

October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## **OCTOBER 2020 PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

We are close to lifting some borders and it will be interesting to see the uptake by visitors. Forward bookings at some local motels are not as good as expected; with “the phone has stopped ringing” being mentioned by several operators.

The hospitality industry is still doing it tough and in line with the THA action plan we have called upon the government to lift the capacity restrictions currently imposed on many cafes, bars and restaurants.

At this week's breakfast we have two representatives from UTAS speaking to us on UTAS's Flagship Employability Program for International Students. We have Penny Stringer, Industry Engagement Coordinator and Leila Daniels, International Student Employability Liaison telling us about the program. It enables employers to take their business to the uni to attract students and graduates to get into internships or gain work experience, either paid or as a volunteer.

At a recent breakfast the CEO of TasPorts, Anthony Donald spoke on the Burnie Port plan. It was our biggest breakfast to date -with 37 members and guests. Anthony spoke well and TasPorts has subsequently taken out a bronze membership. My Pathway has also just returned as a bronze member – we thank both organisations for their support.

Following discussions with Burnie Council funding for Renew Burnie project has been finalised and we can now engage with Renew Australia. I expect this to be closed off within a week.

Once formalised we can engage formally with landlords and interested social enterprises to take space in the arcades and create a more vibrant and active environment. Additionally, we will be enhancing other areas around the city to make them more appealing and better utilised. We are trying to attract more locals to use the city environs in the hope that they will help economic growth.

Another part of our project is to bring art and history into the CBD. Already our presence in the Plaza Arcade with *Paper on Skin* dresses on display and our Living History Cinema in shop 8 has created a lot of interest – even a short letter to editor a week or two ago. The cinema shows old films of Burnie, APPM, Tasmania, the Bass Highway construction, etc and has been well received by older and middle-aged locals.

Justin is planning to install an LED lighting display in shop 6 to further brighten the area and to show the power of modern computer-controlled lighting systems which can present another option to attract locals and tourists to the CBD.

Another item we are working on is our Living History project; this involves bringing some of the rich historical assets we have at the Burnie Museum right into the middle of town. We plan to have a demonstration available for members in the next few weeks.

Christmas is not that far away, and we will be setting up Santa's Grotto in shop 8 of the Plaza Arcade (in conjunction with the Council). Santa and his elves will do their best to entertain the local children.

Shop 9 in the Plaza Arcade will become the HQ for these projects and myself and others on the *Renew Burnie* team will be spending time there on a regular basis, so please drop in and say hello if you are passing by. We have made it quite comfortable and it is a great place to meet.

Tonight, at the Council meeting there will be discussion regarding lighting up the Norfolk Pine tree near the Anglican church. We are hoping for a positive decision that can provide a long-term feature for the city and can also be used at other times of the year such as pink for October, blue for mental health week, etc.

I wish you a busy and productive (& profitable) month.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ian".

**Ian Jones**

President

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