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AGM 2025 Chair's Report

Let me begin by thanking my committee for doing an absolutely sterling job all year, especially these last months, when I have disappeared off the face of the Bathurst map somewhat unexpectedly and in a very unplanned and disorganised sort of fashion. Thanks very much to them for more than pulling their weight, and holding fort in this last little bit.

My personal apologies for simply disappearing in the way that I have, but I didn't really have much choice and it looks as though I am unlikely to be able to recover to a sufficient extent to carry on. Although it had been my intention to quit this November anyway. So thanks to everybody who has been involved in supporting the BR&RA and who has been part of our journey. Thank you.

We started off in April 2023 with the intention to achieve as much as possible, as quietly as possible. So, we chose to fucus on a few key projects and to approach things from the bottom up rather than to try and force results from an unwilling council. I think that Bathurst has been fairly successful in terms of the quality of service we are getting from our local people and the relationships that we have built up with the people who are actually doing the work, who fix our water leaks and try to look after our roads, and so on.

We are in the process of moving on the municipal front into a different kind of gear to see if we can influence in some way the provision of adequate equipment to actually do the job; because one grader, one Tlb, and one compression roller is not enough to maintain the roads in Ndlambe. Similarly, we can't expect a decent water supply unless they finish the upgrade to the water treatment plant.

Those 2 things were going to be the focus of our forthcoming meeting with the municipal manager, but unfortunately my back gave out, so the meeting has not happened yet.

Some of the projects we focused on, getting launched in the early stages of this phase of BR&RA, were the commonage management committee, a collaboration between the village and the township, which is being more than adequately guided now by Monty Roodt. And also the establishment of a

functional sector community police forum which is being enthusiastically and effectively managed now by Danie Boneschans and his team.

Kew gardens was a sort of dream that we hoped somehow might materialize and by more luck than judgement really, it has come together under the guidance of Jax, who together with a lot of Bathurst gardeners seems to have a lot of fun producing some interesting and exciting results in that area of our village, which should make things look more spiffy in the next little while, which is exciting.

The one really serious outstanding item is a potential project, that I dreamed of doing something about, was re-developing the town hall and library site into something seriously useful to this community as a whole. I am hoping however, that Mtimkulu will follow up discussions that we have had and take on this particular challenge, because I think that it would make more difference to Bathurst than any other single thing could do.

Beyond that I think it would be most useful if I could have a meeting quite soon with my successor to discuss where we have got so far with the municipal management who are less co-operative and helpful than some of the municipal employees, but I don't think that there is a great deal of point going into detail here about what exactly had been the intention or might prove to be useful.

So yes, you know, a somewhat unplanned and unscheduled cheerio and the very best of luck to the committee and the future. Bye.

Elizabeth Milne