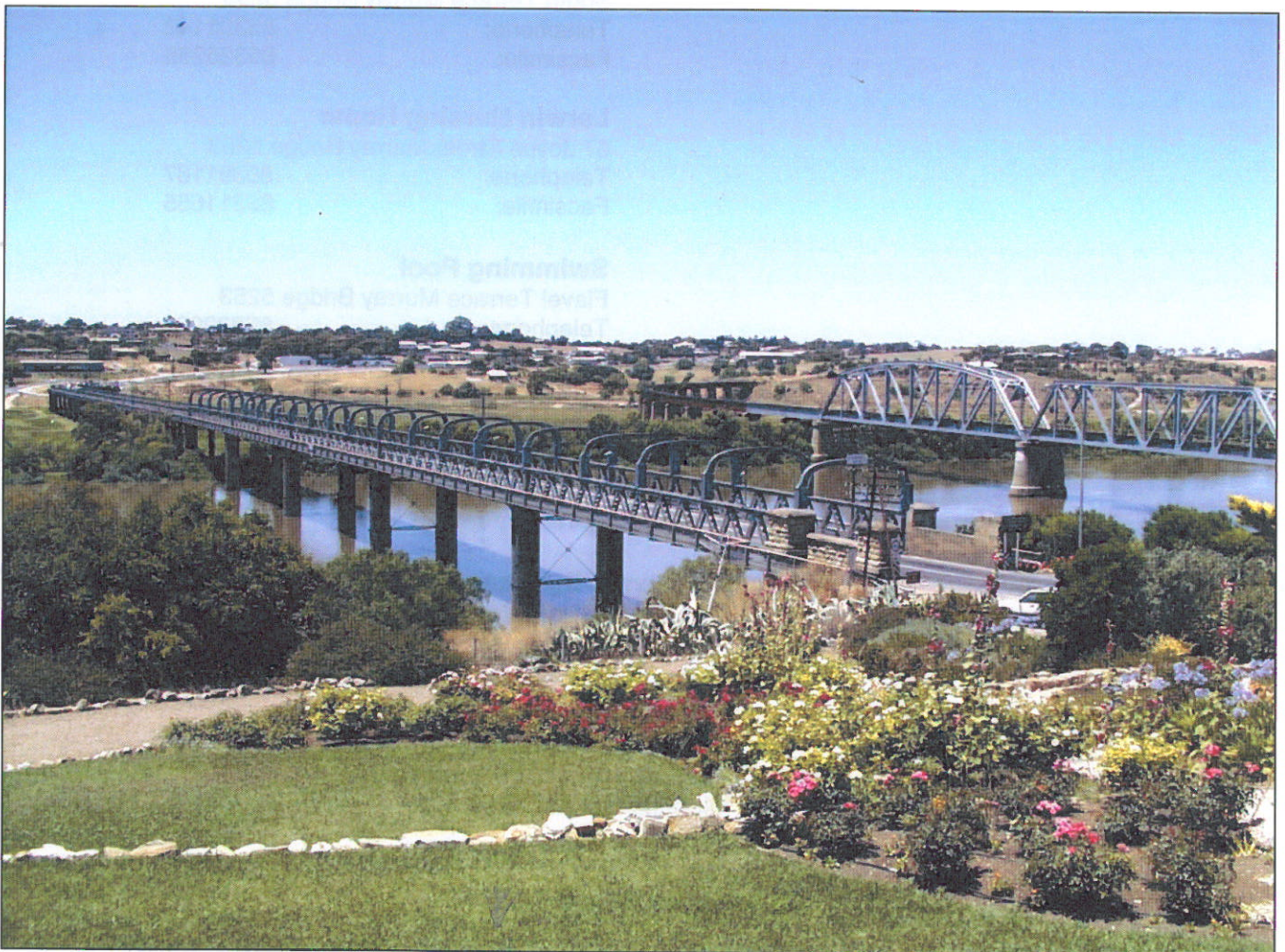


The Rural City of Murray Bridge



Annual Report 2003/2004



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CONTACTS

Local Government Centre

2 Seventh Street Murray Bridge 5253
(PO Box 421)
Telephone: 85391100
Facsimile: 85322766
Email: council@rcmb.sa.gov.au
Web: www.rcmb.sa.gov.au

Depot

21 Hindmarsh Road Murray Bridge 5253
Telephone: 85391160
Facsimile: 85310170

Public Library

Level 3 Mobilong House
Seventh Street Murray Bridge 5253
Telephone: 85391175
Facsimile: 85321622

Visitor Information Centre

South Terrace Murray Bridge 5253
Telephone: 85391142
Facsimile: 85325288

Lerwin Nursing Home

67 Joyce Street Murray Bridge 5253
Telephone: 85391187
Facsimile: 85311655

Swimming Pool

Flavel Terrace Murray Bridge 5253
Telephone: 85322924

AUSTRALIA DAY AWARDS

Citizen of the Year

Leta Padman

Young Citizen of the Year

Clyde Rigney Junior

Sportsperson of the Year

Dianne Temby

Young Sportsperson of the Year

Michelle Dohnt

Event of the Year

Relay for Life

MAYORAL MESSAGE



This year started a bit different for me. I was laid up for a while in hospital and I would like to thank all those who stood in for me during my absence.

The depot staff have been busy again this year with road upgrades in our City as well as outlying areas and have installed a major stormwater drainage system which will stop flooding on Adelaide Road. They continue to achieve great results for our community.

Well done.

(And we have a new roundabout at last !!!)

Our planning staff have been working overtime with Council doing several Plan Amendment Reports:

- Primary Industry Zone
- Heritage (Town Centre and Environs)
- Town Centre
- Narooma
- Minor Townships

I would like to thank them for their hard work during this busy time.

The extension of the Lerwin Nursing Home has started and will make a bigger and more efficient facility for our community. The alterations to the Town Hall and Regional Gallery are continuing which will make a big difference when finished.

Discussions are continuing with the Ngarrindjeri Elders regarding the formation of a joint agreement on protocols to be observed within the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

We were fortunate to have a visit from Her Excellency the Governor of South Australia, Marjorie Jackson-Nelson, on February 13 2004 to mark the 50th anniversary of her competing in a race at LeMessurier Oval whilst she was Olympic Champion.

Continued support is provided to the Committee supporting refugees seeking asylum. This group has been awarded State and National awards for their efforts.

The Port Adelaide Football Club was welcomed here in March for a school sport promotion week and the 125th anniversary of the opening of the "new" bridge was also celebrated.

Our Chief Executive Officer, Rob Foster, did not seek re-appointment in May and after an exhaustive process to select a new CEO, David Altmann, previously the Chief Executive Officer of the Murraylands Regional Development Board, was chosen and commenced work in July 2004.

Our area is experiencing a strong growth phase and I would like to thank all staff, both inside and out, for their understanding and patience during this busy time.

Councillors have continued to work in the best interests of our Community and I would like to thank them for their commitment, dedication and continued support.

Allan Arbon
MAYOR.

REPORT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

It was a privilege and honour to be appointed by the Council in May 2004 as the new Chief Executive officer of the Rural City of Murray Bridge. Although I commenced on 5th July 2004, it is with pleasure that I assist in providing the following report which reflects on Council's achievements during the 2003/2004 financial year.

The Murraylands region has experienced strong growth and this is expected to continue in the years to come. Murray Bridge as the *regional centre* for the Murraylands has been at the forefront of the strong economic growth which offers the Council and the community many exciting challenges and opportunities.

Indicators of the strong growth include unemployment within the region being at an all time low of 4.8%. In addition, recent research undertaken by Monash University and the Murraylands Regional Development Board predicts that the Murraylands will be the strongest growth region in South Australia over the next three years.

Murray Bridge and the region have fantastic facilities and services and offer an ideal opportunity for new business and services to establish and to cater for population growth. Murray Bridge is strategically located in its proximity to Adelaide; key national transport routes; has the availability of excellent facilities and services; has a burgeoning tourist industry; has an excellent climate and lifestyle with the River Murray as one of our biggest assets; and the availability of land and services for future growth.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge is looking ahead with a positive vision and purpose and commenced an exciting and challenging Strategic Plan for 2005 – 2010. This Strategic Plan will address where Council should focus its activities and priorities over a five year period and will set a vision for growth in service provision over a twenty year period. It is likely that the Rural City of Murray Bridge will commit in excess of \$100 million over a 5 year period. It is therefore vital that Council, as a leading business, be

charged with the responsibility of developing an active and outcome driven Strategic Plan to ensure Murray Bridge is at the forefront of service and infrastructure provision over the coming years. Council decided to actively engage the community and all relevant stakeholders in the development of the Strategic Plan over the next twelve months.

Council will have the ability to measure its performance over the term of the five year Strategic Plan. The Plan will also be reviewed on a regular annual basis and become a rolling plan over that period.

Through the Strategic Planning process the community will be urged to be actively involved to help ensure that the Rural City of Murray Bridge becomes the "premier regional" centre in South Australia.

I congratulate the staff, Mayor and Elected Members for the strong achievements, as detailed in its Strategic Plan, and as outlined in the 2003/2004 Annual Report.

I look forward to a challenging and prosperous time ahead.

David Altmann
Chief Executive Officer.

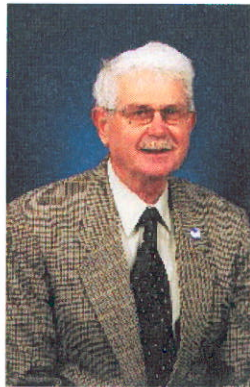


ELECTED MEMBERS – 2003/2004

BRINKLEY WARD



Cr. Bruce Pearson

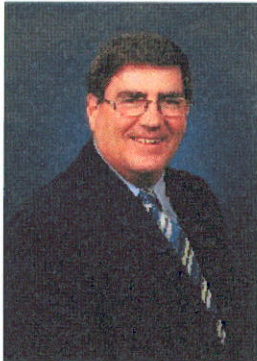


Cr. Bob England



Cr. Barry Laubsch

MOBILONG WARD



Cr. Ken Coventry

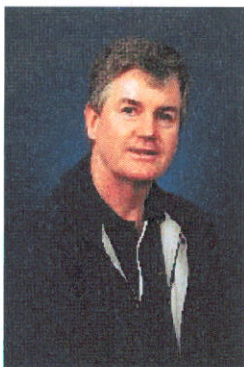


Cr. Theo Weinmann



Cr. Clem Schubert

MONARTO WARD



Cr. Phil Nutt



Cr. Keith Simmons



Cr. Milton Weinert
(Deputy Mayor)

Mr Fred Sanders served a term from May 2003 until August 2003. Keith Simmons contested the outcome of the Monarto Ward election and as a result was duly elected in August 2003.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Strategic Planning
Governance

BUSINESS SERVICES	CORPORATE SERVICES	HUMAN SERVICES	REGULATORY SERVICES
Operations Community Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library • Lerwin Nursing Home • Home & Community Care programs 	Financial Services Information Management Records Management Asset Management Contracts & Risk Management	HUMAN RESOURCES OH&S Customer Service Community Development Economic Development Tourist information Centre Major Events	Land Use Planning Environmental Services Building Services Compliance Services

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM



Rob Foster
Chief Executive Officer
(until May 2004)



Chris Collins
Manager, Business Services
(Deputy CEO)



Thornton Harfield
Manager, Regulatory Services
(July 2003 – January 2004)
Acting Manager, Corporate Services
(January 2004 – June 2004)



David Wade
Manager, Human Services



Renee Mitchell
Acting Manager Regulatory Services
(Jan 2004 – June 2004)



Rhona Parker Benton
Manager, Corporate Services
(until January 2004)

It was with great sadness that Chris Collins passed away
on 11th September 2004 after a long illness
“Gone but not forgotten”

SENIOR MANAGEMENT REMUNERATION

Chief Executive Officer	\$130,085.00
Manager, Business Services	\$147,357.32 (Company Contract)
Manager, Corporate Services	\$90,268.15
Manager, Human Services	\$87,329.14
Manager, Regulatory Services	\$88,400.00

(All amounts per annum and inclusive of superannuation – CEO package also inclusive of vehicle allowance)

Council Profile

Number of Elected Members including the Mayor	10
Number of Electors	13,354
Number of Rateable Properties	9,426
Resident Population (2001 Census)	16,532
Number of Wards	3

Statement of Council Representation

The representation quota is determined by dividing the number of electors for the area of the Council by the number of members of the Council.

