

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HALLIDAYS POINT SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

47 Blackhead Road, Hallidays Point. 2430.

By Lois Wilson

The Foundation Meeting was held on 18th March 1997 at the Black Head Bowling Club; 20 people were present. Seniors had 27 members. Doug Liddell was voted in as President, Peter Daniels Vice President, Joe Ashton Treasurer, Charleen Liddell Secretary, Paula Sibthorpe Liaison Officer, Committee members John McMullen & Graham Thompson. Prior to this meeting Seniors met in a hall at Diamond Beach Holiday Park.

Charleen & Doug Liddell raised money for the Seniors bus by selling raffle tickets for a trip to New Zealand, a trip to the Central Coast & a huge picnic hamper in Triple CEE Complex in Taree. Seniors had an Easter Hamper Raffle, Mother's Day stall & a Christmas raffle at the Black Head bazaar & a barbeque outside the Proud Aussie Tavern. On 30th Dec 1997 there was a fun night held at Diamond Beach Holiday Park. Children & parents danced & played games. Spin the Wheel offered prizes; boat cruises, fishing trips, fun park tickets, restaurant meals & gift vouchers. Jean & Manu Tamaka organised a Multi-cultural concert on the 4th of April 1998 at the Black Head Surf Life Saving Club & raised over \$600. Altogether \$20,000 was raised. This included advertising space on the bus.

Our Foundation members worked hard to raise money; first to buy the bus, then build our bus shed, then a toilet block & storage area for our Community Centre & extensively renovate Castelleto's Cottage to make it what it is today; a multipurpose hall which many groups make use of.

Before we purchased our bus we used to hire a bus from Wingham - a 19 seater which Doug Liddell drove. Everyone who went on these day trips enjoyed them.

In 1998 Seniors purchased a 19 seater 4 cylinder Toyota Coaster from Erina for \$16,500. This bus was largely financed by local businesses, paying for advertising on the bus \$2,000 for front - Insurance Brokers, & \$2,000 on back plus various smaller amounts bought by local businesses.

Ray Addison & Joe Ashton sold raffle tickets & were thrilled when they made \$30.

In 1998 Joe Ashton started Bingo at our local church as a social activity to bring people together.

In 2,000 Doug Liddell negotiated with Taree Council for land to build a bus shed. (Near Casteletto's cottage).

Andy's tree removal removed a large tree from the site at no cost.

Many volunteers from seniors laid foundations for forming the concrete pad (on a Sunday.) Joe Ashton was a bystander as he had had a heart operation.

The concrete was supplied by Black Head Concrete. Some of the volunteers were Ray Addison, Keith & L Cameron, Herb Blackley, Doug Liddell & many others.

Eventually the Building Inspector had a complaint. Ray Addison said "Bad luck it's laid!"

Concrete blocks were purchased at \$2.50 each by 303 local families. Their names are on a board in the bus shed. Mary Marshall went door to door selling bricks. A bricklayer laid the concrete bricks with the help of Ray Addison, Keith & L Cameron & Herb Blackley. Wayne Munroe put the roof on. Bob DE Boer planted a garden beside this shed.

In May 2001, 2 days before the last Bazaar (before the winter break) Alana Parkins contacted Joe Ashton who was President of Seniors, & asked if Seniors could run a food stall because the Coastal Patrol had pulled out. So Joe organised bread from 2 the baker & meat from Wayne, our local butcher. Ray Addison, Keith & L Cameron & others helped. They made \$200. They thought they were rich!

In August 2001 our garage was officially opened by Doug & Charleen Liddell. Our local member Mark Vaile was in attendance as was Councilor Eddie Loftus.

Joe was going to Canada for 6 weeks & asked if a road could be built to the bus shed. Cars got bogged on the old road. When he returned the new road was built by GTCC.

Keith Cameron modified the outside of the trailer Seniors bought for the BBQ for

\$1,200 so that an awning could be attached.

In 2004 the Council re-constructed the pond & put in a Sports field. The Assistant Engineer, Robert Baker told Joe that Castaletto's building (next to the bus shed) was going to be demolished. Joe said, "Don't pull it down. Seniors could use it"

Joe saw Eddie Loftus, (who was the Mayor) & Council granted permission for Seniors to renovate the old building on condition that they keep Council informed of alterations to the building,

Joe Ashton had a meeting with Mark Vaile. He was our local Federal Government MP. He obtained the following grants to build storage area which joins the bus shed, the toilet block & money to renovate the hall.

\$11,000 from Commonwealth Govt. Regional Solutions Program. Then another \$30,000 Grant from Regional Solutions Program.

\$8,000 Greater Taree City Council

\$15,000 which Seniors raised

Doreen Heaps went with Joe Ashton to Greater Taree City Council. First they asked for \$80,000 which was refused then \$40,000 then \$20,000. They were offered \$8,000, & Joe said "We'll take it."

First of all Ray Addison, Keith & L Cameron, Herb Blackley & his brother, Joe Ashton, landscaper Bobby Coupe & work for the Dole people, as well as Wayne Monroe a builder, a bricklayer plus Gary Fitzgerald, an electrician built the storage area & toilet block adjoining the bus shed. All the blocks for the toilet block came from the infernal walls of the original building.

The original building leaked badly. There had been a fire in the kitchen. It had to have a new roof & internal cladding and a concrete slab inside & out with new roof over the veranda. Russell Holland was the builder in charge of Work for the Dole. Electrical wiring was replaced by Gary Fitzgerald. Betty Ashton helped Joe Ashton lay the tiles in the kitchen & entrance.

