

Millmerran Commerce and Progress Inc

Presidents Report 16/10/2024

I am pleased to present my third Millmerran Commerce and Progress Inc President report. Firstly I would like to acknowledge and thank Natasha O'Hanlon, Brenda Gillespie, Nola Schaumburg, Jan Fitzgerald, Roselle Crellin and Mary Tosswill. These women are a dynamic bunch who have the best interest of Millmerran in their heart. It has been easy to work with them and I am indebted to them for their friendship and support.

A major milestone this year has been the Domville Place development. From way back in November 2022 when we engaged landscape architect Eva Porter to design a master plan, we have since had a deputation by Roselle Crellin, Mary Tosswill, Jan Fitzgerald and myself at a TRC Councillor meeting on 19 June, 2024. We are now happy to say that on September 11, 2024 Toowoomba Regional Councillors met at an Environment and Community Committee Meeting in City Hall, where they resolved to approve the MCPI proposal to develop upgrades to Domville Place. I attended this meeting which gave me a great insight to proceedings of Council and it was well worth the trip in to show support to the Domville Place item on the agenda. This announcement is a major step forward and currently the Management Committee and TRC are discussing a Partnership Agreement for the use of this land to develop our plans. Once this agreement is finalised we will announce the Project Manager and begin sourcing the funds and contactors to achieve our dream.

This being a Camp Oven year, MCPI once again hosted the Busking in Millmerran in downtown Campbell Street. It was amazing to see so many visitors enjoying our beautiful town and terrific to see a large crowd of people stay on and listen to Eithan Biefeld Trio in Domville Place. A huge congratulations to ACOF President Mary Baillie and her team for organising such a fantastic festival. This event brings just over 4000 visitors to our town and this gives our businesses and organisations a huge injection of funds and enthusiasm. With thanks to Brenda and Greg Gillespie, MCPI hosted a meet and greet with cheese platters for the early arrivals on Tuesday evening which was well attended by about 130. MCPI also organised the free bus shuttle that was supported by businesses which operated to and from the showgrounds from Wednesday to Sunday.

Roselle Crellin and I visited the Sporting Shooters where the annual Chisholm Trail was held over the October long weekend. This event brings visitors from all over Australia to Millmerran for a shooting competition where competitors dress in period costume while respecting skills and traditions from the American Old West. Once again the businesses of Millmerran benefit greatly by patronage from this event.

The full colour Millmerran Newsletter goes from strength to strength. The October 2024 newsletter was an incredible 40 pages which is the largest we have produced of the colour edition. We are able to have the extra pages in the newsletter as it is no longer delivered to town post boxes by the mailman on their motorcycle as it is too heavy and bulky. Thankfully the rural newsletters are still delivered by the mail service on the 3 rural mail runs. Thank you once again to Roselle Crellin for her tireless work in collating the monthly newsletter. The newsletter is our major source of fundraising with all profits directed towards our projects and events.

We are about to begin work on our next print run of 10,000 Millmerran Tourism Booklets which will be Version 3. This will bring our distribution to over 30,000 copies which is amazing for our town and community. We currently have a photography competition running for the front cover which closes Friday 29 November.

The Darling Downs Regional Alliance has proven to be an instrumental group that MCPI is thankful to be involved with. It is a group of all Commerce associations within the TRC area which includes Millmerran, Pittsworth, Toowoomba, Clifton, Yarraman, Oakey, Highfields, Cecil Plains and Crows Nest. These meetings are held twice a year and each town takes it turnabout to host. Many of the TRC Councillors & the Mayor attend, along with key management staff. These meetings are so beneficial where we can discuss what is happening in our towns and talk about strategies to improve outcomes of difficulties faced. Many of the issues that Millmerran has, other towns do too and united we represent a large area with a huge number of

people. This year we have attended meetings in Toowoomba and Pittsworth. The first meeting in 2025 will be held in Yarraman.

Looking back over my Presidents report that was written this time last year, I see a paragraph relating to the Millmerran Library and our lobby for TRC to resume opening hours to five days per week. Unfortunately this lobby continues and we are still have not received an outcome. A review of library hours for the whole TRC precinct was undertaken last year and we were promised a result by Christmas, then July 2024 and still we have not heard. I call the TRC Manager of Library and Cultural Services often and keep asking for an update.

With the renewable energy sphere well and truly upon us, Millmerran is set to see huge changes in our landscape and community. MCPI have been actively meeting in person as well as corresponding through phone calls and emails with Genex and PCL – Bulli Creek Solar Farm, Skylab – Punches Creek Solar Farm, Inland Rail and the Captain Mt Wind Farm and camp. We appreciate these companies keeping an open line of communication with our organization and we shall continue to work together to ensure that Millmerran is factored into all decisions pertaining to decisions that will affect our township.

The new Millmerran Hospital is well and truly underway and Qld Health along with the construction company FKG have been readily available for all queries and requests. It was pleasing to see the Arthur Ezzy Memorial Rose Garden moved to a different location and the roses successfully transplanted. Though a small gesture for FKG, these roses carry deep significance for those whose loved ones they honor. We eagerly anticipate 2025, when the hospital opens its doors and our community can benefit from modern health care.

This year MCPI was instrumental in the installation of the first public baby change table in the ladies toilets at Anzac Park, the revamp of the business signs at the entrance to the industrial area in Crocker St, a replacement fence, entrance gates, repair of the Columbarium Wall and new toilets at the cemetery, welcome to Millmerran signs by the Show Society and Camp Oven Festival, submission to the Factory Dam restoration, TRC candidates forum, Southern Downs State Govt MP James Lister meeting, Walpole St freestay shopper dockets and disposal of the deteriorated camp oven on Campbell St.

Once again thank you to the Management Committee for taking time out of their busy lives for this organisation. We spent many hours through zoom meetings editing the Millmerran Community Place Plan this year which was sent to all members for input and then sent on to TRC earlier this month. We also have zoom management meetings throughout the year to keep this organisation running and this is something that we should all appreciate. I would like to make special mention to Vice President Brenda Gillespie as she steps down from her role and off the committee. Brenda has been a great support to me and I value our friendship and her input to MCPI over the past three years.

Thank you again everyone. I look forward to being your President for the incoming year.

Nik Macqueen