

Acheron Valley Watch - Newsletter December 2006

Dear Acheron Valley Watchers,

After our intensive networking, researching and public involvement in Council planning and election matters during 2005, the past year was a year of quiet consolidation for our community group. Although at a more relaxed pace, we were able to achieve a number of positive results. During 2006 we engaged in discussions with Cr Janet Gilmore about environment and planning issues, contributed to the public involvement process offered by Council re the Council Plan 2006-09 and the Youth Strategy and made a submission about the amendment C17. We were informed by Council Staff that C17 received a number of objecting submissions and as a consequence will be further dealt with by Council in the new year, most likely during council meetings mid January 2007.

During 2006 we also enjoyed a number of social events, amongst which the legendary suppers at the Igloo and a “Persian Night” dinner at the Buxton Roadhouse. During all these culinary highlights many ideas (and drinks) were flowing.

A most memorable event was the presentation of anthropologist Lea Jelinek and environmental scientist and campaigner Iswanto from Java about a community recycling program in the village of Sukunan (Yogyakarta). The evening was hosted by Anne Kantor and after the presentation we all enjoyed a wonderful international meal around the cosy fire place.



Lea and Iswanto presenting

In the social domain, a delegation of the AVW committee attended a forum on community welfare and a meeting about a planned Food Bank. Both events were hosted by Berry Street. Future actions of Berry Street to alleviate social hardship due to the drought conditions will rely on active engagement and voluntary support from community groups such as ours. Our cooperation with Berry Street will continue throughout the next year.



Uncle Roy talking at the Bushkids Festival

Throughout the year we also enjoyed the company and support from local artist and aboriginal elder Uncle Roy Patterson. He dedicated a painting of a wedgetail eagle – “Banyul”, the highest totem of the Daungwurung People – to our community group. He gave an impressive presentation on bush medicine and bush tucker during the Bushkids Music Festival – a charity event that was also supported by Acheron Valley Watch. Joining forces with different local teams, we hope to turn this music festival into a cultural highlight for our area.

A rather sad event for Acheron Valley Watch was the farewell of our dear friends *Syd* and *Christine Garvey* and *Lorraine* and *Dietmar Fleckhammer*. In despair, many creative persuasion attempts were made to keep them from moving away – and during this memorable night at the Igloo they promised to keep in touch: So, stay tuned, as their housewarmings cannot be too far away ...

Christine & Syd



the farewell singers

Dietmar & Lorraine



Finally, the 2006 program came to an end with a productive workshop held at Doug and Lynne Walter's place, where in three working groups the key issues for next year's working program were discussed. A major focus for all groups emerged in the topics of climate change, drought & water management and a series of other environmental issues and how to respond to them on an individual and community level. Linking Acheron Valley Watch activities with the actions of other groups or institutions, such as Berry Street, Roots and Shoots or activities offered by the Goulburn Broken CMA was also high on the list together with an array of other social and cultural activities.

For the preparation and conduct of the AVW program 2007 the following committee members have been (re-)appointed:

Chair person: Rita Seethaler
Deputy chair: Julian Brown
Treasurer: Doug Walter
Secretary: Sacha Jelinek

Board members:

Anne Kantor
Ann Jelinek
Rita Harris
Bill Jeffreys
Maira Jeffreys
Glenys Hazelman
Robert Vandergragt
John Woodley



AVW end-of-the-year workshop 2006

The AVW committee will meet again in early January to continue the preparation of 2007 activities. In the meantime, we would like to invite you to renew your annual membership (see attached form) and to let us know of any ideas you might have for interesting / fun activities in the future. The next AVW News Letter will appear in early February 2006 to inform you about any upcoming events. In the meantime, the AVW committee members wish you a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year!

Rita Seethaler (chair)

Julian Browne (deputy chair)