

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
YARRALUMLA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
Annual General Meeting, 14 August 2018

The YRA is 30 years old this year. Membership is at a record high. Our finances are in great shape, and we are now much more than just the Brickworks.

Membership

As at	30 Jun 18	30 Jun 17	30 Jun 16	30 Jun 15	30 Jun 14	30 Jun 13
Households	123	106	109	122	75	74
Ordinary	66	44	54	61	42	44
Total (Assuming 2 persons per household)	312	256	272	305	192	192

The YRA is the culmination of 30 years of hard work by many people. We started out because of opposition to proposed plans for the Canberra Brickworks. The development of the Canberra Brickworks remains one of our most important issues. However, the association has become much more than that. In the past year, the 13-member committee with adhoc support of individuals has continued with one of our key objectives to maintain and improve the quality of life of the Yarralumla Community.

New activities in the past year include the Tree Maintenance Volunteer Group, installation of infrastructure such as the drinking fountain at the shops and working on a Community Garden proposal.

Tree Maintenance Group

The YRA signed an MOU with TCCS in November 2017 for volunteers to do minor pruning in park areas. There have been more than 12 working bees with several regular volunteers headed by Peter Pharaoh.

Infrastructure

We thank Gai Brodtmann's office for their support in our successful application for 3 Commonwealth Government Stronger Community Grants in 2017/18 totalling \$8,350. These grants were matched by our own funds to build infrastructure in Yarralumla. We installed the drinking fountain at the shops, 2 new park benches as well as 2 defibrillators – one at Yarralumla Primary School and one at the Yarralumla Play Station. Signs will be installed in the near future. We would also like to acknowledge the support of the ACT Government in relation to the park benches and drinking fountain.

Community Garden

This initiative was proposed by one of our members and more than 20 members have since indicated an interest. The next step is to finalize a location. Once approved, we plan for the garden to be run by the Canberra Organic Growers Society (COGS).

The site currently being considered is the land near the YMCA Auxiliary Hall on the corner of Loftus and Mueller Street. Ideally this area could be used for additional car parking for the shops, a storage facility for the YRA and revitalization of the YMCA Auxiliary Hall as a true community space. We believe a comprehensive plan is required for the entire area between Loftus Street and the tennis courts. The YMCA Auxiliary Hall has not been used since 2013 and we have asked the ACT Government to investigate.

Community Activities – Yarralumla Primary School

As part of our support to the school the YRA provides an annual award to encourage and recognize community mindedness of students. We also made a donation for the commemorative pavers and were formally represented at the Yarralumla Primary School's 60th Anniversary Ceremony in August 2017 and participated in the school fete. This was in addition to donating a defibrillator and a first aid kit.

Community Activities – Yarralumla Does Christmas (YDC)

For the past 6 years, the YRA has held at least one community event each year. For the past 2 years, this has been Yarralumla Does Christmas. We are targeting Saturday December 8 for YDC 2018. We thank Yarralumla resident Belynda Buck for producing great concerts for the past 2 years. While Belynda has agreed to be involved again this year, we are still working on the format and open to suggestions. Yarralumla Does Christmas has also been away to involve other groups in the community such as the schools and pre-schools, and the Yarralumla Uniting Church. We would also like to thank the Heritage Nursery and the Embassy of Finland for the involvement last year.

Community Activities – Marathon

The YRA has assisted with the drink stations for 5 Canberra Marathons. Despite the early start all volunteers have a great time and we boost the number of volunteers by giving students from the two grammar schools some community service hours. The organizers also give the YRA a donation.

Inner South Canberra Community Council (ISCCC)

The YRA is a founding member of the ISCCC, which is a forum for residents' groups to discuss common issues, work on joint submissions, and arrange community forums.

Forums during the year covered topics including zero emissions, storm water, waste to energy, planning and building rules, housing choices, and more recently light rail and buses.

Other benefits the YRA receives include annual public liability insurance and voluntary workers insurance. The YRA has access to online survey functions free of charge. We also receive funding from the ISCCC to help cover our communications and marketing expenses.

Finance and Grants

In addition to membership fees, donations from members and funds received from the ISCCC, we have been able to diversify our funding through our involvement in the Canberra marathon as well as grants. Last year we received \$8,530 in the Commonwealth Government Stronger Community Grants. The Southern Cross Club has also pledged a \$1,000 grant towards Yarralumla Does Christmas 2018. The Southern Cross Club also provides the YRA with storage at Woden, which is highly valued.

Fix My street

We have actively promoted the ACT Government's Fix My Street initiative. However, we have also been proactive in our own "Fix My Suburb initiative" including the Tree Maintenance Group. Early in 2017 committee members Diana Wright and David Johnstone produced a report on traffic and parking issues across Yarralumla and this has formed the basis for our interaction with Members of the Assembly and government departments in trying to get some major and not so major upgrades. We have guided government representatives on tours of some of the hot spots and proposed solutions for parking issues at the shops, the school, and the dog park. We have been advocating for improvements such as pedestrian crossings, stop signs, new gutters, footpaths, and retaining the heritage looking lights as well as bollards for the shops and repairs to existing bollards around the suburb.

