



Dear Members,

You may be relieved to hear that the Association has dropped out from the “silly season” and will not be holding an end of year gathering this year. Instead, we hope to hold a “welcome to 2019” gathering in February.

Here is a brief update on what your committee has been doing since the AGM in May this year.

**As some problems are solved or postponed, others arise.**

### **The Harbour Trust**

#### **Middle Head Oval**

We are delighted at the returfing of Middle Head Oval with natural turf instead of plastic and we hope that the sports associations will also be happy with the result. Council sought the advice of an agronomist for the returfing and we hope that his advice will be retained into 2019 when the surface will be put to the test.

#### **The new problem – Netball Courts**

Council received a state government grant for lighting to the three netball courts at the Drill Hall precinct of the Headland Park. Mosman Parks & Bushland gave conditional support for the lighting. However, it would have involved a change to the Harbour Trust’s Management Plan and the Trust was concerned about the intensification of use of the precinct. The Trust has therefore deferred a decision about allowing the lighting until Council provides a Traffic Management Plan and examines rescheduling of sport and activities to stagger the use of the precinct.

A problem for Mosman Netball has been that it has been unable to use the indoor court in the Drill Hall because the Drill Hall is used for after school care.

Mosman Netball has secured the support of some Mosman councillors who have produced two proposals. One is for netball courts at Middle Head and another is for netball courts and a club house at Reid Park. The Headland Preservation Group and The Mosman Parks & Bushland Association have always opposed any addition to the existing sporting facilities on the Headland. Reid Park is an attractive neighbourhood park, situated on a major walk way, and enjoyed by families and dog walkers, particularly at weekends and mornings and evenings. Bush regenerators have worked substantially on the bushland to either side and at the end of the green parkland.

#### **The Scenic Protection Area**

You will remember that we were very concerned about the prospective loss of Mosman’s Scenic Protection Area at the end of November 2018. Although we wrote to you earlier telling you of news from our local MP and the Minister for Planning that an extension had been granted for our Scenic Protection Area, that extension did not become official until 23<sup>rd</sup> November! We were extremely anxious and lobbied intensively, but the good news is that the extension when it finally came, was for three years, not two as anticipated. We understand that there is unlikely to be a further extension. By that time, Mosman Council will have to conceive a new method of protecting its foreshore slopes. It is the retention of their leafy character, particularly as viewed from the Harbour that has been our concern.

### **A grant for nesting boxes**

The member for North Shore advised the Association that there was a Minister's Conservation Fund and asked whether the Association had an appropriate project that it would like funded. The Committee scratched its collective head and came up with the idea of nesting boxes and cameras to monitor their visitors and inhabitants. Mosman's Bushcare Officer, Natalie Edmonds, put us in touch with various interesting people for advice. The application was made and was successful. With native species under ever increasing threat from loss of habitat, urban bushland has a role to play in their preservation. This project will make an interesting extension to our bush regeneration work once in place and running. We are hoping to tell you more about it at our February gathering.

### **Natalie Edmonds**

We were extremely sorry to hear that Natalie has resigned as Bushcare Officer for Mosman. Natalie has a great knowledge of plants, fauna and bushland management and was always helpful to the groups which the Mosman Parks & Bushland Association coordinates as well as to individual bush regenerators. Her enthusiasm was an inspiration. We wish her well.

### **Archiving the Association's records**

The Association's beginnings were in 1964 and the committee thought it was high time its records were archived. We obtained a grant from Mosman Council to do so and we have obtained the advice of a professional archivist. Committee members and volunteers have been working away, but the task is far from complete. We would like to thank particularly, volunteers who put their hands up unexpectedly for work.

### **The Sydney Marine Park**

Hopes were high when submissions were invited for the Hawkesbury Shelf Marine Park proposal. The proposal originally contained non-contiguous sanctuaries in some parts of the park where recreational fishing would be prohibited. The government was quick to back-slide however when the recreational fishing community objected. This was unfortunate for both marine biodiversity and ultimately for fishing as sanctuaries have been proved to allow fish stocks to recover. The Sydney Institute for Marine Science in regretting this decision has called for limits to the sizes of fish that can be caught and for enhanced compliance. We have supported that call.

### **Our Unmade Roads**

We continue to advocate upgrading the zoning of our unmade roads with high ecological and aesthetic value to give them greater protection from development. Mosman Council was successful in 2016 in achieving a zoning upgrade to E2 Environmental Protection for 16 of our Unmade Roads. At the time Council made an excellent assessment of our Unmade Roads. We have suggested that more unmade roads may have achieved sufficient bushland characteristics and biodiversity quality to justify a second round of upgrades.

### **Thanks**

As always, the Committee and I wish to thank our bush regenerators, our volunteers and our members. We are fortunate to live in Mosman and to be able to make a contribution to its beautiful natural environment.

With warm greetings for Christmas and the New Year,



Kate Eccles

President

December 2018