

The need for a Community newspaper was frequently discussed in varying company at various times.

In May 1994 Rose (Watts) and I wrote to the Shire expressing the need for a paper and expressing our interest, but no more was heard until early 1995 at a corporate meeting I was unfortunately unable to attend, the subject was broached, leading to a meeting of interested people (seven in all)

Not being one to sit around and say we need to do this or we want to do this, I am a believer in doing it. I had lengthy discussions with my superior at work, who's advice was that if we felt we needed this project, go for it, with or without assistance of an official kind which I did and spent many hours on the phone seeking advice from community newspapers around the state, especially my dear friend Mrs Iris Bristow of the Narembeen Fencepost (with a friendship spanning 50 years as my teacher and friend, I gleaned much information from her and also a visit to help us get on the right track.

I also spent many hours on the phone to Ann Holliday of Mucka Matters who was also extremely helpful. Being computer illiterate, I baled up Graeme Sassella- Otley on a daily basis, seeking information re equipment. When he saw me coming he would ask if I had my paper hat on or my work hat. For some weeks it was Paper hat.

At this stage we set a date for our first paper, and then I felt the negative vibes from some whom I expected more support, also a suggestion that we wait until we had some equipment to start. My answer was that we had advertised a date and that we would have a paper on that day come what may.

The Shire offered financial assistance at this stage and we planned to photocopy our first issue on the Shire photocopier.

During the week prior to the first issue, I hit the panic button and decided the whole exercise was futile, we'd never do it, we didn't know how to do it and I had sleepless nights for opening my big mouth. (I usually have the attitude that anyone can do anything if they try.)

I then arranged a visit to Darkan paper office (time running out) 1 week to deadline) three or was it four of us met with the editor who explained everything and we watched them working, only equipment two typewriters and a copy printer. We were completely encouraged. I was elated, I KNEW we could do it. This was the turning point.

Next day a trip to Pingelly where they were working on their paper. Lesley Page and her team boosted us again. WE CAN DO IT!!

We released our first paper 30 August 1995 and distributed this to every household in our postal area. Many mistakes when we look back but as you can see we are improving every time.

After our first paper came a change of attitude, the vibes were favourable and acknowledgement of our achievement was shown. At last many people had faith in us. First we had to obtain a printer and we made application to the Lotteries for a grant with that in mind, we aimed high with a large request (Mr Epiro shaking his head) but we were overjoyed when we received \$10,500 to purchase our copy printer, in the meantime while we waited the 4 months for the grant to come through, we hired a small printer at a cost of \$100 a month on the strength of the forthcoming purchase of the larger printer we had hiring fees for the months of December and January were waived by the company.

The venture was made possible with the grant from Council for initial materials and also the fantastic help from Graeme Sassella Otley, Jill Cowcher (disturbing her every issue by using her typewriter) the school, school staff, and P & C for the use of the rooms in the prefab, typewriters, computers, cutting boards, staplers, guillotine etc. the list goes on and on, but most of all their encouragement and enthusiasm.

I am extremely grateful to have with me in this venture, Wendy McDonald, cool, calm, competent and a perfectionist. Wendy doesn't let pass a missing dot, comma or colon and her computer skills are improving everyday with the large amount of work she does for the paper.

Marilyn Spragg after completing a short computer course joined us and has been reliable and competent and with us every working day.

Sheryl Ford does full days work every issue on computer for which we are grateful.

Sam Candy is with us all the way, hunting out pictures and satisfying the inner person with coffee and cakes.

Pam Gillett took over the treasurer's work when Jill Giacomelli had difficulty telling the husbands initials from the wives on the strangely named company cheques, not to mention nicknames. Rose Watts although a busy person is handy on assembling days and President Charmaine Duff is doing her job well, although as with most presidents, is being kept in the dark and only occasionally fed little happenings to keep her going.

The Council staff, Jim, Brendan and Sharon and earlier Ryan have been helpful and patient, I think that had their doubt about us at the start, but they don't seem to shudder when I walk into the office now.

We have gathered a wonderful bunch of volunteers, who are helpful and keen; we are pleased that they and the rest of the community appreciated their very own paper.

Thankyou everyone who has been involved.

Kay Aylmore Editor