There are also some relatively big tasks that I would like to refer to separately.

Pocket Parks

There has been an ongoing problem with enforcement of land use in the pocket park on the corner of Banks Street and Solander Place. I am pleased to report that the hedge has finally been removed. However, to revitalize all the pocket parks the YRA has also proposed a design competition and are still waiting for a formal response from the relevant department to see if this is viable.

Derelict Site on the Corner of Bentham and Hutchins Streets

We have been told the current owner plans to submit a development application before the end of 2018 and the ACT Government is unwilling to take any action until the DA is submitted. Unfortunately, this could be just further delaying tactics and we are not confident that there will be any action be either the owner or the ACT Government.

CSIRO

We made a submission on the Heritage Management Plan and are closely monitoring this site since it is likely to be the next big development after the Brickworks to affect Yarralumla once the current lease runs out in 2020.

YMCA – Aquatic Recreation Center

We remain appalled at the government's inaction on enforcement of a 2013 ACAT ruling that confirmed the YMCA has been in breach of its lease. We have been told the YMCA is required to move their head office function out of Yarralumla Bay by the end of 2018 (but we were told in 2017 that they had until the end of 2017). We are also disappointed that both YMCA Canberra and YMCA National Headquarters have not returned our telephone calls or responded to letters.

CGS/CGGS Rowing Sheds

CGS consulted with the YRA about plans for a new rowing shed. This follows on from a similar consultation that the CGGS had with the YRA before building its new Rowing Shed. Consultation is one thing, but the main concern to residents is that these organizations abide by their lease purpose clauses. Unfortunately, despite CGGS building a wonderful facility we have received several complaints about CGGS being in breach of its lease purpose clause. This is not a matter for the YRA to police, but we have alerted the NCA who said they would investigate the matter.

Canberra Brickworks Precinct (CBP)

Four YRA members are on the Canberra Brickworks Panel. Once Doma was appointed preferred tenderer, the focus shifted to meetings between Doma and the Community Panel, but there have been no Community Panel meetings in almost a year because of delays in signing the contract. Doma did make an EPBC referral since part of the CBP impacts on the Golden Sun Moth. The YRA made a submission, but indications are that the area concerned will not have any significant impact on their plans. We have invited John Dietz, CEO of the Suburban Land Agency to provide an update on the CBP following the formal proceedings of tonight's AGM. Once the contracts are signed, the formal community consultation process will commence and the YRA plans to arrange from Doma to present their proposal to our members as soon as possible.

Dudley Street Upgrade

The YRA has been very clear with representatives of the ACT Government that we do not think the money allocated to upgrade Dudley Street is a wise use of ratepayers' money and that the upgrade itself will not alleviate the real problem which is the intersection of Novar and Dudley Street and nearby streets. We believe the money should be reallocated to fixing up the intersection and towards the construction of a Mint Interchange.

The Dudley Street upgrade will also have significant impact on the Golden Sunmoth and Native Temperate Grassland areas. EPBC approval is required for the upgrade to proceed and we have put our case in a submission to the EPBC.

Submissions and Other Issues

In addition to our submissions on EPBC referrals associated with the Brickworks and Dudley Street (December 2017), the YRA also made submission on (1) Submission into the Inquiry into the planning, management and delivery of road maintenance in the ACT (July 2017; (2) Nature in our City Inquiry; and (3) Curtin Group Center Master Plan (June 2018). Other issues that we are also looking at include the Yarralumla Wetlands, how to help reinvigorate the shops. We have worked with the Curtin Residents Group and Deakin Residents Group on issues of mutual interest, and we also have a representative on the Lake Users Group. We also have proactive relationships with Friends of Grassland and Friends of the Albert Hall.

Communications/Committee

Our very active committee has also been aware of the need to keep members and the broader public aware of activities. We have also held numerous meetings with ACT Government officials and our local representatives during the year.

We send our financial members emails a couple of times a month to keep them up to date as well as several hard copy newsletters throughout the year that are distributed to every household in Yarralumla.

We maintain a noticeboard at the shops. This year we also held a stall at the Yarralumla Primary School fete as well as the Connect and Participate Expo held at the Old Bus Depot Markets.

We have a general brochure on the YRA but have also been working on a new brochure that explains the street names and street trees.

Our biggest project has been upgrading the website, which unfortunately is not ready to unveil at tonight's AGM, but we do have a draft available on a laptop to show anyone who is interested after the formal proceedings.

We lost one committee member during the year – Marea Fatseas – who resigned to avoid any perceived conflicts of interest when she became Chair of the ISCCC. Every person on the committee has contributed in their own way and I thank each of them for their contribution to the smooth running of the YRA as well as putting forward new ideas.

I would also like to extend our thanks to non-committee members who have helped with specific tasks. Particularly, Denise Page for maintaining the noticeboard and Alissa Page for running the YRA Twitter account.

Thank you for your ongoing support.