

20 February 2003

One hundred residents attend inaugural Friends of Lane Cove meeting

One hundred residents of the Lane Cove Municipality attended a meeting to form a new residents action group on Wednesday night, vowing to fight for better communication with Lane Cove Council.

Residents flocked to the Lane Cove Club for the inaugural meeting of the Friends of Lane Cove. Councillors Ian Longbottom, Mary Rawlings and Rod Tudge also attended the meeting.

Most people who attended became financial members at a cost of \$25 for individuals, \$100 for corporations and \$10 for pensioners.

Local resident Bob Curtis chaired the meeting and was elected President. In his opening address, Mr Curtis emphasised that the Friends of Lane Cove was an apolitical organisation established not to berate Council, but rather as a link between Council and ratepayers.

“We’re just a group of concerned people who, over the past two years, have come to the conclusion that the ordinary ratepayer needs someone to represent them,” Mr Curtis said.

“This is not a knock-the-Council exercise but rather an exercise in ensuring that the voice of the people of Lane Cove is heard.”

Mr Curtis said proposed developments such as the Woolworths and Council car park developments in Austin Street, the now defunct St Hilliers proposal for units on the Rosenthal Avenue car park and Council’s handling of a legal action by local retired architect Dick Gailey OAM spurred a group of local residents to take action.

“The Dick Gailey case is alleged to have cost us (the ratepayers) \$17,000 in legal expenses for Lane Cove Council,” he said.

Former Lane Cove Chamber of Commerce President Tracey Hassarati was elected Secretary and Public Officer of the Friends of Lane Cove.

“The mission of the Friends of Lane Cove is to become a focal point for the people and organisations of the Lane Cove Municipality who are concerned about making Lane Cove a better place to live,” she said.

“Our objective is to provide the communications tools for people and organisations in the Lane Cove Municipality to make their views and opinions known to others in the community and to ensure that people and organisations are aware of the procedures and processes available to bring about a change in the community.

“Our strategy is to establish a community focussed association that can and will provide the information and facilities, such as web sites, databases, information resources and facilitate the coming together of people with common concerns, goals and objectives.”

Mr Curtis and Ms Hassarati spoke of a number of activities which were planned for the group, beginning with a photographic competition for people to identify the “icons of Lane Cove”. Lobbying on behalf of the community in regard to the proposed Austin Street developments is also high on the priority list.

Anyone wishing to find out more about the Friends of Lane Cove should contact Tracey Hassarati on 0418 446 079 or visit the FriendsofLaneCove.com website.

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