

THE Rosedale ASSOCIATION INC



Newsletter Issue 129 March 2020



POSTPONEMENT OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: SATURDAY 11 APRIL 2020

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS MARGOT MARSHALL & KATE MCINERNEY

After the devastating fire on New Year's Eve, the bush is regenerating, the birds are coming back and our wonderful Rosedale community continues to rally around each other. Many have received their insurance payout and some are already planning to rebuild.

The sad tally for Rosedale is 84 homes destroyed – 13 in the south, 70 in North Rosedale, one in Roseby Drive. 12 boatsheds incinerated. Every street has lost at least one home. We're so grateful there were no fatalities.

Our deepfelt thanks go to all the exhausted heroes who stayed and defended, not just that day but for weeks afterwards, extinguishing spot fires, embers and recurring stump ignitions.

But now we're confronting the unprecedented health threat of COVID-19. In the face of border closures and more and more lockdowns, we've cancelled ALL Easter events. We're postponing the AGM until it's safe to hold it. In the meantime we'll be communicating by email and Facebook, including reports from Council and lessons learned from the bushfires.

So please pay your membership dues online or by cheque (see page 9) and make sure we have your correct email address so we can stay in touch.

Finally, thanks to everyone who bravely shared their bushfire stories, to Michael Skipper, Fran Stewart, John Gasson, Lucy Knight, Nina Kolleth and Roz Clarke-Walker for photos and to Annie Shillington for her expert layout. Stay safe and keep healthy!



The Rosedale Association Inc. PO Box 2125 Malua Bay NSW 2536 www.rosedale.org.au



ROSEDALE ASSOCIATION
COMMITTEE

President: David Boardman

Secretary: Vicki Smith

Treasurer: Noel Egan

Members

Tim Brown

Melissa Gribble

Daniel Long

Kate McInerney

Margot Marshall

Dugald Stewart

Peter Ward

Please pass this newsletter on to your friends and neighbours – now's the time for everyone to join to help us rebuild the Rosedale we love. See membership application on page 9 or [HERE](#)

It's only \$10 a year.

TREASURER'S REPORT

ROSEDALE ASSOCIATION INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT 2019

INCOME

Members Subscriptions	\$ 1,910.00
Interest Term Deposit	\$ 344.82
Cake Stalls	\$ 168.00
Donations Yowani Steps	\$ 2,360.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 4,782.82

EXPENDITURE

Australia Post	\$ 130.00
Easter BBQ	\$ 198.48
Malua Bay Fire Service	\$ 500.00
Batemans Bay Surf Life Saving Club	\$ 668.55
Insurance	\$ 183.92
Gordon Bray Plaque	\$ 385.00
	\$ 2,065.95

EXCESS OF EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME \$ **2,716.87**

ASSETS

Cash at Bank	\$ 17,010.10
Term Deposit	\$ 11,619.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 28,629.10

*RAI has committed to contribute \$12,500 to council for the Yowani Steps.

ROSEDALE LANDCARE GROUP

INCOME - Donations.....	\$ 1,645.00
EXPENDITURE - To RAI for Yowani Steps	\$ 5,000.00
Cash at Bank 31/12/2019.....	\$ 8,189.92



REFLECTIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT DAVID BOARDMAN

I feel a spiritual connection to Rosedale. The bush, the beach, the wildlife, the ocean. This is the place I spent my summer holidays growing up. It conjures up so many memories - people I have met, friendships made.

This love of the beach was instilled in my mother and has been passed on. Rosedale was her escape. The family holiday home of 53 years at North Rosedale was lost on New Year's Eve. The grief the family is experiencing is reflected in the stories of so many of the Rosedale community.

On New Year's Day my youngest son turned seven. We spent some time together on the beach - swimming, catching waves and building sandcastles. As I surveyed the charred remains of North Rosedale and the Boatsheds I reflected on why I feel so connected with this place. The beach felt the same as when I was a five year old. Jimmies Island loomed large in the background. Dolphins patrolled the breakers. I imagined how it was when Cook sailed up the coast.

Much has been lost but much is unchanged. I am feeling optimistic about the future.

