



Supporting village scale self-sufficiency

Minutes: Annual General Meeting

28 November 2023 - Mount Molloy Old Fire Brigade Shed

Welcome

Meeting was opened at 09:45, John Brisbin as Chair welcomed the attendees.

Apologies: Mayor Toppin, Lorne Cubit, Pam Finch, Betty Lawford, Clare Hawse, John Colless, Glen Cambage, Gerda Domen, Joan Crothers.

Quorum: (4 required) John Brisbin, Simon Hawse, Caroline Lieber, Cyril Vains, Bruno Martin, Sue Northey (online)

Special Guests (joining online): George Chapman, John Johnston

Previous Minutes

The 2022 AGM Minutes were presented and moved: John / second Sue / Accepted

Presentation of Financials

FY2023 Financials were presented. See attached to these Minutes. The organisation remains solvent with approx \$31,000 of members equity and sufficient cash at bank to meet obligations as they fall due.

Thanks to Mareeba Shire Council for continued relief on rates.

Financials moved: Simon / second Cyril / Accepted

President's remarks

John gave a brief summary of the year's achievements and challenges.

Nominations and elections

The 2022 Committee retired and Cyril agreed to serve as Returning Officer.

The following nominations were accepted, unopposed.

- **President:** John Brisbin (nominated: Simon / Caroline)
- **Secretary:** Sue Northey (nominated: Simon / Caroline)
- **Treasurer:** Simon Hawse (nominated: John / Caroline)

Change of signatories

There were no changes required to the signatories.

Amendment to the Objects

This amendment to the Objects is intended to clarify the group's intention to undertake certain activities in its own right. The type of activities should be quite broad, but all related to the theme of "village scale self-sufficiency".

Current Objects


1. To acquire on fair terms and hold, in perpetuity or as close as possible, the title to the Mount Molloy Boiler Block (24 Santowski Crescent, Lot/Plan:1/247832)
2. To ensure that the block is maintained and presented as a positive community asset
3. To advance commercial opportunities for the site that contribute to the sustainability of the association where these opportunities advance the best interests of the larger community.
4. To return value to the community, specifically with regard to the non-profit organisations operating for public benefit.

Resolved:

- (A) That Items 1, 2, and 3 of the Objects remain unchanged.
- (B) That Item 4 shall now read: "To return value to the local community by supporting local non-profit organisations operating for public benefit."
- (C) That a new Item 5 be inserted as follows: "To advance initiatives supporting village-scale self-sufficiency, including educational workshops, craft and skill demonstrations, and proof-of-concept and implementations of associated technology."

Moved: John / second Cyril / Agreed unanimous.

Meeting closed 10:00am

Certification <i>I certify that this is a faithful and true record of the meeting.</i>		29/11/2023
	Chair: John Brisbin	Date

Minutes: General Meeting

Welcome, Apologies, Minutes, Financials per AGM

Special Guests

George Chapman

George was introduced and welcomed to the meeting. He expressed appreciation for being able to join the meeting and affirmed his ongoing enthusiasm for the project.

The group thanked George for his support.

As a result of success with the initial round of fundraising efforts, the group decided to make a first payment of \$5,000 toward retiring the mortgage on the block. This was moved by John, second Simon and unanimously approved.

John “Johnno” Johnston

Johnno is the grandson of JM Johnston, the visionary entrepreneur who set up the sawmill operations in Molloy. Johnno was able to give an excellent historical summary of JM’s early days as a fisherman, prospector, and saw sharpener. It was this skilled trade that set JM up to lease a sawmill at Ravenshoe, and everything changed.

Newly married, and full of ambition, JM soon converted the Ravenshoe sawmill lease to a purchase. Shortly after, he was introduced to investors who were keen to get sawmilling established in Mount Molloy. They had spent a fortune on the copper operations and needed a way to get their money back.

In 1914 JM opened a fine new sawmilling operation in Molloy, custom designed to his specs. It was an exceptional facility, and was so successful that it enabled JM to continue expanding his empire. Within a few years JM had acquired sawmilling operations in Milla Milla, Bloomfield River, Mareeba, Shipton’s Flats, Cooktown, Townsville, and Stratford. For a number of years JM was the largest employer in north Queensland. According to those who worked for him, he always paid by cheque and he always paid on time.

JM always had an idea to connect the sawmilling business to a shipyard and cargo operation. He established a shipyard at the Stratford sawmill and, together with his trusted Captain Alf Hansen, launched four cargo vessels: Cowra, Priscilla, Yalata and Breasthook. These ships took timber from JM sawmills to as far away as Adelaide, returning with leather hides and wine. The vessels were utilised by American forces during the war years.

Along with substantial commercial success, JM suffered terrible tragedies. His young daughter Lily died on route from Mareeba to Cairns, and he lost a favoured son in the war. Perhaps struggling with a broken heart, JM Johnston passed away in 1943 at the age of 59. He is commemorated on an historical plaque in Stratford, and his life is celebrated at the ongoing project with the Boiler Block.

A longer version of this historical snapshot is in preparation and will be available on the Boiler Block website when Johnno is ready to release it publicly.



George Chapman (L) and John “Johnno” Johnston (R) joined the 2023 Boiler Block AGM.

Following the remarks by our special guests, the meeting discussed a number of topics without further need for resolution.

Leon Rosenbrock highlighted his experience with steam power plants and the certification of steam systems. He is keen to see something interesting happen at the block.

The meeting closed at 11:30.