Tidy Towns (Alana Parkins) gave permission for all the trees surrounding the building to be removed. They were planted by Elvis Castelletto. There are 3 remaining trees near the Football Field In December 2004 Joe Ashton, in consultation with Ray

Addison & Ray Long decided it was time to replace the bus. The two Rays went to Port Macquarie to look at a 22 seater, 6 cylinder 1997 model Toyota Coaster. They phoned Joe & told him, "It's too good to pass up." The price was \$ 49,500. Seniors had \$20,000. The remainder was loaned to Seniors by members & was repaid within 12 months. Our old bus was sold to Bob Coupe for \$ 9,000. On 4th January 2005 we received our bus.

Many members worked & still work at the Bazaar; the money earned from this repaid members who loaned money to help to pay for the replacement bus, & keeps our bus "on the road."

The Seniors Multi-Purpose Centre was officially opened in February, 2005 by the Hon. Mark Vaile, MP.

Ray Addison made a garden, between the hall & the croquet court. He dragged railway sleepers & soil into position, & planted trees & shrubs. There is a plaque there dedicated to the late Ray Addison 2012. Topsy Marshall looks after the garden now.

Unfortunately many of our records were lost when we had a break in & papers were found in the pond nearby.

Joe Ashton has organised many great holidays. Our longer trips include Ballina, Grafton, Coffs Harbour & Mittagong twice, Central Coast, Avoca (Bell Bird) 3 times, & Montville, Cooma, Kiama, Moree, Shoal Haven, Nowra, Nambucca & Mudgee once. Our bus took us to Newcastle when we went for a cruise to some Islands in the Pacific Ocean on P & O "Pacific Sun", then picked us up when we returned. The same thing happened when we went for a cruise to New Zealand on the "Sea Princess" in March 2014, only this time we boarded in Sydney, so our bus took us there & back. All our trips have been most enjoyable. Now we are in the capable hands of Lee Kirk.

We have been on many day outings, about 10 per year. Joe Ashton organized these great little trips. Now Lee Kirk has kindly taken over. We take morning tea; our superb cooks, Bev Crisp, Josie Jozelj, Ray Long (& the late Riemy De Boer) make slices & cakes. We usually stop at a club or restaurant for lunch. We all enjoy each these outings.

When Ray Long was our bus driver he used to pick members up at their door & take them shopping to Taree, then deliver them & their shopping to their door. Unfortunately too few people were using this service so it was stopped.

Our bus will pick up members & take them to Bingo. It also takes Hallidays Point School children to our Hall in Seniors week. The children sing & play their recorders & flutes.

Then we give them a sausage sizzle, drink & chips. We all enjoy the morning.

A big thank you to our bus drivers; Doug Liddell, the late Keith Cameron, Ray Long, Peter Maguire & Jimmy Wootton.

Every year on Melbourne Cup Day, Carol Lynch organises a lovely day for Seniors at our Hall. There are prizes for the best dressed & the best hat for men as well as women. Carol organises the sweeps & will place bets with the TAB. Our wonderful committee put on a great lunch! We watch the fashions on the field, then the race on our BIG TV. Carol also runs Senior Moments Games every 2nd Monday afternoon.

We have Christmas lunch at the Black Head Bowling Club. Everyone brings a gift for the raffle. The tables are decorated by your Committee. Christmas music makes a festive atmosphere.

A special thanks must go to the people who have organised the Bazaar; Joe Ashton, Ray Addison, Gloria White & Robin Evans, & their helpers. On the first Saturday of the month from September to May food has to be purchased, prepared & packed into boxes & refrigerated. Early on Sunday morning at 5.30 AM the food has to be packed into Eskies & transported to the Bazaar with the tent, tables, urn & BBQ's etc. Then the bread is-wrapped in serviettes. We would like to thank the people who cook the barbeque, the Cashiers & Senior helpers who serve the customers. Then after lunch everything has to be unloaded, washed & put away. It is a big operation.

Doreen Heaps worked very hard to get the Croquet club started, & is our organizer for Croquet & Tai Chi. John Blacklock has been a great help mowing & fertilizing the lawn.

In 2006 Doreen Heaps contacted U3A & asked if they would come to Hallidays Pt Seniors twice a month. They told her U3A was at Taree & Forster; so Doreen held

workshops for likeminded people with computers to share their knowledge. So instead of U3A we have Knowledge for Seniors.

Chris Scott took over the following year. Once a month Walter Bolin and Chris conduct an open forum discussing many controversial topics. They are always well researched & interesting. Chris also leads a poetry group. They produce a book of poems each year, which are in the Library.

Jean Scott organises Theatre Bookings. Many people have enjoyed shows at the MEC in Taree, and some at the Glasshouse in Port Macquarie.

Liz Skuja and Gloria White are our Cinema girls. We have seen some great movies.

Marilyn Lambden calls Bingo twice a month. Many of our members love their Bingo, and the morning tea they bring to share.

Topsy Marshall opens the hall & sets up the tables & chairs for art each Friday.

Bev Crisp is our caring Welfare Officer, checking up on seniors who are not so well; sometimes visiting people, phoning them or sending cards & flowers. Please let Bev know if you know of someone who is unwell.

Ray Long has mowed the lawn between our building & the garden, & to the croquet court for years. He also takes the bins out when necessary, all the way to Baywood Drive. He kept our bus immaculate for years.

There have been artists who have donated paintings to raffle; Ron Davis, Fred Bullen & Iris Salmon, & people who sell the tickets, all help to raise money.

Last but definitely not least are our wonderful committee who work tirelessly to make our Club great. The range of activities have grown over the years. They meet once a month & produce a program every month.

Their names are on the NEWSLETTER which follows:

Life Members and Office Bearers from the beginning of Seniors in 1996 are listed on the Honour Boards at the Seniors Hall.