Many of us have connected with neighbours we didn't know. We have put aside differences to come together. Our wonderful community at work: night patrols to deal with lingering fire threats and make sure everyone is safe, com-

munity meetings held in Canberra and Rosedale. Our Shire Council has gone to amazing efforts to restore water and sewerage. Power is restored and dangerous trees removed. Our wildlife has returned. A new Facebook page. A Go-FundMe page (\$30,000 in donations). Amazing generosity in time and money.

Many challenges lie ahead. We must continue to work together to ensure the character of Rosedale is maintained during the rebuilding process.

Rosedale Bounces Back



Angel rings replaced thanks to ANSA



Keith and Mary Boardman return





BUSHFIRE REPORT MICHAEL SKIPPER

With bushfires raging down eastern Australia since July, we lived with the nagging fear that this time Rosedale had no escape. In December we alerted members to RFS warnings of our vulnerability and the need for more fire preparation especially in North Rosedale. But none of us anticipated the speed and ferocity of the fire that struck us on New Year's Eve.

On Boxing Day, the huge Currowan fire jumped the Kings Highway and gave birth to the Clyde Mountain fire. On the evening of 30 December it burned down to the foothills of the Clyde and overnight swept towards Mogo.

At about 5.00am on New Year's Eve mobile phones and landlines rang with messages of imminent danger, advising people to evacuate. By 7.30am most of Rosedale had evacuated, either to their permanent homes if roads were open or to evacuation centres in Batehaven, Moruya, Malua Bay and Tomakin.

Burnt and blackened leaves had been falling all night and could be seen everywhere. The electricity supply went down as the fire raged towards Rosedale, Malua and MacKenzies. The fire topped the hills and ridges behind us on Dunns Creek Road and Ridge Road. Time seemed to stand still. It

was 8.30 in the morning but felt like midnight - so dark with only an ominous red-orange glow in the north west. This glow got brighter, the temperature increased rapidly, an extremely strong wind from the west hit us and by 10.40 we had glowing embers of leaves and bark raining down over Rosedale. Within minutes the vegetation on main beach was alight, along with virtually all North Rosedale. Flames were being fanned by the strong westerly wind from the hills behind us and by what was on fire in Rosedale already. The ember attack continued on the westerly wind and raced through Rosedale Parade, George Bass Drive, then onto Tranquil Bay, Paul St, Knowlman Rd and the eastern point of Cooks Crescent. By now all the country between Rosedale around to McKenzies and to the very end of Pretty Point was alight and burning freely.

The predicted southerly change came in around 11.20am and pushed the fire northwards. The change destroyed some homes but saved much of the hamlet, particularly in the south. I have no doubt that had the southerly come later and hot westerly winds continued, our losses would have been much, much greater, even fatal for those who evacuated to the beach. In another half hour, the beach would have been hell, with much higher temperatures, dwindling oxygen, increased smoke and unbreathable air.

FROM THE BEACH

LUCY KNIGHT



I'd decided to stay with our three young kids - our family home is right on the beach and I was worried about driving through burning bush with unreliable communications.

By 9am, we'd lost power. We took old wool blankets, food and water down to our boatshed. We were alone in front of the boatsheds when embers started falling about 11am. Flames shot up at South Rosedale, not far from the cabins - and then fire erupted from embers near the boatsheds, just metres in front of us. By this time the kids and I were wrapped in the wool blankets and sitting in the water, but the waves were so strong we couldn't stay there for long. Boats started burning. It wasn't hot, but it was very windy, and the kids were very frightened.

With Rosedale completely alight, our neighbours Will and Tim Brown helped us move to the middle of the beach, close to other people. There was emotion, but no panic - often we watched in stunned silence as houses exploded and water bombers arrived.

Rosie Brown showed us a young kookaburra she rescued - it had crashed to the beach with smoke in its eyes. That kookaburra was a heaven-sent distraction. For six hours, the kids stopped worrying about themselves while trying to keep the kookaburra alive. They showed it to the fire brigade when they arrived, bringing one fireman to tears.

At the end of that terrible day we were lucky enough to be able to drive out of Rosedale. The house had minor damage but survived. And after everything they'd been through, the first thing the children told their dad was that they had saved a kookaburra!



