**Chairman’s Report 2013**

The objects for Bowen Collinsville Enterprise in its constitution are - to foster, promote, facilitate, and support economic and social development in the Bowen Collinsville area. I believe BCE in 2013 has achieved all these objects in the role we have played in guiding and supporting all players involved in creating a positive and sustainable future for the region.

The year started with QCoal asking for assistance in launching the new QCoal /Flying Doctors Mobile Dental Service for the Collinsville area and it was an honour to be part of such a great scheme, which was a highlight for that community considering the struggles 2013 brought it.

In February with the release of the proposed dredging plan for Abbot Point it became obvious that there had been a real lack of consultation between the NQBP consultants and the local recreational and professional fishermen as well as the supporting retail outlets and tourism industry. We suggested and helped the Bowen Recreational Fishing Club organise a meeting with all concerned local parties along with all 3 levels of government, GRMPA and NQBP that would give everyone a chance to get the direct information and most importantly have the opportunity to give feedback. This meeting proved there was a lot of misunderstandings and lack of consultation, and basically for the rest of this year we have been there in support and helped coordinate further meetings with all involved as well as George Christensen and both the current and former Federal Environment ministers. It is disappointing that the final decision hasn’t been announced in time for this meeting today so that we could see a result for all these efforts.

At the December meeting last year following a request from Member for Dawson George Christensen it was discussed for a way to help in finding a solution for the concerns in the Don River. A meeting was finally held in April with all 3 levels of government, and the Don River Improvement Trust. John Finlay was contracted and produced a comprehensive report on all the works that had been accomplished in the Don River over the years with input from DRIT chairman John Willcox. This was presented on the day with some suggested outcomes. The Queensland Minister for the Department of Natural Resources was in attendance after an invitation was extended to him with the help of Member for Burdekin Rosemary Menkens, and he complemented BCE on the initiative and immediately promised a one off 100,000cm allocation for removal of sand from the nominated troublesome spots to be reviewed annually, and 500cm for all river frontage property owners in a bid to follow the Herbert River model of having stakeholders have “ownership”of the river. This was followed by a deputation to Andrew Powell the Queensland Environment Minister who has the responsibility of the lower part of the river at the Home Hill Country Cabinet Meeting which was again organised by Rosemary Menkens to inform his department of the concerns in the section of the river that they control and advise on the actions of the other department. The Department of Natural Resources has called nominations for representatives for the DRIT and hopefully these plans will be a good start for a revamped Trust. Also Congratulations to Mayor Jenny Whitney on becoming Chairperson of Queensland River Trusts Association which will no doubt be a great help to the DRIT.

After a number of deputations over the last 3 years and a change of Queensland Government we have seen what I believe to be our greatest achievement of the year which was getting Queensland Transport to meet with all Boat Harbour stakeholders to discuss giving them some security with their leases and most of all the opportunity for them to expand as well as giving any potential investors a chance to progress the harbour under a master plan. The master plan is now being amended with the latest feedback, and already we have introduced 4 different groups of investors to Queensland Transport, and at this point make special mention of Stuart Underhill and Ian Sturdie for their support along with then WRC Planning Department for their input into making it happen.

A meeting in June with DISDIP representatives and relevant Stakeholders was timely regarding the State Development Area as following the demise of the Multi Cargo Facility Plan there is a danger that the drive for this important part of our future could be slowed with change in governments and the relative departments. Nikki Wright has been a strong advocate for us and we thank her for her ongoing support.

The other great achievement for the year is to see the Accommodation Register finally finished after 2 years with the help of WMDL. This is a great result as the potential developers including Ratch and GVK have suggested it is something that has been missing as a recognised planning tool for future large developments.

Our Web Site is growing as we load the information of past and current plans on it, and is fast becoming a tool for potential investors to see what has been done, what could be done, and what will be done. It has a long way to go but would like thank Adits and Rusty Mango Design for supplying and updating it free of charge.

Working with Whitsunday Marketing and Development Limited has been a pleasure under Danial Rochford’s leadership and we are now starting to see the region unite and we joined in delegations, proposals, and meetings to ensure the region is well represented. Likewise, Tourism Bowen and Bowen Business Chamber have set an example for other communities of how united organisations complementing each other, can only be of great benefit in promoting a region.

Ratch were asked to give a presentation on their plans for Collinsville and were happy to do so and this meeting provided a great opportunity for them to see the regions passion for a Base Load Power Station in Collinsville and the important part it plays in the future “jig saw” puzzle of a state development area, water, and port development. Subsequent meetings have continued our support for them being a part of a big future overall plan.

We supported the Bowen Business Chamber with the bus hire for the transport of 18 members of a Brisbane Business Group, which included high ranking executives of some of the state’s bigger companies in a tour of Bowen and Collinsville to show off the regions potential. We also organised a tour of the farming, fishing, marina, and tourism opportunities in conjunction with WMDL for a group of Chinese investors which has led to the WRC heading to China later this year to grow ties with the Whitsunday region.

WMDL has formed a local Advisory Group to support the Barrier Reef TAFE in helping link it to local industry which in turn helps with its viability and stems from the emergency meeting Matthew Magin coordinated last year with Rosemary Menkens when doubts of the Bowen Campus were emerging.

A combined meeting in Collinsville with BCE, Tourism Bowen, and WMDL and various Collinsville Club representatives went a long way to bolster positivity especially with Dave Nebauer’s Uranah talk. The talk in the town next day was upbeat and proved that we need to do it more regularly and thank Ross Meier for his efforts in making it happen.

Following is a cross section of personalities we with over the year with various deputations and briefings and show the broad range of our organisation.

**Federal Government**

George Christensen – Member for Dawson

Warren Truss – Deputy Prime Minister and Nation Party Leader

Mark Butler – Former Minister for Environment, Water and Heritage

Greg Hunt – Minister for Environment, Water and Heritage

**State Government**

Rosemary Menkens – Member for Burdekin

Andrew Cripps - Department of Natural Resources

Andrew Powell – Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection

Mark Holden – DISDIP

Nikki Wright – DISDIP

**Local Government**

Jenny Whitney - WRC Mayor

Councillors Collins, Clark, Willcox, Ramage, Clifford

Scott Waters – WRC CEO

Dan Staley – WRC Planning Department

Staff – WRC Planning Department

Staff – WRC Engineering Department

Finally, I would like to thank our executive team, all our wonderful members, especially Terry Pilcher for all his work in the background making sure things happen, Mardi Mathieson for the professional role she plays in the running the organisation, Robyn Dyer for making the TAFE available for us, and a special thanks this year to John Finlay for his detailed work for the Don River meeting and work on the constitution.

Bowen Collinsville Enterprise is a volunteer group that is made up 22 great people who offer their time and services freely. All the above 2013achievements all happened on a budget of less than $3000 and should make every member proud to be a part of this organisation.