

THE ENTRANCE COMMUNITY PRECINCT COMMITTEE

ADDRESS TO THE ENTRANCE COMMUNITY PRECINCT COMMITTEE

by

RAY SCANLAN, TOWN CENTRE MANAGER, THE ENTRANCE.

17 March 2009

Ray told us that he had now been the Manager of The Entrance town Centre for a period of seven months. Ray was born and grew up in Broken Hill. While new in the job, Ray explained that his first engagement with The Entrance was as an eight year old when his family came here for a three week holiday. It was a fantastic holiday, only the second time he had seen the Ocean and the joy of the beach was a new experience. His trip home, on the Silver City Comet train, brought home to him the stark contrast of the green of the coast giving way to the brown dessert at Broken Hill

Ray advised that in 1996, Wyong Shire Council established The Entrance Town Centre Management (TCM). It covered the area of The Entrance Town Centre. Council invested in the TCM many of its responsibilities, including infrastructure, waste and garbage, logistics, safety, business development and marketing. There are twenty nine to thirty thousand people in The Entrance. The Entrance has a long history as a holiday destination and a strong culture of a relaxed lifestyle grew up from enjoyment of Tuggerah Lakes and fishing. Retail and accommodation grew up to support the tourists. This community gave The Entrance its values and its soul. In recent years the pace of change has increased as shown by the increase in high rise accommodation. The impact of this change will continue as the empty units fill up. In saying that Ray made the following points:

- The Entrance is a holiday destination and it is keeping the balance between the residents needs and the tourist's needs is important.
- The Entrance is a village and TCM believes it should remain that way.
- He did not want the marina type development like that at Port Stephens, which he saw as a boat parking lot.

Ray told us that TCM had conducted a survey of fifty three businesses in The Entrance to provide clarity of purpose of TCM. The survey represented a good cross section of the area. The major findings included:

- Supported change, but in a way that kept The Entrance's identity.
- In the town centre they favoured the modification of existing buildings.
- Do this by refurbishing existing shops not building new ones.

TCM is working on a three to five year plan to frame its work and priorities. Some of the ideas included:

- Review the type of entertainment promoted by TCM.
- Aim at a diverse range of people, including youth, middle aged and seniors.
- Business is dependent upon the summer holiday period. To spread the period of when events are held different musical festivals are being considered, such as a classical music three week festival, a jazz festival and a blues festival.
- Attract more businesses that suit both tourists and residents. The Entrance need businesses that fill the gaps, such as green grocers and clothing stores. We do not need five \$2.00 shops.

In concluding Ray referred to the following paper that described his ideas for The Entrance:

“Active town centres are lively, interesting places where economic transactions take place and entrepreneurs, professional service providers and businesses compete at many different levels and layers; they are places where legal, financial, banking, medical and government sector offices integrate with national chain retailers and stores that attract the brand conscious; where coffee houses, foreign groceries, delicatessens, galleries, eateries, restaurants, wine bars, theatres, concerts, festivals, fresh air and outdoor activity attract those interested in social interaction and people watching; they are places where quality handcrafted individual fashion, accessories, furnishings and home ware items tip the scales; where the evening and day time economies blend

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seamlessly; where the town is permeable and connected to tempt people down side streets and out into main thoroughfares; they are places where people move through areas and where activity, both economic and community generates an active and exciting street life; they are places that are safe and welcoming and in which their community is able to trace elements of their town's history, its cultural identity and its future; and they are places in which the community and visitors derive pleasure from its interesting diversity!"

Ray then answered questions from the audience.

Q. Did you survey tourists and residents?

A. No just businesses.

Q. Can you advise which businesses did well out of TCM festivals?

A. The average stay was 2.1 days with eateries, restaurants and accommodation benefited. However some businesses indicated they did not get much out of the festivals.

Q. There seems to be an increase in young alcohol fuelled people with bottles in hand, with no Rangers or Police presence.

A. TCM rangers are not responsible for policing anti social behaviour. This is a police matter.

A general discussion followed that safety and security of property goes hand in hand with any entertainment. Providing safety and security is a cost to ratepayers. While the feedback on the New Year and Australia day weekends is good it does put a stress on the community.

A. Educating people to behave properly does not lay wit TCM. The CCTV cameras will come into operation in July 2009. They are high definition using fibre optics and wireless technology. They will not be monitored by the Police but will act as a deterrent by allowing a review of incidents. Statistics show that The Entrance has the lowest crime rate in Wyong Shire, hence The Entrance receives the lowest Police priority. On the Australia day fireworks I was told there would be thirty five police on duty. When I approached the Police command centre I found there was only five police on duty at The Entrance. The other thirty has been transferred to Terrigal!

Q. There is a lack of disabled parking in the main strip at The Entrance.

A. TCM recognises there is a lack of parking but this is an issue for council.

Q. When former Mayor, Warren Wellham address this meeting he spoke of an Events Manager being appointed by WSC. Has anything come of this?

A. Councillor Lynne Webster answered this question by advising that Council is employing such a person.

There was a discussion on the traffic problems during major events. Doug Darlington advised that the Police were arranging a meeting of stakeholders including TCM and TECPC. Councillor Lynne Webster advised that she was opposed to a break in the median to allow right turns from the Oaks car park and was opposed to its closure during major events.

A suggestion was made to Ray that the TCM should consider a locals get together celebrating neighbours. A special effort should be made to include the Muslim and Korean families at The Entrance.