The number of electors of the Rural City of Murray Bridge as at February 2004 was 13,354 and the quota is 1:1484.

In accordance with Section 12 of the Local Government Act 1999, Council is scheduled to undertake its next periodic review in 2005.

The current ward structure can be found at Appendix 1.

Members Allowances

The allowances were set under Section 76 of the Local Government Act 1999 as follows:

Mayor	\$21,600
Deputy Mayor	\$6,750
Elected Members	\$5,400

Decision making, Structure and Functions of Council

Council comprises 9 ward councillors and the Mayor and is the decision making body on all policy issues. Ordinary meetings of the Council are held on the fourth Monday of each month at 7.00 p.m. and members of the public are welcome to attend.

The Works & Finance Committee meets on the second Monday of each month at 7.00 p.m. and makes recommendations to the

Council. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

The Development Assessment Panel meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 10 am and makes decisions on Category 2 and 3 development applications (those which require public notification) where there have been written representations made by third parties.

Notices and agendas of all Council, Works & Finance Committee and Development Assessment Panel meetings are placed on public display no less than three days prior to the meeting. Minutes are placed on display at the Local Government Centre within five days of that meeting.

In accordance with Section 44 of the Local Government Act 1999 powers, functions and duties are delegated to the Chief Executive Officer. In this role the CEO may, at his or her discretion, delegate powers, functions and duties to Council officers. Such delegations to Council officers enable the effective and efficient operation of the Council administration.

As required by the Local Government Act 1999 Council has developed a procedure for the "Review of Council Decisions" outlining how decisions of Council or other people acting on behalf of Council are reviewed.

Public participation in Council's decision making process

There are a number of ways in which members of the public can put forward their views on particular issues to Council. These are:

- Deputations/Presentations – with the permission of the Mayor a member of the public can address a Committee or the Council personally or on behalf of a group of residents.
- Petitions – written petitions can be addressed to the Council on any issue within the Council's jurisdiction.

- Written requests – a member of the public can write to the Council on any Council policy, activity or service.
- Elected Members – members of the public can contact Elected Members of the Council to discuss any issue relevant to the Council.

Community Consultation

The Rural City of Murray Bridge values effective consultation in developing a positive relationship with its community and also the right of the community to be informed and influence decisions which affect their lives.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge has a Community Consultation Policy that describes in detail its commitment. The objective of this policy is to ensure Council effectively:

- Consults with its community
- Promotes community involvement
- Makes decisions which are open, transparent and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the community
- Fulfils the legislative requirements as set out in the “Public Consultation Requirements” of the Local Government Act 1999 and where necessary, the Development Act 1993.

Access to Council Documents

The following documents are available for public inspection at the Local Government Centre, 2 Seventh Street, Murray Bridge between the hours of 8.30 am and 4.45 pm. Monday to Friday. Members of the public may purchase copies of these documents.

- Council Agendas and Minutes
- Committee Agendas and Minutes
- Development Assessment Panel Agendas and Minutes
- Policy Manual
- Delegated Authority Manual
- Strategic Management Plan
- Budget Statement
- Annual Report

- By Laws
- Annual Statement
- Development Application Register
- Register of Elected Member Allowances and Benefits
- Register of Employees Salaries Wages and Benefits (including Senior Management)
- Assessment Record
- Register of Public Streets and Roads
- Register of Fees and Charges
- Voters Roll
- Access to Meetings and Documents
- Code of Conduct – Elected Members
- Code of Conduct – Employees
- Election Campaign Donation Returns
- Procedure for internal review of Council decisions
- Audited Financial Statements
- Register of Interests of Elected Members
- Register of Community Land
- Public Consultation Policy
- Contracts and Purchasing Policy
- Rating Policy
- Order Making Policy
- Charters of Council subsidiaries

Other Information Requests

Initial enquiries regarding access to or copies of information not covered above should be directed to the Freedom of Information Officer at the Local Government Centre, 2 Seventh Street, Murray Bridge. Formal applications will be responded to within the statutory requirements.

Confidential Items

The Rural City of Murray Bridge is committed to the principle of open and accountable government. Council also recognises that on occasions it may be necessary in the broader community interest to restrict public access to discussion and/or documents. Council considered 62 items in accordance with Section 90(3) of the Local Government Act 1999, where it was considered necessary to exclude the public from the discussion of a particular matter. Of these 62 items, 17 have been released into the public domain and 42 have been ordered for review in October 2004.

Freedom Of Information Applications

The Freedom of Information Statement is published annually by the Rural City of

Murray Bridge in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 1991. The Statement is included in this report at Appendix 2.

The Rural City of Murray Bridge received one Freedom of Information application for the 2003/2004 financial year.

Council Board and Committees

A number of Boards and Committees comprising elected members, staff and the public have been established to investigate particular issues. Currently these are:

- Works & Finance Committee
- Development Assessment Panel
- Review of Arrangements for Use of Ovals Working Party
- Donations/Community Grant Funding Committee
- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- Community Development Advisory Committee
- Crime Prevention Advisory Committee
- Murray Bridge Road Safety Committee
- Murray Bridge Town Bus Board
- Lerwin Expansion Committee
- Library Facilities Committee
- Traffic Safety (Manure on Roads) Committee

Management Committees

All of the following management committees have been appointed under Section 199 of the Local Government Act and manage properties on behalf of Council:

- Captain's Cottage Museum Management Committee
- Murray Bridge Showgrounds Management Committee
- Swanport Centre Management Committee
- Johnstone Park Combined Clubs Management Committee
- Monarto War Memorial Hall Management Committee
- Mypolonga Community Hall Management Committee
- Murray Bridge Roundhouse Management Committee

Subsidiaries

The Rural City of Murray Bridge is a member of the following subsidiaries:

- Murray & Mallee Local Government Association
- Southern & Hills Local Government Association
- Adelaide Hills Regional Waste Management Authority

Copies of their Annual Reports are attached as Appendix 3.

Services for the Community

Council makes decisions on policy issues relating to services that are provided for members of the public. These services include:

- Aged Care Transport for medical appointments and essential shopping
- Bus shelters
- Car Parks
- Clean air controls
- Cemeteries
- Community halls and centres
- Cycle tracks
- Dementia care
- Dog control
- Environmental Health matters
- Garbage collection
- Home assistance for the elderly
- Immunisation programs
- Litter bins
- Parking bays/street closures
- Parking controls
- Parks and Reserves
- Planning and Development controls
- Playground equipment
- Public Library
- Public seating
- Public toilets
- Recreational/Sporting facilities
- Respite Care
- Roads/footpaths/kerbing
- School crossings
- Stormwater drainage
- Street lighting
- Street sweeping
- Street tree planting
- Traffic control devices

Rating Policy

The Rating Policy of the Rural City of Murray Bridge is included in this report at Appendix 4.

Corporate matters

Staffing Levels

Permanent Full Time	78
Permanent Part Time	42

Casual

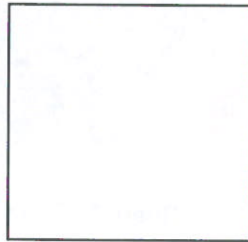
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An organisational chart is attached as Appendix 5.

Citizenship Ceremonies

The following people received Australian Citizenship during 2003/2004

Kevin Fraser
Bekir Ersoy
Rahime Ersoy
Kathryn Hannaford
Jacqueline Baumgurtel
Ana Danciu
Sara Menzies
Celie McNamara
Vanessa Leech
Shiela Wells
Myrna Wells
RB King



North Bokara Rd (Figure 1)

North Bokara Rd was constructed and sealed from the Mypolonga township to 3km east of the town. This was the last section of North Bokara Rd to be done and it completes the link from Woodlane Reserve to Mypolonga. The project cost approximately \$300,000.



Figure 1 - North Bokara Road – New Bus Bay

BUSINESS SERVICES

OPERATIONS

The Operations Unit has continued to operate efficiently and effectively in 2003-2004.

The main areas under the Operations Unit are:

- Road and Footpath Construction and Maintenance
- Stormwater Construction and Maintenance
- Parks and Gardens
- Swimming Pool Management
- Traffic Management
- Engineering Design, Maintenance and Surveying
- Protection of the Environment, and
- Plant and Equipment

Road Construction and Maintenance.

The level of new bitumen sealed road construction has continued in 2003-2004. The key projects in the rural roads upgrade and sealing program were the Flagstaff Rd realignment, Wagenknecht Rd, North Bokara Rd, Hall Street, Hallett St, Cemetery Rd, Tolmer St, and Stacey St.

Flagstaff Rd Realignment (Figure 2)

Works commenced on the realignment of the Flagstaff Rd Intersection on the 23rd of May 2003. This project was jointly funded with contributions of \$150,000 from the Rural City of Murray Bridge, \$150,000 from Transport SA and \$50,000 from the Economic Development Board.

The realignment has involved substantial land acquisition for the construction of 680 meters of new roadway resulting in greater visibility at the Flagstaff Rd - Pfeiffer Rd junction and the Murray Bridge to Wellington - Flagstaff Rd junction.



Figure 2 - Flagstaff Road Realignment

Wagenknecht Road (Figure 3)

Wagenknecht Road was in a poor state of repair with an increasing demand from

industry and heavy traffic. The upgrade of Wagenknecht Rd continued the strategic linking of Monarto to Mannum and will have significant benefit for the surrounding area. 5km of road has been upgraded to a sealed surface at a total cost of \$700,000 with funding from the Local Roads Grants.



Figure 3 – Wagenknecht Road

Black Spot Upgrades (Figure 4 & 5)

The 2003-2004 year was the first time Council has applied for Black Spot Funding. 2/3 funding was received from the State Black Spot Program, along with a 1/3 Council contribution to upgrade the intersections of Thomas St - Eleanor Tce and Seventh St – South Tce, costing a total of \$120,500.

The intersection of Seventh St – South Tce is also the site of the City's first roundabout. The end result is one that looks appealing and has truly transformed this section of road into a safe and colourful precinct.



