

Householders' Options to Protect the Environment Inc.

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President's Report for 2013-2014

(Last updated – 8 November 2014)

Good morning folks,

Looking back over the past 12 months I know that not all has gone according to plan.

Several new initiatives such as information displays at Toowoomba's PCYC Sunday Markets and our monthly Kitchen Conversations morning teas didn't attract the support and interest from members and supporters that we had hoped.

Certainly, illnesses to management committee members and others throughout the year impacted heavily on the timeliness and, in turn, quality of our work.

Also, the lack of financial sponsorship significantly hurt the staging of our annual *Celebrating Our Environment Expo* (formerly known as Pathways to Sustainability Expo) at the University of Sothern Queensland (Toowoomba campus) in June.

On the positive side, we welcomed Terry Ryan as our Vice-President; Barry Miller stepped up to look after our Membership Database; Shawn Dang and Jasmine Ding volunteered to write articles for the newsletter and website; and more recently, Charmaine Atkinson volunteered to produce the September and October editions of our newsletter. Thanks to all of you for your contributions.

The strategic planning meetings held in December 2013 and January 2014 yielded quite a lot of useful information with work progressing well on the development of a Business Plan and Sponsorship Prospectus. Hopefully, we'll be able to attract some corporate support to help us lift our profile nationally; to defray our operating expenses; and to allow us to undertake new projects, events and activities.

In January, HOPE convened a meeting of disaffected residents and ratepayers within Toowoomba Regional Council boundary who's main concerns centered on the lack of genuine community consultation and a perceived lack of due process being followed by council on major planning decisions. The 40+ attendees at the meeting agreed to form a steering committee to progress the establishment of a Concerned Residents & Ratepayers Alliance. Terry Ryan, our Vice-President, assisted with the group's formation.

The monthly Community Forum program was reasonably successful with good numbers of participants at 4 meetings; low numbers at 2 meetings; and 2 meetings were cancelled due to lack of registrations. A big thanks to our guest speakers who gave freely of time. Much appreciated.

The provision of information displays at *Peaks to Points Festival* (20 Sept – Oxley Creek Commons, Rocklea); *Toowoomba Languages & Cultures Festival* (10 Aug), *U3A Seniors Expo* (20 Aug - Toowoomba) and the *Youth Leading the World Congress* (17 Sept - Toowoomba) were appreciated by the event organisers and well received by the attending public.

Some of HOPE's other achievements during 2014 were:

- Received a "Golden Friend of SEQ" award for long service to the group
- Provided advice and assistance to the working group charged with the responsibility of establishing the new Darling Downs Environment Council – which was officially launched on 8 October.
- Finalisation of the Helpful Hints booklet; and the Household Energy Efficiency booklet. A big thanks to Kerry Kruger for the effort she put into upgrading these publications to a national standard.
- Support for, and assistance with, "Clean Up Kearney (Springs sports grounds and associated parklands)" event (25 October)

On the financial side, we have had another lean year with minimal income received from donations and fund-raising.

The 2012 Volunteer Grant of \$1,000 for fuel related expenses was acquitted in March 2014. The financial year 2013-2014 audited reports were completed in August. Thanks to Robert Crosato (our accountant/auditor) for promptness of delivery. The BAS return was completed and lodged – with an expected refund of \$432.

As stated earlier in my report, the 4th Celebrating Our Environment Expo was well supported by exhibitors, but poorly attended by USQ staff and students, as well as the general public.

The Management Committee has suggested that the Expo be dropped for the immediate future and replaced in 2015 by a program of short, practical, hands-on type workshops – perhaps on a monthly basis.

In an effort to further lift our profile and better 'market' HOPE members and supporters at public events; it was decided to hold a "*T-shirt LOGO competition*". The winning logo will be used on the front of t-shirts to identify our members. Thanks to Charmaine Atkinson for progressing this initiative.

It has been my privilege to be President of Householders' Options to Protect the Environment in 2013-2014.

I wish to thank the management committee and the many admin volunteers for their respective contributions to the organisation - the stronger the team effort, the better the outcomes.

Our patron, Jerry Coleby-Williams, for his on-going support and attendance at this year's Celebrating Our Environment Expo.

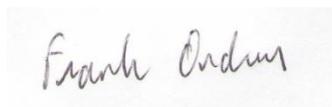
I also wish to thank the partners/supporters who have helped HOPE in so many ways.

The variety of national, state and local NGOs, government agencies and businesses that provided free literature and other resources – especially Qld Dept of Environment & Heritage Protection, Green Harvest and WME Magazine.

The local state and federal members of parliament who have provided free photocopying through their respective electoral offices.

Finally, I wish the incoming committee for 2014-2015 all the best.

Yours sincerely,



Frank Ondrus, President – HOPE Inc., ph 07 4639 2135