13 KNOWLMAN ROAD, 10. 20AM GEORGINA HICKEY

From the time we got that sickening early-morning fire alert we'd spent the hours until around 10 am watering the decks, filling buckets, gathering blankets, cutting ham, filling water bottles, packing cars and taking loads to the beach.

I was the last to amble down Mum's drive. An ember landed in front of my feet - I said 'Fark, fark! This is what they've been talking about.' I stamped on the leaf, it wouldn't go out - pathetic really.



My son Jack was backing his car onto the beach, my brother-in-law Soren directing him. But then he called out 'Get out of the car, Jack! The fire's coming!'

I heard Soren's shouting and at the same time saw (and heard!) an orange flame on the dunes headed towards the track to the beach (just left of the cabins where Jack had got to). I immediately started

running to the beach. Got to Jack (more 'Farks'). And then Jack said 'I've got to go back to the house to get Sarah [girlfriend].'

There was no way I could have stopped him, nor would I have tried. I kept going forward to the beach, at which point the wind went crazy, blowing hard towards Jimmies. I grabbed a blanket and dropped it in the water to wet it. My mouth was so dry. I was so thirsty - all I wanted to do was gulp the seawater. I kept thinking 'I have to wet this blanket and put it around my head' (as per our plan). But the wind was so strong it blew me over onto my knees into the sea. Fark! I kept thinking - it's not going to be fire that'll get me - I'll end up drowning in my own blanket.

Then I saw Mike [partner] and apparently screamed at him 'Where's Jack?' and he calmly pointed towards the water where he and Sarah were knee-deep holding each other.

Mike reckons it was only a couple of minutes from the time the flames started on the dunes until that moment when I asked where Jack was. But to me it seemed like at least half an hour - an eon of worrying that Jack was still in the house, possibly dead. (Writing this is making me cry.)

So the four of us (Mike, Jack, Sarah and I) huddled in a scrum with wet blankets draped over us, trying to brace ourselves against that furious wind and ember spray. I've never experienced wind that strong.

We heard an enormous explosion - Jack's petrol tank - followed by four more (the tyres).

Then, all of a sudden, the southerly came. The photo timestamps say it was somewhere between 11 and 11.15am. Immediately the smoke lifted, the sky lightened, the wind was a fraction of what it was. We all looked around, a little dumbfounded. And then tentatively walked back to the house.

The 'barn' (accommodation area) gone. Back to the beach. We watched the main house burn down (only later did I find out Mike had briefly snuck back to try and defend it - I was so angry). Our four cars incinerated. Only our stinky wet smoky clothes left.



ROSEDALE FIREFIGHTING UTES TIM BROWN

We returned from the beach to find houses and cars alight, vegetation burning, power and communications out - but mains water pressure still on! We used garden hoses to put out creeping fires and create a wet edge around houses.

Checking houses along Knowlman Road we came across the Hamilton's place (they were overseas) with two 1000L water tanks, a Davey firefighting pump and a ute in the driveway - all ready to go! We set up a mobile firefighting ute and for four days we worked with others to douse spot fires, prepare for another looming threat on Saturday and patrol at night.

When Saturday's threat thankfully passed uneventfully, we returned to Sydney and put together two more firefighting units, funded by donations and trucked down to Rosedale thanks to Woolworths. It was an amazing effort by a remarkable group of people.



Will Brown in front of fire fighting ute

COMMUNITY STRENGTH VICKI SMITH



Bill and I followed our fire plan, preparing our house and evacuating to Moruya early New Year's Eve. We watched with horror as the fire moved east. We got back into Rosedale at dawn on New Year's Day to find our home still standing, but so many destroyed – and many saved.