Figure 4 – Roundabout under construction



Figure 5 – Roundabout completed

Other Road Projects

Other road projects completed in the 2003-2004 financial year included the sealing of the following outer township roads:

- Hall St, Mypolonga,
- Tolmer St, Wellington,
- Stacey St, Wellington,
- Hallett St, Callington, and
- Cemetery Rd, Callington.

In addition to the construction and sealing of these roads, kerbing, sealing and drainage works were carried out.

Reseals were undertaken for the following roads:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| • Cawte St | • Verdun Rd |
| • Christian Rd | • Bells Rd |
| • Corella Pl | • Lorikeet Ave |
| • Francis St | • Williams St |
| • Hill St | • Lorikeet Crt |
| • Ibis Rd | • Williams Gr |
| • Industry Rd | • Tumbella Drv |
| • Lohmann St | • Whitehead Ave |
| • Long Island Rd | • Charles St |
| • Peart Cr | • Laura St |
| • Plymouth St | • Allen St |
| • Rayson St | • Jeffery Cr |
| • Tapp Tce | • Magpie Drv |

Adelaide Rd Beautification

Council was unsuccessful in getting grants funding for Stage 2 of the Adelaide Road PLEC Project for the financial year 2003 - 04. However, Council has since been successful in getting grants funding for the \$550,000 Adelaide Road PLEC Stage 2 Project from Charles Street to Thomas Street to be undertaken in the current financial year of 2004 - 05.

Adelaide Road Stormwater Project Stage 1 (Figure 6 & 7)

The Adelaide Road Stormwater Project Stage 1 is a \$1.2 million grants funded project undertaken by Council in collaboration with the Catchment Management Subsidy Scheme. This project caters to the stormwater infrastructure requirements of Catchment 2 which encompasses the western edge of the City, bounded by the Adelaide/Melbourne railway line to the north and generally Adelaide Road to the south, an area of approx. 882 hectares incorporating a wide variety of land use types.

The objectives of the project are:

- Reduce flooding and consequent property damage
- Improvement of stormwater quality
- Promotion of water efficiency, water harvesting and water reuse
- Enhancement of environmental values
-

The scope of the works involved the installation of a conventional underground 1500mm diameter concrete pipe system from Adelaide Rd via Cynthia Crt, Doecke Rd, Sherwood Rd, Grassmere and Greenlands Dr to a retention/detention basin situated on Lot 175, Greenlands Dr. A local contractor, Eichlers Earthmovers was awarded the job by way of an open tender process for the installation of the pipe system while the construction of the detention basin was carried out by Council's work force. Stage 1 works have now been completed and the finalisation of the design plans and costing for Stage 2, which will be undertaken in the current financial year, are underway.



Figure 6 – Culverts under Adelaide Road



Figure 7 – Greenlands Drive Stormwater Pond

Maurice Road/Hawke Road Drainage.

Council undertook the design and installation of the Maurice Rd/Hawke Rd drainage system which forms part of a number of important stormwater connector systems that has been identified by Council for installation or upgrades. The scope of the works involved the installation of an underground 525 mm diameter pipe system from the Bridge Bowl on Maurice Rd to the Golf Course Ponds on Maurice Rd for final discharge. The stormwater system was completed at a cost of \$130,000.

The installation of a similar drainage system on Christian Rd has been budgeted for in the 2004/2005 financial year.

Stormwater Monitoring

Stormwater monitoring was undertaken on the Jaensch Rd Drain, which drains 300ha of Murray Bridge, including the CBD, to determine accurate pollution loadings entering the river. This information will be used in the design of stormwater treatment wetlands.

Wash Down Bay (Figure 8))

The construction of the wash down bay in May 2004 at a cost of \$ 85,000 completed the scope of the works at the new Council depot on Hindmarsh Rd.



Figure 8 – Washdown Bay

Road Maintenance

Road maintenance has continued to be sustained at similar levels to previous years. These include bitumen patching and repairs, repairs to unsealed roads and patrol grading of unsealed roads. The seven-day patrol-grading roster is continuing to provide a greater level of service for rural areas.

Plant and Equipment (Figure 9)

The Operations Unit Workshop continues to provide management, servicing and repairs to Council's fleet of plant and equipment. This is a well-operated unit that provides a quick response and comprehensive repair service.

The purchase of some new items of plant has improved our efficiencies. Overall, the continual upgrade and consolidation of Council's plant and machinery is resulting in reduced down time, and mechanical maintenance costs. This has resulted in greater utilisation of machinery and equipment within Council.

In addition, the purchase of a new truck and trailer (replacing two trucks) has resulted in improved asset utilisation of plant and manpower resulting in an overall savings of over \$40,000 in labour and operating costs such as registration, fuel etc associated with the reduction of one truck.

A new lawn mower has also been purchased this improving the time taken to mow the ovals and the larger outer areas resulting in less anticipated down time and maintenance. Other plant purchased are a Motor Grader and Back Hoe further reducing down time, maintenance and costly repairs.



Figure 9 – New Purchase – Truck & Trailer

Baker Reserve (Figure 10)

Baker Reserve has received a facelift with kerbing and sealing of the car park and boat ramp approach.



Figure 10 – Baker Reserve – Sealed & Kerbed

MASTER PLAN PROJECTS

Sturt Reserve

The near completion of Stage 3 has added more recreational facilities to enhance the already excellent existing infrastructure.

- Extra lighting for security and night time use.
- Extension of roadway to add curves to the one-way road to slow down traffic.
- New kerbing and stormwater to allow water to be directed into the wetland area.
- Re-establishment of turf and irrigation system.
- Continuation of tree planting throughout the area.

Avoca Dell - Amenities Upgrade (Figure 11 & 12)

Stage 2 of Avoca Dell is now complete and in operation.

The Recreational Boating Facilities Fund has contributed \$69 600 to this project which has been matched by council. The end result is that Avoca Dell has been provided with additional amenities such as a new boat ramp, sealed car parking area and access road, street lighting, re-shaped ski beach and dedicated overnight houseboat mooring bays. Additionally vandal proof disabled access toilets have also been constructed. Storm water has been diverted into drainage swales prior to going into the river with sedges also to be planted to help in the treatment of the storm water.

The final Stage of the Avoca Dell redevelopment will commence in late October. This has been jointly funded by Council and Planning SA, who has contributed \$46,852 for which council is very appreciative. Works include the installation of Gazebo's, electric barbecues, walking paths and extensive landscaping. There is no doubt that once this final stage of Avoca Dell is complete that it will be one of Murray Bridges premier recreational reserves.



Figure 11 – Avoca Dell – sealed access and car parking



Figure 12 – Avoca Dell – new toilet block

Wharf Hill (Figure 13)

Council is creating a new focal point to the riverfront from the main street. This project is currently partially finished, with an assortment of masonry works creating focal points. The stone work in the car park is recycled granite taken from kerbing in Murray Bridge's central streets. The granite was hand cut 50 odd years ago and now forms a feature of this exciting project.



Figure 13 – Wharf Hill – recycled granite

Thiele Reserve (Figure 14)

Bullrush and other water species have been placed along the river bank to control serious erosion that was undermining the road at Thiele Reserve. These reeds were removed from the new Avoca Dell mooring sites and recycled.



Figure 14 – Thiele Reserve – recycled reeds

PARKS AND GARDENS

New Works Depot

Landscaping using a variety of mulches to enhance the shape and colour of the garden beds was completed this year.

Recycling Green Waste (Figure 15)

In an effort to reduce water application and weeds Council has been busy mulching many gardens. This has left Council with no mulch spare for residents to purchase.



Figure 15 Mulching – Hogger machine

Bremer Road Cemetery (Figure 16 & 17)
 New kerbing and roadway has been constructed recently with the installation of a new RSL beam. Next year gates will be installed giving a feature at the entrance.



Figure 16 – Bremer Road Cemetery – RSL Beam



Figure 17 – Bremer Road Cemetery – new road and kerbing

Diamond Park (Figure 18 & 19)
 The water hungry Cannas that had been a fantastic display over many years have been removed and replaced with more water friendly plantings. A lot of local stone has been incorporated in the design.



Figure 18 – Diamond Park - before



Figure 19 – Diamond Park - after

Edward Square (Figure 20)

At the Edward Square embankment the following was planted;

Summer Annuals – Alyssum and Petunia (Australian Coat of Arms)

Winter Annuals – Pansy (*Olympic Rings*)



Figure 20 – Edwards Square – Olympic Rings

Native Vegetation Plan

A plan to link native vegetation to other native vegetation has been instigated with \$21,000 set aside for direct seeding annually. This has been carried out in June this year due to late opening rains.

OTHER PROJECTS

Swimming Pool Upgrade

The Murray Bridge Swimming Pool was upgraded with gas heating which will enable year round use of the facilities.

Water Savings

From Council's private pumping main, Council has saved 600,000 kL of water which is the equivalent of 23 Olympic size swimming pools. This has been achieved with the introduction of closer scrutiny, a late start in summer watering and Aquaboost water saving liquid. There has also been considerable savings on SA Water metered reserves over this period.

Council has also introduced to most public toilets the Desert Eco Water Saving System, which is an environmentally friendly waterless urinal block.

Work For the Dole

This year the Work for the Dole have been busy constructing;

- Extra board walks with seating all from recycled plastic at the Swanport Wetlands.
- A gazebo with interpretive signage for the Swanport Wetland.
- Landscaping with retaining wall, path, irrigation, plants and mulch at the Guides Hall.
- Installation of bus shelters throughout the City.

Community Service Program

The Community Service Program is continually serving the community well by:

- Rubbish removal on all major roadsides as well as illegally dumped rubbish on outer roads.
- Weeding and brush cutting in town reserves.
- Spreading mulch on landscaped areas for weed reduction and water conservation.

MURRAY BRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Now in its 37th year, the Public Library continues to provide a range of important services to the people living in Murray

Bridge and the surrounding districts. Because of its size, it takes on the role of a regional library, providing a breadth and depth of material not available in the smaller libraries nearby. Its links with all other public libraries in the state, Film and Video Collection, the State Library, and the National Library enables it to provide a comprehensive service to the whole community. This year in excess of 4,000 loans were transacted between ourselves and other libraries.

In addition to a range of books for all ages, the Library has audio cassettes, compact discs, videos (non fiction as well as movies and children's programs), computer programs and CD-ROMs, magazines, and jigsaw puzzles for people to borrow. During the year we launched a collection of DVDs, and this has been tremendously popular. (With around 300 titles circulating, it has taken six months for more than twenty to be on the shelf at any one time.)

Books in languages other than English continue to be well used. We are supporting Council's stance as a refugee-friendly-city by responding to the needs of Afghani refugees with books, a series of videos to help learn English, and the promotion of a news service in Farsi on the Internet. These men are also heavy users of the video collection. It helps them gain an understanding of the English language.

The Library provides a service to Mobilong Prison, with a fortnightly visit. This is appreciated by staff and inmates. Books in Vietnamese, Spanish, Chinese, etc. are in constant demand. Around half the requests from Mobilong are for fiction, the rest are for books to support studies, workshop manuals, music, cheesemaking, drawing, writing poetry, and so on.



