

THE PILGRIM TRAIL FOUNDATION:

MINUTES OF AGM

March 31st 2017

PRESENT: Duncan & Maggie Jefferson, Roger Walsh, Ean & Sue James, Colin Ingram, L-A Shabish

APOLOGIES: Jane Pelusey, Clive McIntyre

RESIGNATION: Jane offered her resignation as it is increasingly difficult for her to attend meetings due to her travel commitments. The Board passed a unanimous vote of thanks for all her contributions and hoped to see her at future events.

Lori Ann Shibish was nominated to the Board by Duncan Jefferson, seconded by Maggie Jefferson and was voted in unanimously.

TREASURERS REPORT: Roger submitted his report which showed that we began the year with \$232 and finished the year with \$230. He reported that our major recurring expenses were Insurance, Trademark renewals. There had been recent monies received from sales of maps as well as for books during the year.

Colin proposed that the treasurers report be accepted and the motion was carried unanimously.

CHAIRMANS REPORT:

Thank you for attending the 2017 AGM of the Pilgrim Trail Foundation. Thank your for your your commitment, your enthusiasm, your benevolence and for the deep friendships we've come to share ... occasionally supplemented by the odd glass of wine!

Since the official opening of the Trail by Her Excellency the Governor, the Honourable Kerry Sanderson in March 2016, a paradox has occurred. There has been a great deal of planing, and yet ... not a great deal has been achieved. The old adage that Rome wasn't built in a day continues to give me great comfort! But when I look back down the years, back to where it all began, I believe that we should be enormously proud about what we have created and what we have done with so few resources.

From that first group that walked in 2009 - 50 kilometres of which was along the Great Northern Highway - to our current alignment through three State Forests with not a semitrailer in sight, and with each year more schools using the track, and more individuals and bush walking groups independently using the trail, and with interstate groups hearing of, and using the Pilgrim Trail, we should be quietly chuffed that we have been part of an amazing adventure.

And yet I have a sense of frustration that we could have done more. We could have pushed harder and that we should have more to show than just an alignment which is still only partly signed.

Then I take a step back and realise that we have created a really solid foundation, one that we can now build upon. But in order to go forward, we need to go back to the beginning.

Our current Constitution does not serve us well. It was drafted seven years ago in order to achieve DGR under the Taxation rules of that time, and was created “off the shelf” in order to give us legitimacy - and it was done for free! Subsequently, those Taxation rules have changed and we have been advised that under our current Constitution we would not be accepted for DGR. But just like the tax rulings change, so our vision for the Trail has altered.

What was the original reason for founding the Trail? It was in response to a “burn out” experience that I’d had.

That difficult time for both myself and for Maggie was greatly relived by walking the Camino in Spain. In fact, the original idea for the Pilgrim trail was to re-create such a experience back here in Australia - to provide an opportunity for those who need a time-out and to help heal the existential crises that affect so many people today. Well over a third of people suffer from depression or mood disorder during the course of their lives, and physical activity in a peaceful environment have been well documented to play a vital role in the management of such people. Our Trail is a perfect placed to help the literally hundreds of thousands of West Australian who will suffer such mood disorders.

And in a similar vein, we are developing a deepening relationship with our Noongar people - the first West Australians by almost 40,000 years. But as we know they have had a troubled history since the arrival of the Europeans and the Pilgrim Trail may well be another way in which we can help in their healing process. I also believe there is an opportunity to work with groups such as the Clontarf Foundation to provide a facility so that they can take trou-

bled youths along the trail and into areas of deep significance for them.

Why do I mention these things? Because if these are truly a core part of our vision for the future of the PTF then we may be able to apply for Public Benevolent Foundation Status. It's a big challenge and one that we may not be successful with, but if we are successful in that application through the Charities Commission, then we are 95% likely to be successful in applying for DGR.

I am of the opinion that should we achieve such status, then our drive to accrue financial independence would be far more likely to succeed.

Last week I met with Sonic Healthcare in Sydney - a top 50 listed company who are very keen to help us. In a brief conversation with their In-House lawyer, her opinion was that we may have a reasonable case. Sonic are creating a Business plan for us - and although I have yet to receive the final document - it should prove to be a template for us for the next couple of years..

From the discussions I had in Sydney:

Achieving financial security is pivotal to how we proceed.

We need to build our business base through reaching out to our major Stakeholders and supporters. This can be done through digital marketing - but we need to find that expertise.

We need to have a webpage that is current, user friendly and which acts as a shop front for our merchandise. We need a Facebook page that not only tells our stories but which connects us to similar organisations around the world.

All these things requires time and personnel - both of which we are currently lacking and that we will need to fund.

To that end I suggest that first up, we create a job description for a CEO who can handle these issues.

Once we have a target, then we can give maximum effort at making it happen.

So my challenge to you all is that in the next 12 months we aim to have a new constitution in place, one that has a high chance of achieving Public Benevolence Status and then DGR status. And that we aim to employ a CEO on a part time basis - one who will execute all the other things we need to do.

Things such as:

Building our memberships

Sending out monthly newsletters to our stakeholders and members

Working on our IT and marketing

Securing our financial independence through Grants, private donors and sponsorships

Creating relationships with groups who have similar benevolent aspirations - both educational and institutional.

Establishing campsites where eventually we can erect appropriate shelters

I hope you all share my excitement. There seems to be so much to do, but at all times we must stop and consider why are we doing all of this? And you know what - that's the question all Pilgrims ask at some point on their journey. I think the answer is about belief, about caring and about trying to make the world a better place just one step at a time.

Thank You.

General discussion arose on DGR status, how to formulate a description of a possible CEO, the urgent need to funding to cover ongoing costs, the availability of funds from the City of Swan and Lotterywest, the importance of IT which allows us to maximise our reach and connect with similar organisations overseas, the possible re-alignment of the trail along the Swan from Walyunga to Moondyne Reserve.

Colin moved that the Chairmans report be accepted and the motion was carried unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS:

Colin proposed that the current office bearers are retained and the motion was carried unanimously.

The meeting concluded at 7.15pm