonkin, David Volk, Christine Volk, Janet McCulloch, Gail Paxman, Vidura Wijesekara, Jill Loveland, Rob Reid.

Meeting Open: 6:36pm

First AGM, no previous AGM minutes to confirm.

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Chair's Welcome & Report

- Mike Whitehead

(Attached below.)

Accepted.

Moved - Lyn Broadstock. Seconded - Alison Trevenen.

2. Finance / Treasurer's Report

- Millie Koenders

(Attached below.)

Accepted.

Moved - Tim Gay. Seconded - Matthew Heenan.

3. All Committee Stand Down & Election of Office Bearers

| Name | Nominated Position |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Michael Whitehead | Chair |
| Millie Koenders | Treasurer |
| Beth Lamont | Secretary |
| Luke Tonkin | General Board/Committee |
| Timothy Ryan | General Board/Committee |
| Sue Podger | General Board/Committee |
| Matthew Heenan | General Board/Committee |
| Lyn Broadstock | General Board/Committee |
| Leanne Britton | General Board/Committee |

Nominations read out by Jeff Moran. No contested positions and no limit to number of members.

We move that all nominations be accepted.

Moved - Laura Hudson. Seconded - Tess Kelly

All in favour.

4. Welcome New Committee

Welcome and thank you to new and re-nominated committee members.

5. General Business

Questions from the floor:

- Robyn Kinnane: Query about history of the buildings - bricks and construction in particular... committee to connect Robyn with archivists or historians from UCA.
- Information given about our current operating conditions: no public events on site until our change of use permit is approved.
- Mention and discussion of the \$2,000,000 purchase price
 - This figure is an “option to buy” the property at the end of our licence agreement. We will have first option over any other buyers. We are not obligated to purchase.
 - This figure is only a beginning, but the next steps - masterplanning, buildings and restoration works, etc. will be where a lot of real big costs are.
- Information given of heritage overlay - which is only over the area, not these specific buildings.
- Leanne Britton - Q: What fundraising ideas are in the works already?
 - Discussion of meetings with all three levels of government. We have put together and are finalising a prospectus document for a “crowdfunding” campaign.
 - We will approach philanthropists also.
 - We intend to create a fundraising manager role, as well as other paid roles as soon as we can.
 - Tim Gay - Idea put forward to have names of past community of the church put onto bricks to have their names on site - a fundraising and community-building exercise.

No other questions. Mention is made of plenty of information being made available on our website, which will continue to be updated as things progress.

Close Meeting: 7:17pm

Next general meeting - Monday 2nd December.

Thank you to all attendees and all of our wonderful members.

Michael Whitehead, Chair, BPAC ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

Thank you for your attendance at the inaugural AGM of the Ballarat Performing Arts Community.

BACKGROUND:

Whilst the Ballarat region has continually produced outstanding artists across all genres, the facilities available for them to practice and expose their skills over the years have been non-existent.

The need for a meeting place, rehearsal/workshop space and performance/ exhibition space for community arts has never been on a local government agenda in Ballarat compared to every brand of sport that exists in this town.

Consequently, when the three churches in Neill St became available for sale, and no buyer was willing to pay the premium, it provided us with the opportunity to create such a multi-purpose, multi-user space for our community arts organisations. The Uniting Church has kindly rented the buildings to us in an attempt to create a viable business that supports the needs of the community performing arts organisations. The caveat though is that we need to buy the site for \$2M by May 2025!

Our whole focus is now to raise this money by then or walk away and lose this amazing, unique opportunity to create a home for the future for the Performing Arts.

COMMITTEE:

The current committee consists of Beth Lamont (secretary), Millie Koenders (treasurer), Matthew Heenan, Lyn Broadstock, Luke Tonkin, Tim Ryan, RSSS and BNT representatives. Jeff Moran is a co-opted member who has been of immense value and is so important to our team. We wish to sincerely thank past foundation committee members Carolyn Bennet (RSSS) and Peter Kingsbury who I will talk about later.

Beth and Millie are the powerhouse behind the committee with incredible support from the team. Thank you to all.