Library Display



Children's Display

Those seeking work experience often approach the Library for the opportunity to gain additional skills. As well as school students, we currently support three adults involved with formal return-to-work programmes. One has become so interested in the work that she has taken up the challenge of gaining Library qualifications through TAFE.

Another volunteer, with the support of Library staff offers training on the use of the Internet to members of the public. Internet use continues to be intensive. Often there are demands on the computers at the Library that cannot be met.

A staff member attended a John Stanley workshop in Murray Bridge. John also came into the Library and offered advice on ways to make it more vibrant and user friendly. (A free consultation.) The staff member who attended is full of enthusiasm and the Library will be working towards implementing a number of the ideas gathered in the next year. We have decided to focus on an area to appeal to young people, and have already asked one of our volunteers (a retired painter) to paint some of the smaller pieces of furniture in suitable colours.

The Library is very grateful for the support of its numerous volunteers. They perform such tasks as shelving material, processing new books, sorting donated and withdrawn books for the Friends of the Library sale, caring for the plants and the goldfish. One has taken on the task of indexing the Birth, Marriage and Death notices in the Murray Valley Standard since 1967. This will be a valuable resource for many years for those investigating family history.



School Holiday Programs

The best promotion for the Library is the School Holiday Activities. Victoria (a volunteer) organizes and runs the programme very successfully. In the July sessions she is planning snail races, with the mayor presenting trophies to the winners. She gained a grant of \$1000 and assistance from the Friends of the Library of \$200 to pay for materials, etc. so that there is no direct cost to the Library for this activity. The Library also has continued to produce a monthly Facts Sheet, with information about Library activities and recommended new books.

Friends of the Library have continued their valuable support to the Library and its staff. They raise funds through the sale of second hand books. As well as a three day sale in November, this year they are holding half day monthly sales. The funds have been donated to allow the Library to purchase shelving for videos and dvds, and a notice board.

The possibility of relocating the Library has aroused much interest with Library patrons, as well as the community at large. A proposal from TAFE brought deliberations to a halt early in 2004, but it is hoped they will soon begin again.

STATISTICS: 2003/2004

Loans	186,643
Reservations	2,044
Interlibrary loans	4,647
Total transactions	324,274
Registrations (new borrowers)	1,258
Current Borrowers	
Adult	7,622
Children	2,919
Mobilong	88
Homebound (deliveries made by FOL and library staff)	47
Library staff	7
Book depots	4
Other Libraries	83
Total Borrowers	10,770
Customers	63,277 (persons who actually borrowed)
Number of visits/door counter	126,740
International visitors	500
Volunteers (20 people)	1,994 hours
Floor space	850 square metres

Book Depots :Jean Jarvis Centre, Murray Heights, Hospital Day Care, Lutheran Homes. All loans changed regularly.

LERWIN NURSING HOME



Lerwin Nursing Home

The Lerwin Nursing Home is a 50 bed facility that provides accommodation for people who have high level of need for continuous nursing care. Lerwin is located in Joyce Street and is designed as a stand alone facility. The home is part of the Business Services Unit and Council's general staff assist in a number of functional areas of governance including accounting, payroll and human resources.

Accreditation

Although this year's reporting period has fallen between the major Accreditation rounds (3 yearly), quality activities have continued to allow continuous improvement outcomes to be met. A scheduled support visit by the Standards Accreditation Agency occurred in March (2 support visits are usually scheduled between the main audits). The assessor concentrated her audit around standard 2.7 – Medication Management. The assessor concluded that Lerwin was compliant.

In April, Lerwin became a foundation member of the newly incorporated Aged Care Quality Association (ACQA). ACQA was formed after a group of providers (of which Lerwin was one) had been successfully benchmarking a number of care related key performance indicators. ACQA provides networking and training on quality related issues as well as benchmarking and data analysis service to member organisations.

Staffing

Registered Nurses are in short supply and for this continues to be an issue of concern at Lerwin and the industry in general. A number of shifts have needed to be covered by agency staff this year.

Australian Nurses Federation Enterprise Agreement is nearing completion. Nurses are to receive a 16.5% increase over 2 years.

Lerwin hosted several groups of personal care staff students (some from Equals International) for part of their practical placements. This practice continues to be fruitful in identifying potential employees when vacancies become available.

LGA Compensation Scheme figures for Lerwin released in April indicated a continuation of Lerwin's strong performance in relation to work injuries, with the indicated rebate rising again for the coming year.

Resident Activities

Resident activities are an important feature of the care provision at Lerwin. This year, the activities program was wide ranging and included the following events and outings:

- Murray Bridge Orchid Show
- Card Playing
- Men's Afternoon
- AFL finals events
- Visiting AFL players
- Weekly Bingo
- Cooking
- Carpet Bowls
- Darts (Magnetic)
- Games Afternoons
- Visiting Singing Groups
- Various lunch outings including Community Club, Dundee's Golf Club etc.
- Crafts including handicrafts and woodcrafts
- Visiting dancers including regular visits by Old Time Dance Club
- Film Afternoons
- Melbourne Cup Luncheon
- Flower Arranging
- Pot Plant Gardening
- Visiting various displays at the Town Hall
- Christmas Party

- Various cultural weeks and days including an Italian day, Canada Week
- Drama concerts
- Weekly Church Services and Communion



Residents enjoying a luncheon with Port Power players

A number of dedicated volunteers have continued to assist residents at Lerwin this year. Their efforts are very much appreciated by both residents and staff. Volunteers have assisted with resident activities, feeding of residents, piano playing and general visiting and talking to residents. Several volunteers have also brought pets in for visits with residents.



Regular "doggy" visitor with resident

Statistics

Permanent resident admissions – 26
 Respite admissions – 16

Permanent residents diagnoses

Wandering dementia	Other dementia	Neurological	Other
9	4	6	7

Average occupancy was 98.6% for the year (down slightly due to Resthaven opening it's new beds). Waiting lists have also been down significantly for the same reason.

Average Concessional Ratio for the year was 63.3% (minimum 40% required).

Building Program

An application for 25 extra bed licenses and a capital grant was submitted in the 2002 Aged Care Approvals Round. The application was successful with 20 bed licenses and a capital grant of \$835,000 allocated. A further 5 beds application was lodged in the 2003 Aged Care Approvals Round which was successful. A further capital grant of \$200,000 was also secured. Project Manager/Architect, Hodgkison, continued with planning work, assisted with the appointment of cost and engineering consultants and with the tender call and appointment of the project builder Mobbs Construction. The official sod turning was carried out by Deputy Mayor Weinert on 15th June 2004 officially launching the construction phase of the project.



From Left: Reg Budarick, Cr England, Chris Collins, Cr Simmons, Steven Mobbs (Mobbs Construction), Peter Goern (Hodgkison), Deputy Mayor Weinert, Cr Coventry, Cr Laubsch, Cheryl Liddell (Hodgkison)

During the financial year:

- Concept plans finalized
- Planning approval gained
- Cost and Engineering consultants appointed
- Detailed drawings were finalised
- Building rules approval gained
- Building tenders were called and analysed
- Building contract awarded to Mobbs Construction
- Building staging, timelines and budgets confirmed
- Site earthworks and demolition commenced

The project is scheduled for completion in July 2005.

Generous donations from a number of service clubs, individuals and bequests from families and friends of former residents have this year been allocated for the building fund. These donations are gratefully received and will assist with the building project.

COMMUNITY CARE SERVICE PROGRAMS 2003 - 2004

The Community Care Service programs coordinated by the Rural City of Murray Bridge provide services that broadly target frail and at risk aged persons or younger disabled adults with moderate to severe disabilities, who without the assistance of these programs, would be at risk of entering residential care prematurely.

The programs are provided through a partnership between Council and Commonwealth and State Governments. Council is one of a number of service providers in our region who each have specified roles and target groups. Council has three distinct program areas; these being Home and Community Care consisting of Homeassist, Dementia Care and Transport, Commonwealth Respite for Carers and Carer's Group, and Veterans Home Care.

The Home and Community Care (HACC) program is a State funded program (although the HACC program itself is a joint federal / state initiative) which aims to provide a wide range of services to frail aged and disabled people. Council's HACC funded program operates via a service level agreement that focuses mainly on aged residents (with a smaller component for younger disabled adults).

The Commonwealth Respite for Carers (CRC) program is a Commonwealth funded program which focuses on providing in-home respite for those who act as carers of the aged or disabled, plus a Carer's Support Group.

Veterans Home Care (VHC) program is a Commonwealth funded program which provides in-home respite and home care assistance specifically to veterans and war widows.

In each case, Council contributes significantly to the programs in cash or in kind.

Council employs 2 full time coordinators who manage the program on a day to day basis.

There are currently 283 clients registered with Council's Community Care Service programs, 265 are active at the present time. Some clients use the service more regularly than others. Voluntary donations for the Transport Program are being well supported with most clients contributing.

16 self employed contractors provide the in home services. A good rapport is maintained with our contractors by meeting regularly and with an open door policy. The contractors are an integral part of their client's lives and in time become a trusted part of their extended "community family". This can make a big difference to clients feeling of security, well-being and self-worth.

HACC PROGRAMS

Volunteer Transport Program

The Transport program covers essential trips within the Council area. A wonderful group of volunteers support the local program using their own vehicles or drive Council vehicles to out of town destinations. This year, 12 volunteers have provided over 9470 hours of service and travelled 73,843 kilometres. Volunteers are reimbursed for out of pocket expenses.

Apart from medical transport, the assisted shopping service has been one of the most utilized services this year, with over 50 clients catered for fortnightly. Clients usually travel 2-3 to a vehicle making it a social occasion as well as a shopping trip. Volunteers often assist with the shopping itself and also assist the client to get the shopping into their homes and unpacked.

The Accessible Bus, used for Adelaide medical appointments and is run in conjunction with the Office of Public Transport has continued to run each weekday this year. This bus can cater for 9 clients plus 2 wheelchair clients. A gopher can also be accommodated if there are no wheelchairs on that day. Frail clients can be lifted on the ramp if they find it difficult to get up the bus steps. This bus takes clients to all major hospitals in Adelaide and various other medical specialists and clinics. This service is now firmly established and is working very well. A HACC car is still sent

to Adelaide on occasions if there are exceptional medical circumstances that would prohibit a client from attending an appointment because they cannot physically endure the length of the trip on the bus. Approximately twenty five percent of residents helped this year would not have been able to travel compared to when the service was provided by car alone. Due to the Accessible Bus, service to younger disabled residents of Murray Bridge has improved and this has been very well received.

Since the bus has taken over the Adelaide run, we have been able to assist clients with appointments in Mount Barker (eye surgery) and Stirling (CT scans and x-rays). Demand for services to these locations has increased markedly this year. We also now have the capacity to take clients to Strathalbyn to the rehabilitation centre.

Home Maintenance and Modifications

The maintenance program helps with most aspects of minor home repairs. It caters for jobs that are one-off or once per year and depends on funding being available. Tasks must fall into a category, which benefit the health, safety or security of the client, eg. minor plumbing and carpentry, installation of grab rails, one-off rubbish removal, one-off garden cleanups, installation of security devices on windows and doors etc. Modifications fall into this category and may be major jobs. Bathrooms that must be altered and made safe for stroke victims to use are just one example where the client pays for the materials and the program assists with the payment for labour to a certain value. The work is undertaken with advice from the Occupational Therapist, from Murray Mallee Health Service and monitored by the Community Services Administrator.