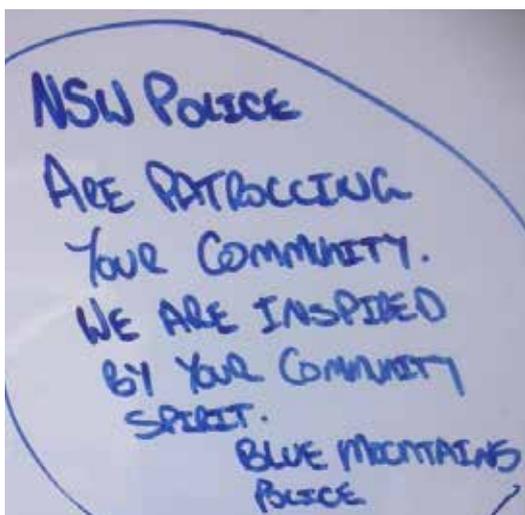
set up a firefighting ute (two more followed thanks to donations) and formalised night patrols, with a car horn system for fire alert if needed. There was no shortage of volunteers looking out for spot fires, smouldering logs, fires to the south and looters.

Communications were a nightmare. With no internet and no phones (for weeks), local roads often cut and highways mostly closed, we welcomed any news from outside and stressed about being unable to get news out. Donated UHF radios arrived – a godsend.

Together we prepared for forecast fire threats - checking hoses and fittings, watering, filling green bins and securing vacant properties. We cleaned fridges and freezers and taped bins closed to prevent contents spilling out in strong winds. We all checked on neighbours and shared food and donated items. We used BBQs, camp stoves and lanterns until generators arrived. With no sewerage, we showered outside, washed up in buckets and monitored our flushing.

We welcomed the early arrival of Council, NSW Police, RFS, Essential Energy, SES and other services, thanking them all. We greeted shocked people arriving to check their holiday homes. Many brought donated goods and joined working bees.

We were committed, cohesive and contained within Rosedale and we didn't want to be anywhere else. There was a sense that Rosedale had given us all so much and it was our turn to give back. The destruction is still unbelievable to us, even though we live amongst it every day. But with such a strong community, we are confident Rosedale will recover and so will we all.



We swung into action, working day and night with others across the community - all fiercely protective of Rosedale and all that remained.

We held two Association committee meetings and two community meetings, followed up pressing issues with Council, installed a community noticeboard in the carpark,

OUR ROSEDALE - OBITUARIES

Here are just some of the heartbreaking stories from those who lost their homes - published on Facebook, Rosedale Renew Rebuild Restore.



10 DALE PLACE

DESPITE JACK'S VALIANT DEFENCE OF THEIR HOME, CATH BOWDLER AND JACK EGAN LOST EVERYTHING - EXCEPT HIS CAR WITH ITS POWERFUL PROTEST.



31 YOWANI KIM MOELLER

31 Yowani has been present for my entire life as a safe haven, a place of tranquillity and recovery, a place for family and a heap of friends. Dad and my grandfather built it around 1964 and it has seen five generations of Moellers, from my great grandmother to Hayley Moeller and our kids. It has always had a presence in my mind, knowing I could get to that place of tranquillity at any time. That's gone now. It will take time to get back to that state of mind about Rosedale I had before the fires. Goodbye my friend. We shall rebuild.



6 DALE PLACE JOANNA ZUBRZYCKI

On New Year's Eve our beloved family home in Dale Place North Rosedale was burned to the ground.

After spending 10 years in England after the war my Polish parents migrated to Canberra in 1956. My mother experienced Canberra, at that time, as a hostile and alien place, hot, freezing and isolating. Her despair was relieved when in their first year in Australia, a work colleague of my father's took my parents and my two older siblings on a holiday to the far South Coast. From that moment on the bush, the sea air, the wildlife, the stunning beauty of the landscape became her salvation. Dad, a devoted Catholic, would often refer to the bush as his place of worship. From 1957 my parents organised annual holidays in Rosedale, finally affording to buy some land and eventually in 1981 building their own home.

Many visitors to our beautiful beach house would remark on its European charm, its special qualities of tranquillity set amongst a stunning spotted gum forest, the abundant bird life, the close-knit community. When both my parents died, we sprinkled sand from the beach onto their coffins, local shells decorate their graves.

The day after our house burnt to the ground my eldest brother Tom aptly remarked that something in him died that day. Our family home represented renewal for my parents who lost everything in the war, it was our spiritual home, our special place.



Several months after the fires, our burned landscape is shooting and we can see what will survive. Time has allowed some regeneration, recovery of habitat and stabilisation of soil - invertebrates and reptiles are recovering in the cover provided by leaf litter and burned logs.