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS:

Royal South St Society, Ballarat Arts Foundation, Ballarat Choral Society, Ballarat Symphony Orchestra, Ballarat National Theatre, BLOC Music Theatre, Ballarat Lyric Theatre, Ballarat Voices, Victorian Opera, Ballarat Centre for Music and the Arts, Vogel Pianos, Staged by Creatives, Ballarat Arts Alive, St Patrick's Cathedral Cantate Domino Choir, Creative Text Solutions, JK Celebrations, Scots Presbyterian Church, and SBC Productions.

We also acknowledge with gratitude the 97 individual Foundation members who 'blindly' jumped in to support us (see website).

BUILDING PROGRESS:

We inherited a space with little past maintenance, questionable utilities, fresh vandalism and huge potential, limited only by council regulations and current lack of capital. As a result of Jeff Moran's detailed work regarding grant applications, council planning permits, noise pollution checks, building permit applications and general maintenance. The committee and volunteers have also contributed to the current building function and form that we enjoy tonight. Obviously we are at a vestigial stage with much more to be done.

SUPPORT:

We are thankful that Bendigo Bank Community Bank Buninyong provided a massive \$15,000 grant to enable us to continue our progress to establish a viable business. Spark Theatre, having devolved, have transferred their funds for the benefit of BPAC. Peter Kingsbury, our founding President, apart from providing as much as the Bendigo Bank as seed funding has also funded the repair, restoration and tuning of the magnificent listed organ in the 1892 building. Consequently, the Committee has recommended that Peter be made the first Honorary Life Member of BPAC. Rob Broadstock is providing Business Plan guidance pro bono while Dean Cinque has provided legal advice pro bono. Murray Robertson (MCR Drafting) has documented our planning approval building works then waive the fee. As has Todd McClelland who provided building surveying works. We Have been treated generously by all who have been recruited to help us and there are more that I could list: as our treasurer commented "there are some very good people out there".

FUTURE:

We await planning/building permits prior to a full-on promotion of events. We have advertised for a part-time Operations Manager (courtesy of the Spark Theatre endowment). Lung Ong from Sandbox Consulting is assisting us with a business plan thanks to a \$1500 grant from Regional Arts Victoria. A Prospectus is currently under construction with advance from Dr Rob Reid and will be completed soon. We now need to concentrate on personal and business contributions, plus Local and State and Commonwealth government grants to achieve a \$2M corpus to purchase the three former churches and cottage...a massive but necessarily achievable ask!

On behalf of a keen committee, determined to create an affordable, accessible and collegiate series of spaces for Ballarat COMMUNITY performing arts groups never historically ever considered by our Council, I thank you for supporting us in our endeavours. I would encourage you, if you can envisage what we plan, to involve others to enable what has previously been achieved for sport to be achieved for the performing arts.

Mike Whitehead

Chair, BPAC

18/11/2024

BPAC TREASURER'S REPORT

18/11/2024

501 – 503 NEILL ST SOLDIER'S HILL VIC 3350

Dear Members,

I am pleased to present the very first Treasurer's Report for the 2023 – 2024 financial year. It was exciting to be given the opportunity to join some of the very first committee meetings late last year as a Ballarat Symphony Orchestra representative. All the early deliberations surrounding decisions for the organisation including name, structure, memberships, operations, planning permits and business plans were in the throes of discussion. I became the BPAC Treasurer shortly afterward. Interest and growth of BPAC followed quickly, with our first financial transactions commencing in January 2024.

Our 2024 Profit and Loss shows a healthy income, predominantly made up of donations from Member Peter Kingsbury of \$13,000, and a Bendigo Bank Community Grant of \$15,000, plus just over \$5,500 in membership payments. Many smaller donations arrived along with these. All donations were gratefully received as they allowed us to commence preparations for our planning permit – a lengthy and costly exercise covering change of use of this facility to allow us to operate as we need to, as well as to pay for current running costs.

As at June 2024 our bank balance was \$28,860.38, which matches our financial year reports. Financial activity for this year is generally small, however this rapidly changes from the new year onward. In addition, you may know that we are currently occupying this site on a temporary licence from the Uniting Church. Our aim is to purchase this wonderful facility during 2025, for which we need to raise \$2 million dollars!

To see this exciting transformation on paper we need you to spread the word, and stay tuned for next year's AGM!

Millie Koenders
BPAC Treasurer

(For all financial reports, please see our website here: www.bpacballarat.org/agm-2024)