

Change of Presidency

SIRA NEWS

Sunday 18th March, 2018



THANK YOU - AND SEE YOU

I am writing to you to let you know of a change in the SIRA committee. As some of you may know, I bought my property on the island in 2000 and sold it in 2017, and since I have been renting on the Island. My lease is ending and I have not found a new home on the Island. I have found a lovely patch in Lovett Bay though and this is where I am moving to.



Since SIRA membership requires residency or otherwise property ownership on the Island, my eligibility for membership will cease and I will no longer be able to fill the President's role.

I joined the SIRA committee in March 2014 as committee member and received the honour of serving as Secretary in 2015 and 2016 and from November 2017 as President. I joined during turbulent SIRA years and the first three years on the committee were a challenge. But I feel that it has been worth it and I believe the proof is in the pudding: the transformation we have undergone is there and will yield long term positive results for the community.

My successor

The challenge a committee faces when its leader has to leave is to find a way to continue regardless and ensure that harmony and stability can continue to exist. I am proud of the Committee in the way it has handled this situation.

In consensus, the Committee appointed **Neelica Raffel** as the new President. Neelica has impressed us in the short time she has been on the Committee. Her intellect, knowledge of association mechanics and her pursuit of the values of fairness and transparency are attributes that will assist her in being a great leader. Neelica will introduce herself below in some more detail, but I can attest that the Committee is thrilled with having her as President.

The Committee also decided to retain its numbers (reduced by one) as it sees no benefit in adding additional committee members and a risk that the harmonious collaboration that currently exists, being disrupted.

My ongoing role

The Committee felt that with my departure there would be a potential gap in continuity, knowledge and manpower, so I have accepted the role of Advisor to the Committee until the next AGM. I will be available as sounding board and will advise on matters of both operational and policy nature.

We are in the middle of a lot of ongoing work in relation to Church Point parking, the Pasadena and related issues. I will continue to be active in that space. Where requested by the Committee I will be making representations on behalf of SIRA and otherwise I will be ensuring I am in the loop. There is a band of private citizens of various backgrounds involved as well. I will continue to fight for the interests of the Scotland Island residents and of course the West Pittwater community.

I am also still involved with the Water Booking and Automation project for which SIRA received a grant from Council. I will continue to manage that project to its conclusion.

A few more words

Lately it seems that discussion around 'values' and 'behaviour' of community members is becoming more prominent, especially on social media. Many of these discussions highlight a fundamental issue within our community:

There are the 'old' long term residents who believe that the way things were in the past – few rules and a free spirited, unconstrained community – is under threat from the group of newer residents who prefer a more orderly environment.

My advice to the long termers is that you should consider that change may be good at times. Really, the way things were in the past were in some cases pretty ordinary. We dealt with these problems on the SIRA committee too: it took many months to implement operational processes that are now completely accepted and do not feature in any discussion any longer, because they are efficient and current.

To the 'newbies' I would like to say: Listen to the long-termers. They have seen a lot of what is currently proposed and know from experience that some of it won't work. Especially when it comes to preserving what makes Scotland Island special, they know what you may lose if you are not careful.

Support the SIRA Committee

The balance between 'old and new' is one that is important to understand and our current Committee is in my opinion in a good position to provide a sensible strategy that pleases all sides of the debate. This current committee consist of members who all have a passion for supporting, promoting and solving the issues we as Island

community are dealing with.

This is why I say: Please support this committee. Please set aside your preconceptions (if any) or opinions you may have formed in the past (if they are negative). As a member of SIRA you are entitled to know that your committee is working in your interest, so ensure that you are being kept up to date. There are several methods to contact the committee, including the SIRA Facebook page.

An effective SIRA committee will get more done in our communal interest. We have had several wins over the last couple of years and we will be able to achieve more if the committee is supported. New committee members make great contributions, an example to note is Alec Beckett of last year's committee who is leading the wharf extension project.

Thank You

I thank the SIRA committee for their confidence in me. I thank the many people who have been able to offer positive contributions to SIRA and the community. Thank you to the volunteers who selflessly assist when help is needed, at SIOCS, the Hall Events and the many other small community initiatives throughout the year. I am a little sad to leave my friends Boyd, Sharon, Colin, Neelica, Anne, Jane, Shane, Fabienne, Nadia and Nicole behind (although I will see them regularly) but I know they are destined for success this committee year!

Regards,

Hubert van Mierlo

Outgoing SIRA President

THANK YOU - AND HELLO



May I first say that I am deeply honoured to have been selected to step into the Presidency of the Scotland Island Residents' Association. I come in to the role having spent not so many years on the island as others, however I am dedicated to the principles and vision of the Association and am proud to be in service to you.

