

OUTBACK GRAVE MARKERS Inc

CHAIRMANS REPORT

AGM 5 SEPTEMBER 2020

Well it has certainly been a different year for us all with the intervention of COVID-19 and the restrictions placed on us all to make sure we kept the scourge at bay as best we could.

The restrictions which made travel between regions impossible for a period, had a major impact on the Leonora trip planned by Trevor. However, as soon as the restrictions were lifted, the trip was undertaken with stunning results on both the plaque installation side and the funding side.

Even with the restrictions in place, Outback Grave Markers Inc has made some rather big steps in the development of the organisation and these are bringing with them some considerable challenges.

The workload that is being placed on our volunteers is increasing dramatically with the requirement to satisfy the visions of the Shires and other providers of funds. OGM needs to provide tangible returns to the Shires in particular so they can meet the requirements of the rules of acquittal that they are bound by to pass audit requirements.

The volume of work being generated by taking on cemeteries for marking is quite daunting. However, the manufacture of plaques being subcontracted to Westcare has relieved some of the load from Trevor and his team. The increase in the research requirement has been exponential as Glennis, Julie and Lorraine need to verify all entries prior to the plaques being made.

It is vital that we do not overload any of our volunteers as this can lead to burn out and even loss of a vital resource. All please be aware of the fact that this work is meant to be a hobby not a full-time job!!!

We have been lucky in as much as OGM seems to be gathering people around it who are prepared to help in many ways, from fund raising to research and spreading the word to discovering grave sites. Our thanks to those who make this work a little easier on the core team.

During the year we have had publicity in many areas. Trevor has a regular spot on 100.1FM with Jenny Seaton where he tells tales from the website in a manner that generates phone calls and emails from listeners with stories and others seeking information about OGM or assistance with relatives' graves.

Some of this has led to other approaches from media for interviews and in the case of the Department of Justice, an approach about them doing an article in the "In House" magazine about OGM. The lady who rang Trevor about this went on the website and then told Trevor she could not do the article owing to some of the wording on our plaques which was not consistent with current community expectations and Departmental Standards.

This has raised a serious matter which is associated with our rapid growth and one we must address if we are to continue with our growth and provide the shires with appropriate signage at each site where we install plaques.

It is timely that this has occurred, as the growth of OGM has been so rapid we are struggling to keep up with the regulatory and "Social Licence to Operate" requirements but we must pay head to these to ensure the continued progress of the organisation and the protection of our sponsors.

Many of you may think that this somewhat over the top but if OGM is to seek funding from any corporate body, be it shires, mining companies, charitable trusts or the like, it is a requirement that we observe these guidelines.

To assist in the management of all these requirements, a set of Protocols is being developed with two more presented to the Committee last month and accepted for adoption by OGM. These protocols are for:

1. Interstate Branches: The formation of interstate groups individuals affiliated with OGM Inc WA and using our good will and resources to do the work within their state.
2. Research Protocol: This protocol is designed to provide assurance that OGM has exhausted all research sources to make sure the data used for the production of plaques is as accurate as possible.

OGM is a Corporate Body and with that comes responsibilities such as Duty of Care and Social Responsibility. This means we need to take care of you all and the move to get Personal Location Devices and Hand-Held UHF radios is part of this along with the Volunteers Insurance and Public Liability Insurance. It also raises the issue of Identity and the need to have photo ID cards for all members, particularly those going out to install plaques and enter properties. This issue was raised last year and needs to be acted on now as it has been reported that some people have purported to be from OGM when entering a mining lease when they were not OGM representatives. To assist in this, we will need a photo of you for Lorraine to be able to produce the cards.

Going forward OGM must make sure that the planning and preparation for Projects is well defined and that scopes of work are prepared before work begins. This was a request from Menzies Shire as a condition of the funding allocation. Once again, this gives the shires documentation to back up the generous funding they are giving OGM.

OGM has a Rolling 5 Year Plan that requires updating annually and when this is done in the next month or so it will provide not only a blue print for the future direction of the group but will also reveal how OGM has performed against the initial goals and timelines set a while ago. This analysis will highlight any areas of concern and provide another score sheet for presentation to potential supporters in funding proposals.

As I said last year, it is an honour to be part of this group and a very humbling experience to see the way in which OGM is appreciated in the community, particularly in the Goldfields region. Thank you to all of you for your support of OGM and the time and effort that you put into it. I trust you get enjoyment from the work you do and the friendships you form as you travel around.

My thanks to the committee for your tolerance in the difficult period we have sustained this year and I look forward to OGM moving forward in a steady and considered manner for many years to come, marking the sites, publishing the stories and preserving the history of this great state.

Outback Grave Markers Inc has a profile that needs to be protected and cherished and it is up to all of our members and volunteers to protect this image as much as possible when out and about or communicating with the community in any way.

Well done to all and thank you again for your efforts.



Alex Aitken

Chairman 2019-20