



I am nominating for the position of President of the Pearl Beach Progress Association (PBPA).

My connection to Pearl Beach has been a long one, beginning with family holidays in childhood and progressing to permanent residency (I have lived here for over 40 years) as an adult.

Over the years, I have served as both an ordinary member and treasurer of the Arboretum and have held the roles of vice president and treasurer of the PBPA. I was a Dunecare volunteer for over 25 years, and a member of an earlier iteration of the environment committee. More recently, I have joined the volunteers at the monthly morning tea, and the garage sale and gardening club sales days.

That said, the length of an individual's residency or their recent involvement in Pearl Beach activities should not be the sole indicator of their engagement with the community. Every member, regardless of how long they have been involved, brings value to the PBPA: it is heartening to see so many new nominations for positions on the executive committee, and I hope many other new members will choose to volunteer for sub-committees and assist with events. New people, original ideas, are truly the lifeblood of any organisation.

By the same token, those who have contributed so much over many years should not be dismissed as out of touch nor their views be considered irrelevant. Those with links to, and memories of, earlier days and ways are not against change, but rather wish to preserve, within change, a legacy that fosters a deep sense of connection and belonging.

Our community is enriched by the diversity of its members each of whom brings a unique set of talents, innovative ideas, and a broad range of life experiences. However, such variety can also present challenges: when differing viewpoints are not fully understood, it can lead to misunderstandings that in turn may strain relationships among members, and it is not always easy to restore amicability amidst the ensuing dissonance.

It is important for all of us to pause and reflect on what we, as a community, truly value, beyond material concerns, and seek to reaffirm the principles and values that have stood this Association in good stead for ninety-six years: a community that can put aside differences and work together for the common good.

I believe uniting the community is the main challenge for both the new executive team and members of the PBPA, and that with open minds, and a willingness to understand different points of view, that is achievable. We need to dream bigger than this moment.

Carole Saint