Some of the residents who do know me will also know something of my passion and energy in relation to social justice, equity and environmental issues. It is my commitment to give the same such energy and passion to the Island, the Association and the issues facing us all on our unique and extraordinary Island home.

For those who do not know me I'll give a little of my background.

I am, and have been a working single mum for the better part of the last 20 years. My daughter is now of course a grown woman in her own right and quite independent but we never stop being parents do we? She is the source of my greatest pride.

In terms of my working history I have worked in community based welfare with children and adults with disabilities; in the criminal justice system – again with children and young people; I have worked in Government Relations and Village Operations with the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games and I have also worked in a range of retail and hospitality settings over many years. I have qualifications in Health Sciences (counselling) and in Teaching (primary). Since commencing work as a Primary school teacher in south western Sydney less than a decade ago I have also become very active within the union (NSW Teachers Federation) and hold a positions with them at the association and state level. I am currently working in a relief capacity for the NSWTF as a City Organiser.

Over the course of this history, I have, and continue to serve on a number of committees and in a range of capacities. I have a strong understanding of democratic processes and in implementing policy and procedural fairness. I have been fortunate enough to have the opportunity to meet and negotiate with both local and state government representatives in relation to a broad range of issues.

I look forward to serving out the remainder of the current term working alongside the executive team, the various sub-committees and working groups and in getting to know all of my neighbours better. I am fortunate to be supported by so many warm, wise and well informed others and can only benefit from their greater experience.

I thank you for this opportunity.

Neelica Raffel

SIRA President.

THE SIRA COMMITTEE

Colin Haskell, Vice President



Colin is a retired retail executive. For the last 15 years he has owned and managed with his wife Rosemary, the Scotland Island Lodge Guest House.

Sharon Kinnison, Vice President



Sharon, 26 years on the Island lives one-up near Tennis Wharf. She is a qualified and experienced high school teacher and bush regeneration supervisor. As a Senior Educator at Pittwater Coastal Environment Centre her role included program management, grant writing, project implementation targeting community catchment and sustainability education and catchment monitoring.

Boyd Attwell, Treasurer



Boyd is an accountant and seeks to bring simplicity and clarity to the association's financials. He's happy to receive requests for information and answers.

Anne Dennis, Secretary



Anne has lived on the island for nine years with her husband and daughter, who is now away at university. Before moving back to Australia she lived in the Pacific and Asia, working as a primary school and TESOL teacher. She now does private tutoring, and loves gardening, particularly with native plants.

Fabienne d'Hautefeuille



My name is Fabienne. Before you ask, yes I am French. Our family bought a property on the island nine years ago and we finally made it here in January now that our children are old enough to be at school. I am from a rural background and love that natural aspect of Scotland Island. My work evolves around hydro-geology or groundwater resources management if you prefer. When I get some time, I love baking, cooking and throwing pots and bowls (ceramics).

Nadja Fisher



In March 2017, I moved to the island with my husband and 3 kids – undoubtedly the best move ever! I grew up in Switzerland and New Zealand and have moved between the two numerous times. After teaching English and German as a Second Language for many years, I now freelance as an editor and translator. I enjoy unsuccessfully circumnavigating cultural faux pas, baking inedible cakes and falling asleep before the opening credits of a film. As a SIRA member, I want to contribute to island life by bringing the newbie-but-eager-to-learn, family-with-smallish-children perspective to this merry round of island residents.

Nicole Gooch



I moved with my family to the island five years ago and we love the beauty of Pittwater as well as this amazing community, including the Island Kindy which has been fabulous for our little munchkin. I am a journalist, researcher and health communications professional, originally from New Caledonia.

Shane O'Niell



I am a long term resident of the Northern Beaches, moved to Scotland Island in 2016 with my partner, Natalie and my 3 kids.

The best move since I moved to Australia from Ireland on a tall ship in 1988.

A photographer for over 25 years, with a studio in Mona Vale, servicing the corporate market in photography and video production, Australiawide

Have a love for the ocean, nature, good food and red wine.

Jane Rich



Here I am again willing to continue on the SIRA committee in whatever capacity I'm more suited.

In 2017 it was as Community Hall Manager and I focussed on concerns surrounding the increase of golf buggies on the Island.

My working life was as a journalist/sub-editor until I made the Island my home five years ago.

My membership of SIRAC has given me a much better understanding of Island issues and the efforts of other committee members to seek positive outcomes in their endeavours for our environment.

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