



President's Report for 2011

Australia Day celebrations led off the year's activities for the MRCA. We were visited by the Australia Day Ambassador, Cindy Pan. A barbecue was held outside the Hall, and there was a fair turn out by the community.

Following the Tea Tree Creek Fire in December 2009, the MRCA established a fire appeal to provide assistance to those affected by the fire. \$2,000 was collected and after discussions with the community, the Committee decided that the best use of these funds would be to give a \$500 grant to each of the four local rural fire brigades. Michelago, Anembo, Colinton and Smiths Rd, for essential equipment items. Colinton split its grant with Bredbo.

A very successful May Fair was held on the 1st of May. The Fair was opened by Martin Hughes, then Deputy Mayor of Cooma- Monaro Shire Council. It was the best ever and \$2,890 was raised for the community Association. The Michelago Rural Fire Brigade the Michelago School and the pre school also raised funds for their organisations. We had record crowds, sunshine and lots to ensure the day was successful. The produce stall raised lots of money for the set-up and running of Driver Reviver at the Colinton rest area. There were around 30 stalls selling everything from leather goods to clothes and from plants to alpaca products. Very popular were Wilson the donkey, the coffee van and the fire brigade's baked potatoes. Thanks to our sponsors the Cooma Monaro Shire Council, Essential Energy, L.J. Hooker, Monaro Rural Health and Spackman Real Estate.

Our other main fund-raising events were barbecues held at Bunnings, Tuggeranong on the 22 May (\$1,375) and Woolworths Queanbeyan on the 22 October (\$530). Overall, \$4,894 was raised for the community during the year.

On 16 July a not-for-profit Variety Concert was held in the Inn with a meal provided by Sue and Robyn Spratt. This was possible with a grant of \$1,500 from CASP and ticket sales. It was a wonderful night, particularly the Al Fresco magician which particularly appealed to the children. Fred Smith with guitar and PowerPoint images sang songs inspired by his time in Afghanistan which were both moving and poignant. The evening finished with serene jazz from the Rafael Quartet. Thanks to Sally Hughes and Gill Robinson for organising this excellent event.

Upgrading of the oval continues to be a task for the MRCA. We have been focussing on repairing and upgrading the tennis courts and during the year a number of working parties rescued two second-hand tennis court surfaces in good condition from a club in Belconnen and have stored these in Michelago. Thanks to Cate Spencer for organising this. The old netting fence was removed and some of the materials used to raise funds for the MRCA. The next stage is to repair the court

base and lay the synthetic surface. This will be followed by the erection of a new fence and restoration of the club house. We have some \$6,000 set aside for these activities but grants and more fund raising will be required for the completion of this next phase.

In February we made a written submission to Council on the Draft Management Plan for 2011-2012. A presentation on the submission was made to Council at Cooma on the 6 March and on 26 May the Mayor, Councillors and staff attended a public meeting in the Michelago Hall to discuss the plan. Although most of the items listed in our submission remain unfunded we were successful in getting repairs to the junction of Micalago Rd and the Monaro Highway. The Council also found funds to widen and seal the entrance to Pony Club Rd which the Committee and particularly Martin Hughes had been pushing for a number of years. This will be the last annual Management Plan of this type as the Council has moved to a more strategic approach with the introduction of a ten year strategic plan. This will be introduced in July 2012 following extensive consultation with the Shire communities. A consultation with the Michelago community occurred on 29 June.

Gay Lawler is writing a history of Michelago which will be on our web site and we hope will lead to an affordable publication for sale to residents and others interested in the history of the region. Thanks to Gay for this very thorough historical work which is fascinating to read. We are still interested in a photographic display in the Hall featuring the founding families of Michelago and the surrounding region.

During the ski season Driver Reviver, organised by Sandra Lauer, was held at the Colinton Rest Area. The Community Association acted as banker, and many from the Community assisted in manning the shed. It was very successful and will be run again in 2012 with further help from the RTA. Thanks to Sandra and all those that helped out during the year.

Another topic on our agenda is a plan for the village. This will need to be consistent with the Council's Local Environment Plan when that is released. One aspect of this will be the future of the railway land and associated buildings. This was part of our submission on the 10 year strategic plan.

During the year we resurrected the idea to bring the tourist train back to Michelago. Di Phelan worked tirelessly to prepare a petition with hundreds of signatures, write a grant proposal for TQUAL and attended numerous meetings arguing the case. Sadly the TQUAL initiative was scrapped just prior to submission and the idea to resubmit that proposal to Regional Development Australia (RDA) was stymied when RDA announced that they would only accept proposals from not-for-profit organisations with an annual income of \$1.5m. We have discontinued our attempt to bring the train back unless something changes radically in government thinking. Thanks to Di for the tremendous amount of work she put into this.

I would like to thank all the members of the Committee for putting in a huge effort on behalf of the community, particularly Gill Robinson for keeping the books, Sandra Lauer with Janetta Morrison for managing the website and Jeremy Mears for keeping minutes and setting out the Newsletters. Without their help none of the above would have been possible. Well done and again my heartfelt thanks. I wish the incoming Committee a successful and productive year.

Tony Robinson
12 February 2012