



Chairman's Report AGM 21st Feb 2007

2006 saw us take our image to another level by firstly designing a new corporate branding and logo representing the mountain (green) the Illawarra flame (red) and the coal seam under our mountain (black). Having the logo completed with the input of the whole committee, we then progressed to a major upgrade and new fresher style to the look of our program. I have to thank Danielle Davis-Cook for her support and assistance in this mammoth undertaking - she was patient, skilled, focused and inspirational in dealing with the graphic designer. Thank you Danielle

A wonderful surprise came when our little festival was invited and also nominated to enter the Illawarra Tourism Awards. We managed the significant accomplishment of becoming one of the three finalist in our category, an excellent outcome for a first time entry powered by a group of volunteers – especially when we saw the competition from the winner, a long established, professional and fully staffed operation. Well done everyone!!!

It has become very clear to me that while we enjoy and have fun organising our festival and associated social activities, we are also doing something really worthwhile for Mt Kembla and the Illawarra region.

I ask you all to take a look at the "Successful Initiatives Schedule" which we update regularly and you may get a surprise at what we have managed to achieve since 2002

Staging a festival, now growing each year is always a challenge.....

There is no magic solution to the challenges involved facing a group such as ours – just practical application, hard work and improved organisational skills each year. I fully believe we are capable of engaging with and staying committed to each other and I also fully believe the majority of our current Events Managers are finally in place to ensure the best outcome for those events. We improve each year and that is an excellent feeling and an assurance we are all trying very hard.

I believe I am extremely privileged to have been the Chairperson of MKMHI. I have been able to work with some extremely talented and committed people and have made some wonderful new friends. Yes, like any family we all have our occasional difference of opinion but we all pull together and stand by each other when it comes to the real issue of running a great festival or event.

If 2006 was our best and most diversified festival so far, and I believe it was, we clearly have some minor improvements to make in our collective initiatives.

From our bus turning bay and parking off Stones Rd to the hotel and surrounds, to our traffic management, to our stalls and displays along Cordeaux Rd we have to work smarter & sharper collectively and cooperatively to ensure our compliance conditions are met in every way.

I am entirely confident we are clever enough as a strong united team to overcome any obstacle we encounter that may in any way threaten the success of the festival.

That is my challenge to all of you. The festival success would not be possible without your involvement.

I would welcome suggestions and proposals from members about practical and meaningful ways that MKMHI might improve and grow the festival – not necessarily by making it larger, but rather more meaningful, diverse, interesting and impressive.

Our Heritage Display is a classic example of just that. They have managed, under Phil's very capable leadership and the support of a great team, to grow their display into an extremely impressive unit, which is now recognised and respected all over the country and it is only just beginning to come together. Our Heritage Display & Collection will grow continually even further in significance.

The level of communication between the executive committee and events managers and works team is vital. Each manager plays an increasingly significant role and needs to have a reliable support team selected by them that they can engage easily, to ensure they are fully aware and accountable at all times. Our corporate governance, best practice, insurance and sponsorships demand just this.

In 2007 this will be even more important than ever before.

Our youth team are just wonderful. Cathy Donaldson and Georgina Element have ensured the Heritage Group is kept "young and up to date". Joel Beattie, James Twyford, Mark Dobbins and teams are to be fully congratulated on the wonderful success they each gave us as a first time effort for the festival 2006. The Ute Muster, the Stalls and the Festival Music were all very successful events. We learned the areas that need improving this year and will address as we go – but it is extremely important that they all be recognised and acknowledged for a job well done.

To sustain our festival and share the workload more evenly is always a challenge and in meeting this challenge I am convinced after much thought, we need to link into the support of our "seniors". Seniors bring wisdom to some of the key issues facing a community or group such as ours and more often than not they are extremely talented people who have left the formal workforce – but have the skills, time and initiative necessary to make a powerful difference.

I would like to ask your assistance in actively pursuing and welcoming the introduction of any willing seniors to our group – the "grey army" is the biggest force in the market place right now....so please keep this in mind and invite anyone who may be seeking to assist in any way. Our CCS is in need of a "manager" and team to make it a more used friendly home!!

While it is not my intention to single people out for praise and thanks – I feel I must mention Chris Jacobsen and his ongoing effort and commitment to Mt Kembla. He is truly the unsung hero for me this year and my respect only continues to grow for him daily....Chris does soooo very much significant work that no one really know about while wearing his many hats around the mountain.....but I do know and I say thanks Chris on many levels. I know you know, I know.

The completion of Wendy's Heritage Cottage renovation and repairs at an estimated cost of \$60,000+ was also a very significant job initiated and coordinated by MKMHI, completed by WCET Work for the Dole Group and Bunnings Warehouse Warrawong, Atlas Constructions and many other community supporters.....so good to see this long overdue repair to our community "open house".

Another big step forward for 2006 was our accounting process being transferred to MYOB at long last. I would like to thank KPMG for their support with our annual accounts audit and especially our Treasurer, Margie Ludwig for her many long hours and major efforts in getting our accounts on to MYOB and to KPMG for the current audit for 2006 trading year.

I would like to thank all the hard working and generous committee members, our volunteers and our executive as well as our major sponsors Dendrobium Mine, Illawarra Coal, WCC, LC Stainless Solutions, TPE Integrated Services, CB's, Darren Mortimer Transport, Allied & Walter Mining, Illawarra Mercury, DGS Mimaki, Port Kembla Port Corporation and Premier Illawarra for assisting in the development and implementation of the many activities that not only make the festival a success but have also increased the awareness of our festival and Mt Kembla Heritage over the past five years.

**Cate Stevenson OAM
Chairperson**