This year, Energy Reviews have commenced and are currently being undertaken with Volunteers trained by Energy SA. These volunteers go to client's homes and work through a check list with the client that focuses on ways to trim down energy use and therefore reduce electricity costs. To date 17 reviews have been carried out by the 4 trained volunteers and feedback so far has been positive.

Dementia Respite

Dementia Respite is a component of Home and Community Care. It is tailored to suit carers who are caring for a person with dementia. This can be done in-home or with the person with dementia taken to day-care, with one-on-one support or for some other form of external activity. This needs to be done in some cases because of difficult behaviours that would preclude them from attending without the extra assistance. Extra assistance can be sourced from the Hills Mallee Southern Buddy Program where this is necessary. The Buddy Program is funded by a special government initiative for dementia clients with difficult behaviours.

Domestic Assistance

Domestic Assistance and Social Support programs are a significant part of the overall program and assists clients who have difficulty doing the day-to-day chores or who are socially isolated respectively. With this help, clients are able to remain independent for much longer.

The service endeavours to assist in emergency situations or where very little notice is possible. This often occurs when a caregiver becomes ill suddenly. Our service works closely with other local service providers to assist where possible.

Three social bus trips have been organised during the year at a nominal cost to those clients participating. These trips assist carers and clients who feel isolated to achieve some social interaction, and is viewed as a pro-active primary health initiative as it gets them out of their homes and gives them something to look forward to. Destinations for these trips this year have included Monarto Zoo, Taillem Bend and Adelaide.

COMMONWEALTH RESPITE FOR CARERS (CRC)

This program assists carers to maintain a life outside their home and caring role. It primarily provides a person to take their place by looking after the person they care for while they have a break.

The majority of clients this year received an average of 3.5 hrs weekly, however some

clients chose to “bank” this time enabling them to take be assisted for longer periods, e.g. a whole day taken fortnightly. For special occasions, extra hours have also been negotiated on several occasions.

In conjunction with the Southern Country Carer Respite Centre we have, on several occasions this year, also been able to arrange overnight and weekend respite so carers could have an extended break. The Murray Bridge Carers Support Group met monthly this year for peer support and education on the caring role as well as for a number of social outings.

Full day outings are an ongoing feature of the program and a once a year an over-night carer retreat is arranged. Destinations for day outings this year have included Adelaide, Mt Barker, Tailem Bend, Waikerie and local destinations, whilst the overnight retreat took 9 carers and 1 volunteer to the Clare Valley. There is strong evidence to indicate that these breaks are of great benefit to those carers who participate.



Carers during Clare Valley retreat

VETERAN HOME CARE

As a Service Provider in this area we provide services to clients in Murray Bridge, and four clients in Mannum.

The services that are provided through Veteran Affairs are Personal Care, Respite, Domestic Assistance and Gardening. Some clients are currently using up to three of the services offered.

This program seems to be working well to date and a good working relationship with

the Department of Veterans Affairs is maintained.

*Clients from outside our LGA are serviced on a cost recovery basis.

Collaboration with Other Service Providers

During the past year, program coordinators have been involved in a number of networking and project working groups including the Murray Mallee Aging Taskforce, Dementia Coordinators Regional Network, Buddy Program, Local Government Aged & Community Care Workers Committee and Veterans Affairs Coordinators Network and Primary Health Workers Forum. The links provided by these forums are crucial for the delivery of seamless packages of care for the residents of Murray Bridge and the Murray Mallee region.

Murray Mallee Ageing Taskforce

The MMAT is made up of 34 organisations across the Murray Mallee and meets bi monthly. An Executive Committee elected by members of the full MMAT meets monthly and supervises the work of the project officer. The Rural City of Murray Bridge provides administrative support (office space, phones etc), meeting room space, manages the project finances and provides day-to-day guidance and direction to the project officer.

The Murray Mallee Strategic Planning Project received one off HACC funding for a term of 2 years ending the calendar year 2004. The project was to develop a framework and a strategic plan for the Murray Mallee Ageing Taskforce (MMAT). A needs analysis was completed in early 2004 inform the development of the strategic plan.

The strategic plan is currently in draft form and provides a framework for the development of accessible coordinated, comprehensive, quality services for older people in the Murray Mallee and develops mechanisms for linkage and collaboration between service delivery agencies.

The aim of the strategic plan is to support older people and their carers to maximise their independence and participation by

improving the quality and flexibility of the service network, improving access to information about the services in the region and ensuring that there are services across the service continuum.

The Project Officer will facilitate the MMAT and then implement the strategic plan through:

- Facilitating MMAT meetings and working groups and providing executive support where appropriate.
- Providing a research capacity on innovative and best practice models
- Facilitating consumer and community participation in planning and gap identification
- Locating funding for specific project work
- Managing specific project work
- Facilitating information to the MMAT through regular meetings, email, workshops and forums.

Detailed project work was also carried out around the issue of aged care Workforce Planning. An external grant from the Murraylands Regional Development Board together with some funds from the project were used to commission a study on this issue. The study has now been completed and this will form the basis for future action on the issue.

STATISTICS

HACC Transport

Number of Return Trips	
Adelaide	244
Mt Barker	56
Stirling	6
Local	2684

Clients by Category

CATEGORY	NO. OF CONSUMERS	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
HACC Home Assist - Domestic	5	30
HACC Home Assist - Maintenance	1	6
HACC - Dementia	2	6
Transport - Adelaide	33	66
Transport - Stirling	3	
Transport - Mt Barker	7	4
Transport - Local	22	107
Commonwealth Respite for Carers (CRC)	4	7
Carers Group	9	12
Veterans Home Care - Domestic	7	14
Veterans Home Care - Personal Care	1	1
Veterans Home Care - Respite	3	
Veterans Home Care - Maintenance	1	1

NB. Some clients receive services from more than one program.

CORPORATE SERVICES

The Corporate Services Department is responsible for delivering a range of internal functions associated with running the Council as an organisation and also provides some external services to rate payers, commercial and non-commercial organisations and government agencies.

Services provided include payroll, information technology and information management, financial control and compliance, policy formulation and management, contracts, leases, licenses and permits, records management and compliance, rating and asset management which includes several major projects of a strategic nature.

Payroll

This is an internal service responsible for managing the accurate payment of wages and salaries to the employees of Council and is delivered in liaison with the Human

Services area who provide legislative and policy advice in matters relating to industrial relations, award payments, enterprise bargaining and other matters relating to good human resource management.

Information Technology

Over the 2003-04 period, the Information Technology of council was comprised of 100 workstations (computers) and 10 servers across 4 sites connected via Optic Fibre, Radio Links, and Ethernet. This infrastructure provided the facility to operate council's main software applications including:

- *Authority* - Property, Development Applications Building Applications, Debtors, Creditors, General Ledger, Animals, Electoral Role, Health, Infringements, etc
- *Map Info* - Geographical Information Services providing full mapping capabilities for the entire Rural City of Murray Bridge Council area
- *Trim* - Records management solution which keeps track of every document within council with the use of scanning and electronic document management
- *Spydus* - Library circulation
- *Exchange* - Email management

All are maintained within a secure environment using the latest technology in open-source software.

The major projects for this year are as follows,

- Migration of the server environment to a Linux operating system - providing a more secure and stable, yet inexpensive platform for network security.
- Re-structure of low-level network design – this will also assist to make the network more secure and efficient.
- Installation of optical fibre between the Local Government Centre and Library – this provides a gigabit back bone which has fixed a data bottleneck problem and provides extensive disaster recovery options for the future.
- Planning and development of new website - giving staff the ability to add

their own content through a solid approval process, allowing the website to be much more useful and attractive to rate payers and visitors.

Geographical Information Systems are also provided to assist both internal and external customers. Features of this system include:

- Online WWW GIS Mapping rolled out 23rd June 2003, which is now giving ratepayers, general community and others access to limited GIS mapping data
- Continuation of GIS data maintenance, with the inclusion of many housing subdivisions approved which requires a continual flow of asset infrastructure (stormwater, footpaths, waste collection, street lighting etc), which will be recorded within the GIS datasets.
- Continuation of GIS data maintenance, including large amounts of budgeted road infrastructure upgrades which is reflected in the corresponding GIS datasets.
- Continuation of formally gazetted names to un-named roads, for their formal recognition for both emergency services, user and asset management purposes.
- Continuation of GIS and data maintenance and development, including the creation of new data layers as needed.
- There are presently 101 data layers accessible on the Rural City of Murray Bridge Geographical Information System.

The IT system has developed into a leading edge system utilizing the best of open-source and proprietary software to provide Council staff, elected members and the public with all the information they require in a secure and efficient manner.

Information management

TRIM (Total Records Information Management) has operated efficiently throughout the year. The IT Manager has received training in Canberra with a view to developing a training program, for new and current staff members, in optimal use of this records management software.

10,253 Items were registered on TRIM this financial year. This includes new files, part files and correspondence by staff and for staff. The vast majority of these items were received and processed without the need for hardcopy files to be transported around the office and has greatly reduced the need for photocopies of correspondence items to be produced.

Records Disposal

Approximately 20 large boxes of old documents were disposed of through the Department of Administrative Services.

Records Storage

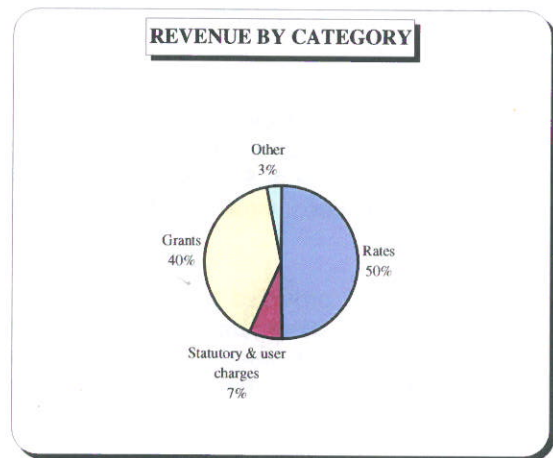
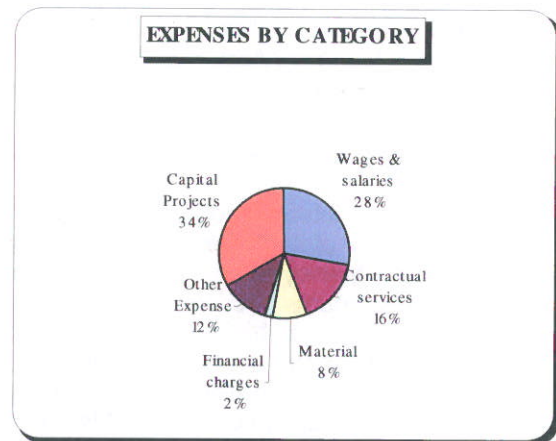
A records storage review has resulted in the need for expanded records storage facilities being identified. Particular need has been identified to properly accommodate Development Applications with their associated plans, maps and reports which will be an ongoing and ever increasing area of Council operations.

Legislative Compliance.