But we still need to be cautious walking through and over the recovering bushland areas.

IN YOUR GARDEN - WHAT TO PLANT AFTER FIRE

Emma Patyus, Council's Landcare co-ordinator, says no plants are 'fireproof' – but some are drought tolerant and fire retardant. Use plants with a high moisture content – those with fleshy or broad leaves or with a high salt content. Living, fleshy green groundcovers such as pigface or Scaevola are drought tolerant and fire ready, providing native birds and animals with a safe haven and food. Prune them regularly to encourage fresh green growth, and clear dry or dead material well before the fire season.

Use non-flammable mulches close to buildings to increase soil moisture and suppress weeds - living groundcovers, pebbles or gravel. In the Rosedale crisis many people battled spotfires in woodchip mulch smouldering for days. *For more waterwise and fire-ready grasses, shrubs and trees, see [Emma's media release](#)*



Wildlife Recovery

- ✓ Provide water on the ground or hung in a tree
- ✓ Put out birdseed mix in bird feeders and animal food such as honeyeater nectar and pellets for echidnas and wallabies
- ✓ Where you can, leave sticks and logs to break down and provide shelter for the returning fauna

Weeds

- ✓ Chop off seeding tops of grassy weeds if you're trying to stabilise soil on a steep, badly burned block

Some weed species - fire inkweed, blackberries, polygala, Crofton weed, bitou bush – thrive after fire. To tackle them see **NSW WeedWise** (download the app in the App store) and [Weeding to help recovery](#)

FINAL WORDS

HEIDI MILLIGAN

In my wildest thoughts I could not have imagined New Year's Eve 2019. I sat with the Williams having a cup of tea confident we could grab the hose and put out a spotfire or two.

When the birds stopped singing and the sky turned orange, we knew how wrong we were. Fire is so unpredictable, indiscriminate and this one had a mind of its own.

But as I see photos of the beautiful surf still faithfully rolling in, the sun shining and the trees sprouting new growth I know our Rosedale community will rebuild and renew.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION, RENEWAL AND PAYMENT FORM

You may use this form to apply for membership, to renew your membership, to make a donation, or to advise a change to your membership details.

The annual membership subscription is \$10 per voting member and subscriptions become due on 1 January each year. Please complete and forward this form with your cheque to:

The Treasurer
The Rosedale Association Inc.
PO Box 2125
Malua Bay NSW 2536

Alternatively, you can renew your membership and make payments by bank deposit. Please make sure you submit the form on the Membership page of the Rosedale Association website:

www.rosedale.org.au/membership.html, so that the Treasurer knows how to distribute your funds.

APPLICATION TYPE (Please tick one)	Voting members
<input type="checkbox"/> Membership application	1 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Membership renewal donation	2 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Change of membership details	3 _____
	4 _____

EMAIL ADDRESS (please print carefully)

YES I am happy to receive all notices and newsletters by email (save money and paper)

NO Please send notices and newsletters by post

NAME AND ADDRESS FOR MAILING

Rosedale address

Telephone numbers

----- (h) ----- (fax)
----- (w) ----- (m)

Rosedale telephone number

WEED NOTICES (Please tick one)

Would you like advice on noxious weeds on your property? Yes No

May we give your contact details to Rosedale Landcare if needed? Yes No

PAYMENTS

Membership subscription for _____ voting member(s) for the calendar year _____ \$ _____

Landcare Fund donation (optional) \$ _____

Rosedale Association Recovery (optional) \$ _____

Total \$ _____

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCIES: 000

ABC LOCAL RADIO 103.5 FM

NSW MENTAL HEALTH LINE 1800 011 511

WIRES (animal rescue) 1300 094 737

ESSENTIAL ENERGY 13 20 80

FISHERIES WATCH HOTLINE (poachers) 1800 043 536

SEWERAGE (COUNCIL) 02 4474 7347



Rosedale Association's defibrillator is located on the demountable behind the cabins.

If undeliverable please return to:
The Rosedale Association Inc.
PO Box 2125
MALUA BAY NSW 2536

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