

## **Presidents report for the year 2010 -2011**

Over the last 5 years the Chamber has worked tirelessly to prepare Bulahdelah and its businesses to survive and thrive after the town is by-passed in 2012.

To this end we have introduced initiatives to make the town become a destination based on its natural attributes and its proximity to the Myall Lakes National Park.

The Bulahdelah Website has put the town and surrounding area on the world wide web and has provided a powerful tool to market our town and local businesses away from the Great Lakes Tourism strategy of referring to our area as the Hinterland, with little emphasis on our town as a destination within Great Lakes.

### **ACHIEVEMENTS**

The promotion of this website has been our main objective, as it is key to our towns success as a destination; so this year we have focused on promotion of this website via

- The Sydney-Forster bus advertising campaign,
- The bumper stickers promoting the website and our positioning as The Heart of Myall Lakes.
- The Bulahdelah local tourism map
- Advertising in the Seniors Journal Go 55's
- The legendary Pacific Highway Program

We have also worked on the improvement of the image and facilities of our town in order to give visitors a good impression and the local community pride.

This is seen in the

- The development of a Strategic Plan which has led to the improvements in Wade Park and the introduction of the Town Plan, which will provide significant improvements in
  - Footpaths and surface of Stroud Street
  - Provision for flag placement for special events
  - New public toilet facilities
  - Landscaping
  - A pontoon and walkway in the River Park
  - Welcome signage
  - Town signage
- The wooden seating program
- The installation of heritage bins
- Town signage on the highway

We have forged strong relationships with Great Lakes Council executives, gaining credibility and support to implement the many projects we have undertaken.

And finally on Sept 27<sup>th</sup> we saw the successful introduction of the What are We Famous Program supported by 36 attendees. This program is aimed at retail outlets, to give visitors a reason to come back to our town after the by-pass. The program also offers us the opportunity for follow-up workshops to help retailers develop strategies to survive and thrive after the by-pass.

## ACHIEVEMENTS IN OUR RURAL TRANSACTION CENTRE (RTC)

We have also seen significant improvements to the services provided by our RTC

- Neighbourhood services for the financially disadvantaged
- Self service Centrelink facility open longer hours
- Centrelink Rural Help service provided by RTC staff to give fast and detailed assistance to Centrelink customers without the lengthy waits often experienced on Centrelink Help Lines
- Introduction of a Bulahdelah Jobfind service provider to save jobseekers travelling to Taree or Forster
- Online training for jobseekers using RTC computers
- Remodelling of the interior of the RTC to facilitate the introduction of a CTC service for on-line training facility, where we hope to provide TAFE and other courses here in Bulahdelah
- Plans and funding to install a shade sail outside over the picnic tables

## THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE THIS POSSIBLE

But none of this would have happened without the dedication and persistence of our Town Project Coordinator Nita Eadie. She has initiated and implemented these programs and obtained Local Government and State Government funding in order to make these projects succeed without cost to the Chamber or the community.

I want to thank the RTC staff Robyn and Renee who provide the administrative support to the Chamber and facilitate the many services available at the RTC.

I also want to thank Dave Saul for the immense effort he has put into the Autofest Event.

And lastly I would like to thank the executive committee Dick Ahmling, Tony Gregory, Patrick Bramston, and Dave Saul for their support this year to run the Chamber.

I thank you, the members for your continued interest and support and I look forward to seeing the Chamber continue to work with local businesses and develop and implement the programs and initiatives commenced this year.

Brian Ede

Acting President October 2011