A review of Council's compliance with the State Records Act with external auditors has revealed substantial compliance, with only minor improvements being recommended. A general statement from the auditor indicated that The Rural City of Murray Bridge is performing at the upper level of records management best practice and legislative compliance when compared to other council bodies across South Australia.

Financial Control

The ongoing improvement in Council's financial control continues with the Council trading favourably against budget in 2003/2004. The accounts are being maintained in accordance with all legislative and accounting standard requirements. The main focus of the department is to improve the standard of Council and management reports to further improve the financial controls within the organisation. A copy of the audited Financial Statements is attached as Appendix 6.



Breakdown of Council's Expenditure and Revenue

Policy

Policies and procedures have been a key focus of the Corporate Services team over the past twelve months. Various policies and procedures for the whole organisation have been developed, commented on, approved by Senior Management Team and in some cases approved by Council.

Some recently adopted (new) policies include:

- Policy Procedure Policy
- Outdoor Dining Policy
- Construction of Unmade Road Reserve
- Street Verge Development Policy
- Footway Trading Policy
- Public Arts Policy.

Council also reviewed the following existing policies:

- Directional Sign Policy
- Elected Members Allowance Policy
- Purchasing Contracts and Tender Policy
- Rating Policy
- Hiring of Council Facilities Policy.

A total of 29 internal policies have been drafted, with 19 of them already approved by the Senior Management Team. Several internal procedures associated with the policies have also been developed and approved. All of the approved policies and procedures have been filed to ensure easy access for all Staff and Elected Members and to members of the public where appropriate.

Rating

There was a 9.8% increase in the total Capital Value of property within the Rural City of Murray Bridge from 2002/2003 giving a total capital value of \$1,074,395,280. This total also includes new subdivisions and revaluations.

Valuations are provided to Council by the Office of the Valuer General, which is a State Government agency. These values then form the basis for local government rating.

Capital valuation increases occurred primarily in the residential areas, and to the rural living and rural residential properties on the outskirts of Murray Bridge. Commercial properties retained the same rate in the dollar as for 2002/2003, however Council resolved that the separate rate levied on properties within the town centre and central business area over the past years (specifically for the beautification of the town centre) would not be levied for 2003/2004, and that the continuing works within this particular area would come from general funds. As a result of the capital value increases, a reduction of the residential, primary production, vacant land and industrial differential rate in the dollar was given for the 2003/2004 financial year to offset the increased rates that would normally be payable. A total of \$8.3 million was raised from rates income.

Council has also introduced rate capping in cases where the amount of general rates for 2003/2004 were greater than 25% over the

amount of general rates payable for 2002/2003 under Section 166 (1) of the Local Government Act 1999. Discretionary rebates can be applied to provide relief to a ratepayer who would have received a substantial rate rise due to a capital valuation increase. This was offered to the principal ratepayer of an assessment for residential properties – apart from those properties which were not the principal place of residence of the ratepayer. Other categories offered for rate capping were industrial, commercial, primary production, and other.

Further payment facilities and payment arrangements for ratepayers have been introduced with Bpay facilities now being a part of the range of payment options provided. Since its inception, Bpay, along with Australia Post payment facilities, have proven very popular with ratepayers and it is anticipated that these facilities will be well utilised during the 2004/2005 financial year. Other payment options which are also well utilised include: the Council website: 24 hours, seven days a week telephone access: and through postal mail and payments made in person at the Local Government Centre.

Council also continues to provide rating rebates of varying percentages to sporting and community bodies, private schools, conservation and heritage areas and retirement villages in line with Sections 161 to 166 of the Local Government Act 1999, other rating legislation and Council's Rating Rebate Policy. An industrial incentive rebate is also provided to assist business under Section 166 of the Local Government Act, with several new businesses attracting this rebate in line with Council's policy.

A rebate was also granted to the many of the tenants of the Bridge Plaza (now known as Centro Plaza) Complex, due to the massive increase in capital value over the past two years resulting from the new extensions to the complex. This rebate was granted based on a 25% reduction on the total value of rates levied on the respective shops within the complex for the 2002/2003 financial year.

Fact sheets compiled and provided by the Local Government Association have also assisted ratepayers to understand "what do we get for our rates?" – a commonly asked question. A services guide, listing important council and emergency services telephone numbers has also been provided to ratepayers.

Asset Management

Council manages a large portfolio of property and buildings, hire facilities, reserves, heritage items and places of interest.

Asset management operations include:

- Regular building maintenance
- Strategic property procurement and sale
- Community Land provisions under The Local Government Act (revocations and Community Land Register and Land Management Plans)
- Leases and licenses for land use
- Interaction and negotiation with state, commonwealth and federal government agencies on matters of land acquisition, land use, lease and license term, native title and native heritage issues, cultural heritage, native vegetation, contaminated site and a range of other economic, environmental, community and cultural issues that affect asset management decision making.
- Significant community consultation processes
- Asset management policy formulation for Council
- Freedom of Information applications
- Commercial negotiations on behalf of Council
- Grant funding applications
- Community group liaison and management

Contract management

Council negotiates and works within a commercially competitive and contestable contracting environment which ensures competitive neutrality, fair trading and competition and advantageous commercial outcomes for Council.

Procurement, tendering and contracting policies are in place to ensure that the full

cost of Council operations are allowed for when Council services are tendered for, and principles of contract management are applied to maintain transparency, fair competition, appropriate documentation of process and probity.

Examples of contract agreements that Council enters into include the purchase of road building materials, waste collection services, external consultancies, stationary supplies, plant and equipment, air conditioning maintenance services, mosquito monitoring etc.

HUMAN SERVICES

Community Development

Community Cultural Development Advisory Committee

The Community Cultural Development Advisory Committee (CCDAC) is a community based advisory committee to the Council and provides information and advice on policies, strategies and projects that will advance cultural development in the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

The Committee has up to 13 voting members (including one member of Council, Cr. Ken Coventry) broadly representative of the many cultural interests in the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

Steve Ashley, Arts Officer, Country Arts SA is a non-voting member of the Committee. The Community Development Officer, Faith Box, provides support to the Committee as Council's Administration representative.

The CCDAC aims to foster and promote a range of projects including advising Council on community and cultural issues affecting residents and visitors to the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

All projects of the Community Cultural Development Advisory Committee assist in the implementation of the Murray Bridge Cultural Plan, which is currently under review.

- Artists Register – originally initiated in 2000 to provide a comprehensive listing of artists and craftspeople within the Rural City of Murray Bridge and the skills they can bring to local projects.
- Regional Art Gallery – Design plan is complete has been completed and further funding of \$150,000 approved from the Regional Art Gallery Capital Development Program for Stage 2 of the gallery development. The project works for Stage 2 will commence early in the financial year with an anticipated completion date of November 2004.
- Town Hall Grand Piano – Fundraising continues for the purchase of a grand piano for the Murray Bridge Town Hall. The next fundraising event to be held at TAFE later this year.
- The CCDAC will undertake a revision of the Cultural Plan of the Rural City of Murray Bridge in consultation with the appointed consultants who will co-ordinate the review of the Strategic Plan over a 12-month period. The revised plan will take into consideration elements of the 'Looking Forward' document. The audit identifies issues concerning the future development of Murray Bridge, which was instigated by CCDAC, and will be a source of material for the review process.
- 125 Bridge Celebrations
- Instrumental in the Gallery Management Committee becoming a separate Section 41 advisory committee to Council.
- Community Forum Presentation
- Heritage PAR Submission
- Submission to Council (Looking Forward)
- Terms of Reference & Membership Review

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) provides information and advice on policies strategies and projects that will assist Council to meet its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.

The Act covers not just those people who have a disability, but those who are perceived to have a disability. The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against relations or associates of people with disabilities. To do this effectively, access for people with disabilities needs to be the responsibility of the entire organisation.

The Committee is chaired by Cr. Bruce Pearson and is made up of community members who have a disability themselves or who work for a local organisation that has an interest in the needs of people with disabilities.

The main function of the AAC is the implementation, review and monitoring of the Disability Action Plan, providing a strategic framework for correcting the many difficulties faced by people with disabilities in accessing Council services and facilities.

Achievements of the ACC on access improvements in 2003/2004 are as follows:-

- Implementation of an action plan to address specific footpath & kerbing issues relating to Eleanor Terrace, Thomas Street, Maurice Road, Albert Terrace & George Avenue.
- Instrumental in the development of a new kerbing profile to be implemented late 2004.
- Developed in consultation with Council's Engineer to incorporate wheelchair and pram ramps into all new road developments in the Rural City of Murray Bridge
- Petrol Plus – improved access by repairing drain plates causing issues for all prams, wheelchairs and gophers.
- Australian Standards – request for the implementation of Australian Standards specifically in relation to gophers & electric wheelchairs.
- Improved accessibility to facilities at Thiele Reserve.
- Improvements to Mannum Road Traffic Lights tactile timing to allow sufficient time for the elderly, mobility impaired and children to cross safely.

- Successful organisation of the first celebration of 'International day for people with a disability', which was held at the Local Government Centre.
- Actioning of many varied accessibility issues affecting the community's mobility impaired
- Terms of Reference & Membership Review

Ongoing Projects

- Railway Station Seating
- Safety Improvements to Woolworth's steep footpaths
- Review of Disabled Parking (Woolworths)
- Improvements to footpath (cnr Adelaide & Swanport)
- Improving Mannum Road kerbing to allow access/egress to Bi-Lo complex.

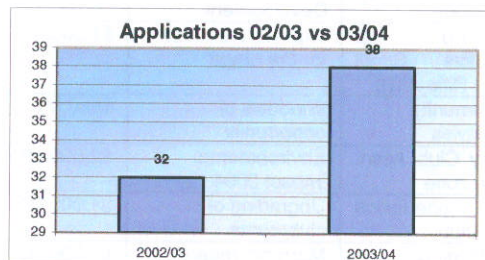
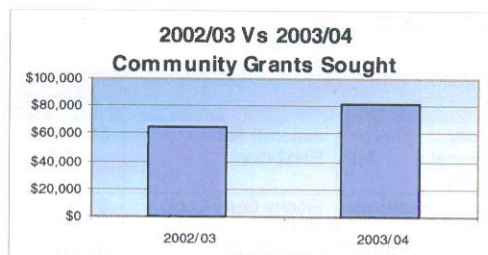
Community Grants

The Community Grants and Donations Committee, comprising Councillors Bruce Pearson, Clem Schubert, Phil Nutt and Council administrative representative Faith Box, meet twice per year to assess applications for support for the Community Grants and Donations Program.

For this financial year (2003/04) a total amount of \$49,996.50 in grants was made available to community groups (please refer tables below). In the first round in September 2003 an amount of \$26,192.50 was allocated and in the second and current round (May 2004) a total of \$23,804. All available funds were fully expended for the 2003/04 financial year.

