

## **WACRA President's Report AGM 27 March 2019**

This has been a busy year for WACRA with members engaging on a wide range of issues with some good outcomes and some ongoing struggles. We have been very pleased to work cooperatively with Council on a number of issues. The provision and installation of an automatic defibrillator in Henley Square culminated in the Hearty Henley event being recognised by Council as the community event of the year. We were delighted to see Kenzie Van Den Nieuwelaar elected to Council. We were pleased to support the Henley South Dunes Group in gaining funding, and to auspice them and the Tennyson Dunes Group for their great work in protecting our dunes.

We participated in a range of consultation processes including Landscape SA, the new state government's strategy for natural resource management. We made numerous representations to the state government and to CCS on coastal management, in particular the continuing sand depletion of West Beach and more recently Henley South, and continue to do so. We raised concerns about the future of developments at Adelaide Airport and managed to not only get a WACRA rep on the Community Consultative Committee, but to get CCS involved too.

We have been very concerned at the trends in urban development in Adelaide, and in particular in the way that power in making planning and development decisions is slipping away from local communities and going to state government and property developers. As an active member of the Community Alliance we have been calling for a greater say for local communities in the planning decisions that affect their lives. Rapid urban infill suits the priorities of governments and developers, but not necessarily people or other species.

We have been engaged in public art projects and heritage issues. We have had our share of defeats as well as successes. We failed to preserve the iconic curved roof shelter of Henley Jetty. We continue to push, but without success, to stop the eight years of illegal extraction of groundwater from beneath the Baju/H2O development and its dumping on the beach. We strongly but unsuccessfully opposed the winding back of community participation inherent in council's new Public Consultation Policy. We supported local residents in unsuccessfully trying to prevent the erection of Telstra's infamous tower (though we did get the colour changed). We have linked with other coastal communities in expressing our concerns about the plans for the dredging of Outer Harbor and the channel into Gulf St Vincent. We have had some success there but not enough. We have provided input into the currently stalled process for completion of the Coast Park pathway. We believe the way forward is through conversation, not litigation, but there is little we can do at the moment.

The continuing growth in the number of premises selling alcohol in the Henley Square precinct and the regular incidents of violent drunken behaviour are a growing concern. We hope that recent discussions we have initiated with council will lead to a roundtable of stakeholders to address the issue. We don't want Henley Square to become a beachside Hindley Street.

We have been pleased however (notwithstanding the unfortunate Public Consultation Policy) to enjoy good relations with council. We acted, we hope, as a critical friend in responding to council's Business Plan. We have appreciated some excellent consultation practice regarding the future of libraries and the development of the Main Street/Military Road precinct. We look forward to productive partnerships in the future on that project,

and also West Beach sand retention and the future of wetlands along Breakout Creek from Tapleys Hill Road to the sea.

This year we have begun a project to document the history of WACRA and its precedent organisations over the last four decades. Thanks to those who have contributed their recollections and reflections. The book should be out by the end of this year. The coming year will certainly bring new challenges and opportunities. Our chief aim remains to act as an advocate and supporter of all those who want to live in a diverse, vibrant, engaged and compassionate community that works for all of us.

Paul Laris 27.3.19