Total Distributed for 2003/04	\$49,996.50
Advertising	\$824.00
Total	\$50,820.50

A total of 38 applications were received from various community groups who sought a total of \$81,012.93 for this financial year 2003/04 vs \$65,329 for 2002/03



September 2003 Round

Applicant	Project	Grant Approved
Imperial Football Club	Bench replacement	\$1,000.00
Christian Family Centre	Fair Day (15th Nov)	\$1,250.00
Murray Bridge Lawn Tennis	Purchase of scarifier	\$1,000.00
Myolonga Primary	Contribution to relocation of Shop	\$1,250.00
Neighbourhood Watch	Printing of emergency card	\$1,090.00
Lower Murray Nungas Club	Purchase of video camera	\$1,600.00
Imperial Netball Club	Shed extension for all weather area	\$695.50
Life Education	New truck to pull multi-media van	\$2,500.00
Monteith Hall	Hall upgrade	\$1,000.00
Murray Mallee Men's Service	Bridge Men's Group	\$1,050.00
Lutheran Court Maintenance	Upgrade toilets and security lights	\$1,000.00
Riverglades Wetlands	Interactive signs	\$2,000.00
Murray Bridge Concert	Purchase of instruments for Kindy Kids	\$2,969.00
Interchurch Council	Purchase of microphones for Carols by Candlelight	\$1,998.00
Murray Bridge Players	Town Hall Kitchen	\$3,090.00
Lower Murray Vintage Club	Concrete floor for exhibition building	\$2,700.00
Total		\$26,192.50

May 2004 Round

Applicant	Project	Grant Approved
Murray Bridge Regional Art Society	Autumn Art Exhibition	\$600.00
SA Recreational Trails	Rocky Gully Loop Trail	\$600.00
Captains Cottage Museum	Multimedia Development	\$1,500.00
Monarto & Districts Small Bore Rifle Assn.	Improved facilities for the range	\$1,500.00
Community Lifestyles	Windows of opportunity	\$500.00
Pony Club Assn. Sthn zone	Environmental impact 2004	\$2,000.00
MB obedience dog club	Upgrading of clubrooms	\$1,000.00
Wellington Progress Assn.	Murrundi reserve rehabilitation project.	\$3,090.00
MB 8 Ball Association.	Pool table purchase	\$854.00
Riverbend Heritage Trail	Refurbish Wellington Courthouse um	\$1,000.00
Roundhouse Management Committee	The Roundhouse at MB booklet	\$880.00
MB croquet club	Rejuvenation of greens	\$500.00
Johnstone Park combined clubs management committee	Upgrading of complex	\$1,250.00
Lutheran Tennis club M/B	Set up Christian reserve	\$3,090.00
MB gymnastics club	Equipment upgrade	\$940.00
Murraylands Cycle Speedway	Electricity connected	\$2,000.00
ECCH	Sole parents support group	\$1,500.00
Library	School holiday activities	\$1,000.00
Total		\$23,804.00

In summary, the Community Grants and Donations has been very successful *and* continues to be an important means by which Council (through the Grants and Donations Committee), supports the projects of local clubs and organisations working for the community. These areas broadly include sport & recreation, environment, community and arts and culture.

Other Community Development Projects Supported By Council during 2003/2004

- Pictures in my Heart
- Refugee Week Celebrations
- NAIDOC Week Celebrations

- Relay for Life
- International Soccer
- 125 Bridge Celebrations
- Community Forum on Reconciliation
- Riverview Speedway
- Murray Mallee Mens Project
- Edwards Crossing Community House
- Carriage Driving Society Inc.
- Snail Race
- Inline Hockey
- Annual Croc Festival (Murray Bridge North School)
- Piano Fund (fundraising)
- Jervois Netball Club
- Monarto Silhouette Shooting Club
- Vicki's Pride Dragon Boat Association
- Murraylands Disability Network
- Disability Group (family & friends)
- Crippled Children's Auxiliary
- Development Assessment Panel (member)
- Bicycle Plan
- Callington Miners Fair
- Community Development Awareness Day
- Talking Newspapers

Murray Bridge Regional Gallery

Gallery Statistics

Visitor numbers at the gallery increased from 2636 in 2002-03 to 3438 in 2003-04. The statistics for 03-04 are for 11 months only due to gallery closure in late May 2004 for renovations. Exhibitions held during this 11 month period included 3 from Country Arts Touring Program, with the remaining shows being work of local artists and 1 Adelaide artist.

Gallery Collection

The gallery has formed the beginnings of a collection. The ANZ Bank donated 3 Rita Hall fabric prints to the gallery (total value approx \$1800-\$2400-00).

Due to Council's involvement with the Afghani Exhibition in Dec 2003, the men have donated a lino print to the gallery (value \$65-00). In addition to this print, Council purchased another print from the same exhibition to add to the gallery collection.

A Jean Sims painting was purchased from her retrospective exhibition; purchase price \$395.00. All works in the gallery collection have local relevance and significance and embrace the cultural diversity of our region.

It is the intention of the Gallery Management Committee to build a collection of quality artwork that will hold and increase in value.

Volunteers

Volunteer numbers have increased from approx 6 to 24 people. Duties include acting as gallery guides, assisting with hanging and helping with exhibition openings.

Marketing

The Gallery has secured a photograph in the 2004 edition of the Murraylands Secrets Magazine (tourism SA publication). This will be widely circulated and should further improve visitor numbers.

We are currently seeking registration as a Tourist Attraction with SA Tourism, and have applied to Transport SA for some signage at town entrances and on Bridge Street.

Press releases relating to current exhibitions are published in The Standard and announced on local radio.

A budgetary allowance for a gallery logo and brochure will allow circulation of advertising material outside the immediate region and will increase visitor awareness.

Stage 2 Development

Stage 2 is progressing according to schedule and the gallery foyer and Sculpture Court are impressive at this early stage. Volunteers and staff will welcome the air-conditioning and the comfort of the new foyer area. The project is scheduled for completion in December 2004. The Committee anticipates a formal opening in March 2005.

Programming

It is the aim of the Director and Committee to have the gallery booked 18 months in advance. The Gallery plans to provide an interesting blend of contemporary, local, and culturally diverse artwork for the community and tourists to our region.

ED..IT Community Communications Centre

Located at the Murray Bridge Community Centre Inc (formerly Edwards Crossing Community House Inc.), the new Community Communications Centre, known as ED..IT, was developed as a result of a collaboration between the Rural City of Murray Bridge and the management committee of Edwards Crossing Community House Inc. Funding was granted by the Commonwealth Government through the *Networking the Nation* program of the Department of Communication, Information, Technology and the Arts.

The launch of the Community Communications Centre on June 2nd 2003 raised awareness of Internet access and state-of-the-art computer equipment now available through ten computer terminals.

The Objectives of ED..IT are:

- To provide a community gateway for the provision of online services, education, information, and networking.
- To improve community access to the Internet, computing and information technology, and to promote such technology as a valuable tool for success in individual and community life.
- To equip and promote the House in a way that meets the needs of all potential users, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and people with disabilities.
- To offer affordable services without compromising the longer-term commercial viability of the Centre.
- To encourage community participation in the House and provide opportunities for work experience and volunteering.

Throughout the 2003/4 year the Centre has held workshops for residents of all ages who wanted to learn about computers (and the Internet) within a friendly and supportive environment. The Centre conducts a "lock-down" games night every second Saturday and consistently has thirty or more young people playing computer and card games on-site.

CRIME PREVENTION

Council has remained committed to its Crime Prevention Program and is an active member of the regional Community Safety Committee. The Attorney General's Department (Crime Prevention Unit), Council and a small band of dedicated volunteers has ensured the continuation of projects such as the Vehicle Immobiliser program, Your Home Your Castle, Transition House and the Graffiti Trailer.

The Zsolt Telkesi Committee, also under the management of the Crime Prevention Committee provided grants to support young people at risk of committing crime.

We recognise and thank the small group of dedicated volunteers who have made it possible to continue our community-based, crime prevention projects.

YOUTH & INDIGENOUS

YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (YAC)

The Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is a community based advisory committee to the Council and provides information and advice on policies, strategies and projects that will advance youth-related opportunities and issues in the Rural City of Murray Bridge.

The YAC includes up to 15 young people aged 12 – 25 years. The Mayor is an ex-officio member of the committee that also includes one elected member – Cr. Phil Nutt and one Council staff member, Shane Thompson, who provides administrative support to the YAC.

The Youth Advisory Committee's objectives are to:

- Guide the actions of The Rural City of Murray Bridge in improving the relationship between young people and Local Government
- Raise awareness in the community of issues that affect young people
- Promote the inclusion of young people in considerations in local developments and planning
- Promote youth participation in all areas of Local Government
- Provide advice and making recommendations to Council on policies, strategies and projects which will meet

these objectives, including the development of a Youth Policy or Youth Action Plan

Projects, activities and achievements of the YAC for 2003 / 2004 include:

- A training camp in September 2003
- Development of the 'Terms of Reference'
- 2004 Battle of the Bands as part of National Youth Week
- Murray Bridge Skate Park
- Mural Competition
- Short Film Project

Future projects that the Youth Advisory Committee is investigating include:

- Murraylands Youth Website
- Youth Roundtables
- Youth Centre

The Youth Advisory Committee will make recommendations to Council on issues affecting young people.

EVENTS / TOURISM / MARKETING

During the 2003/4 year the following events received in kind, financial or advisory support from Council.

- SA Ski Titles
- Christmas Parade
- International Soccer Challenge
- Carols by Candlelight
- International Pedal Prix
- Murray Bridge Agricultural and Horticultural Show
- Bridge 110 Ski Race
- Swim for Kids
- The Callington Miners Fair
- Lighthouse Foundation Charity Run
- Murraylands Youth Festival
- Christmas Symphony on the Serengeti
- Murray Mallee Community Health Services 'Walk for a Cure'
- Reconciliation Week 'Wishing Well'
- NAIDOC 'Bridge Walk'
- Orchid Club Shows
- Regional Art Society Shows

Council has resolved that its role in major events is one of "seeding" new events where

necessary and then adopting an "infrastructure support only" role for that event, maintained from within Council's current resources. Council is continually assessing its support of locally held events to ensure the maximum benefit is gained by the Murray Bridge Community.

Advertising / Editorials

Over the last financial year we have had editorials placed in the 'Out & About' section of the Advertiser, the Tourism section of the Sunday Mail, the Courier, the Weekender & SA Sightseeing as well as editorials and advertisements in the Murraylands Secrets Visitor Guide, Houseboat Holidays Magazine, SA Wine & Food magazine and the South Australian Accommodation Guide. We have also placed all our events into the SA Secrets Events Magazine.

We have distributed our events and Murray Bridge generic brochures through all South Australian Visitor Information Centres as well as distributing them personally throughout Victoria and NSW.

Radio / Television

Over the past 12 months we have been fortunate enough to gain airtime that featured both our events and tourism attractions on 5MU, POWER FM, 5AA, SAFM, 5AD and the tourism channel 88.

We have also featured on Postcards, Discover SA, the Fishing and Boating Show and The Great Outdoors as well as gaining exposure on the 'See Australia' campaign. This exposure, both intrastate and interstate, is part of an ongoing marketing campaign that commenced in 2001 and is aimed at gaining maximum exposure for minimal cost.

Increased Retail Spending

The results of 'ad hoc' surveys conducted after major events indicated that the economic investment in Murray Bridge as a result of accommodation to attend events during the previous year, was in the vicinity of \$12 million.

Our goal during this financial year is to limit the expenditure on tourism and events whilst maintaining performance standards. We will achieve this by teaching each organising body to be responsible for their own event

with Council only supplying the infrastructure and advice as requested.

Visitor Numbers

The 2003/2004 financial year returned the best ever figures relating to visitors to Murray Bridge. It is interesting to note that the main increase in numbers seems to coincide with major events.

This would indicate that Council's strategy of using events as a catalyst to attract visitors to the Rural City is working to the point where we are receiving return visitation for those that have been here to witness our events.

REGULATORY SERVICES

The Regulatory Services Unit administers policies and legislative requirements on behalf of Council and has a significant influence upon the quality of life of our community enjoys and upon the environment in which we live. The department can be split into four broad areas of activity:

- Land use planning
- Building control
- Public & Environmental Health
- Local laws

Activity in these areas extends from day to day operation and implementation by staff, through to policy advice and strategic direction setting in liaison with the elected Council.

In all, there are over 15 separate pieces of formal legislation which regulatory staff administer and/or must have regard for. This is in addition to the various policies and regulations which sit under these Acts.

There are also a number of major projects which broadly come under the heading of Regulatory Services, which include:

- rubbish collection
- landfill management
- waste water management

Rubbish Collection

Council has continued to expand its wheelie bin household collection services within the bounds of equipment availability and EPA guidelines for operating hours. Council will be investigating further expansions of the service into rural areas which will require the use of a second rubbish collection vehicle.

In addition, the use of industrial bins were reviewed. Some being removed from service due to over-use, abuse and safety risks to the public, as well as vermin, odour and litter concerns. Alternative service options were considered with free access permits to landfill being issued to affected residents in the interim.

Landfill

Development of the Brinkley Landfill continued with approval being gained for alternative cell lining which has saved Council considerable funds associated with cell construction. Additional measures have been put in place to reduce the risk of windblown litter and future plans for cell placement, fencing, litter patrols were also developed to further address litter control. Of note was the use of the Lions Club to assist Council in litter collections and Council is very grateful for their willingness to assist in this regard.

Waste Water Management

Council has been active in investigating and supporting some common effluent wastewater solutions for riverside shack communities. This work is part of a broader project to provide household waste water management solutions for up to 10 communities within the Council area.

Development Assessment

The Development Assessment unit has processed over 850 applications for development in the past year which includes a high percentage of common proposals for such things as carports and household extensions, through to multi million dollar industrial developments requiring in depth technical, environmental and economic assessment. The variety and number of applications received reflects the growing interest in Murray Bridge and nearby townships as a desirable place to live, work and play. An 16% increase has been seen

in the number of applications received in the past year when compared to the 2002/2003 financial year.

The conflicts that can sometimes occur as a result of increased and intensified land use present an exciting and challenging prospect for Council to manage, but also signify a time of prosperity and growth for the area.

Applications for New Dwellings 1st July 2003 to 30th June 2004	
Suburb	No of dwellings
Murray Bridge	220
Rockleigh	4
Sunnyside	2
White Sands	2
Monarto	9
Callington	4
Brinkley	1
Mypolonga	3
Jervois	1
Total	246

RCMB Development Applications 1st July 2003 – 30th June 2004		
Nature of Development	Applications Received	% of total
Class 10 buildings (sheds, verandahs, carports etc)	318	37.06
New dwellings (single dwellings, multi dwelling arrangements, retirement village units)	246	28.67
Land divisions (including Community Title & S49)	127	14.8
Residential extensions/alterations, habitable outbuildings	37	4.31
Commercial uses (shops, offices, consulting rooms)	34	3.96
Industrial Uses (workshops, motor repairs)	30	3.5
Other (animal keeping, swimming pools, temporary accommodation, signage)	66	7.7
	858	100

Plan Amendment Reports

The Heritage (Town Centre & Environs) PAR and Town Centre PAR underwent public and agency consultation at the same time. Several formal objections were

received from landowners affected by the Heritage PAR, with some being afforded the opportunity to also be heard before the Local Heritage Advisory Committee of Parliament. Recommendations from this Committee will be included in the final draft Heritage PAR, to be sent to the Minister for authorisation. The Town Centre PAR will be submitted for authorisation after the authorisation of the Heritage PAR has been granted.

The Minor Townships PAR has undergone agency consultation, with approval for public consultation currently being sought. This PAR addresses the Country Township Zones of Mypolonga, Woods Point, Jervois, Wellington and Monteith. All affected landowners will be notified of this PAR when public consultation has been granted.

The Residential (Narooma) PAR has recently undergone public and agency consultation. This PAR addresses the land between Jaensch Road and Long Island Road, between the River Murray and Narooma Boulevard, and is to provide design guidelines for future residential development in this important area. Discussions are currently being held with government agencies regarding the final version of the Flood Zone and new Residential (Narooma) Zone.

Development Compliance

This area of planning, which involves enforcing conditions of development authorisations and unapproved changes of land use and building work, is often under-resourced and reactive in nature. This has been true this year, with planning staff leaving and a replacement being very difficult to find, taking many months to achieve. However, staff continue to negotiate effectively with individual landowners to achieve an acceptable, legal outcome, without resorting to court action.

Development Assessment Panel

The Panel is the decision making authority for Council in relation to Development Applications and has been instituted since July 2001. The Panel has eight members, three of whom are elected members, the Mayor is also a member. The remaining four Panel members are comprised of

qualified planners (not staff) and community representatives. One of these positions has been vacant for several months, with a replacement only recently being found.

The Panel held nine meetings over the year and considered 12 development applications. Seven of these applications were approved, with one being approved subject to the concurrence of the Development Assessment Commission (decision yet to be received). Three applications were refused. One of these matters has been deferred and is yet to be determined.

Environment Resources & Development Court

No applications were appealed to the Court.

Building Services

Council's Development Assessment Officer (Building) carried out audit inspections of building work throughout the Council area in accordance with the Building Inspection Policy.

Council's Building Fire Safety Committee includes representatives from the MFS/CFS and is responsible for the checking of fire safety provisions in new and existing buildings. Of particular interest to the Committee are those types of buildings that may constitute a high fire safety risk, such as boarding houses, motels etc.

Inspectorial Services

Council's After Hours service answered over 600 calls this year. These calls were predominately dog related enquiries (400 calls). Other calls were general enquiries, depot related matters, burning complaints, compliance issues, wandering stock, alarm call outs and By Law infringements.

Dog Registrations

The total number of dogs registered for the period was 4937, plus 455 greyhounds under 23 bulk registrations. Council's Rangers responded to 475 wandering dog complaints of which 125 dogs were returned straight back to the owners. 350 dogs were impounded with 135 being claimed by their owners, 128 unfortunately were euthanased and 87 were successfully placed in new homes.

Rangers investigated 50 dog attack/harassment situations and 60 noise (barking) complaints. Staff also dealt with 50 wandering stock issues.

Council has inspected all greyhound and breeding properties with Development Approval and updated files on these premises.

Council has conducted a broad advertising program to make people aware of when dog registrations are due.

Flammable matter

Only 47 notices were issued for flammable matter during the 2003/2004 Fire Danger Season. This was largely due to inspections being carried out later than normal allowing residents more time to undertake fuel removal. Wherever possible, property owners were contacted personally or by telephone, which resulted in considerable savings to Council for notice costs and postage.

Domestic burning

Council became part of Schedule 1 of the Environment Protection Authority's Domestic Burning Policy in May 2004.

Parking

A number of changes have been made to the Parking Regulations that apply around Murray Bridge. All of these are well sign posted and residents should be able to understand them with ease. Wherever possible, graphic signs are used where restrictions apply, e.g. 1P means 1 hour parking; the "S" symbol with a red line means no stopping in that area; a solid yellow line also indicates a no stopping zone.

By Laws

Council has a number of By Laws. These relate to:

- Permits and Penalties – the means of setting penalties and fines for breaches of By Laws.
- Council Land – use of, or control of, Council owned or controlled land other than streets or roads

- Roads – control of roads vested in Council
- Moveable Signs – control of sandwich boards on footpaths
- Dogs – for the management of dog numbers in private homes
- Lodging houses – for the control of licencing and regulation of lodging houses
- Taxis – to be repealed
- Building sites – to control building waste emanating from building sites.

Order Making Policy

Council introduced its Order Making Policy last year. The Policy is a tool for enforcing matters deemed to be a nuisance or danger to the public, which may include matters such as wandering stock, the keeping of bees and noisy animals. Fines may be imposed on persons who fail to comply with an Order issued under the Policy.

Litter

Illegal dumping of waste/litter continues despite Council's efforts to control it. Whenever rubbish or litter is dumped, Council's officers search for some evidence of the offender's identity in the rubbish so action can be taken against the offender. Fines are heavy for this offence and in certain circumstances Council will take court action against offenders. The cost to the community for this illegal activity is very high. If litter is seen, it should be reported to Council. Never rummage through dumped rubbish as needles are often found and Council's officers carry protective equipment for the handling of these items.

Environmental Health

Immunisation

Council continues to provide a comprehensive immunisation service. Monthly clinics are held at the Local Government Centre. Vaccinations are carried out at pre schools, kindergartens, Child Care Centres and the two High Schools in accordance with the NHMRC immunisation schedule, by Council's

immunisation nurse. 854 High School students have received vaccinations this year.

Meningococcal vaccinations were carried out in the high schools this year also.

Food Safety

The new Food Act 2001 is now in operation in South Australia which replaces the old Food Act and Food Hygiene Regulations. The new Food Act incorporates the relevant sections of the ANZFA Food Standards Code in regards to the structural standards of food premises and food hygiene and provides authorised officers with much greater powers in regards to the enforcement of Food Standards within the State.

This is a positive benefit of the new Food Act. A requirement of the Food Act is for all food businesses to register their business details with their local Council. The completion date for this has now been reached so that all food businesses should have notified Council. The new Act also provides an option for Councils to charge a fee for routine inspections. At this stage Council has not adopted this option.

Information sessions on the new Act were held at 7 locations in the past 12 months which provided food hygiene information and outlined the new requirements for community groups, including church groups and groups involved in charitable activities.

Council is currently reviewing its resources in relation to providing adequate levels of food premises inspections to ensure the safety of food sold and to reduce the chances of a food poisoning incident occurring from a notified business with the Council area.

Public and Environmental Health

To maintain adequate levels of public and environmental health in the community, Council's Environmental Health Officers have been engaged in the following activities in the past twelve months.

- Provision of sharps containers to the public
- Communicable disease interviews and investigations

- Mosquito surveillance, education and control
- Public swimming pool testing
- Approval of new septic tank systems and upgrades to existing systems. In the past 12 months Council has approved 80 new septic tank systems and 35 upgrades.
- Pollution prevention and control incorporating odours, insects, animal wastes and stormwater
- Water sampling from public facilities
- DrumMuster chemical container collections
- Reporting to Department of Health
- Inspections of commercial premises

Chemical Collection

In the past 12 months Council has run two DrumMuster chemical container collections. Approximately 3000 containers were collected at the October 2003 collection. DrumMuster is a program funded by the Commonwealth Government for the collection and recycling of eligible used farm chemical containers.

Waste Oil Disposal

Council's waste oil facility continues to receive increasing volumes of used automotive oils. This is a free service to the public as waste automotive oils can be deposited for no charge. Oil filters and oily rags can also be deposited for recycling for a small fee to offset the cost of having these items recycled.

