

# BURNERS OF SYDNEY AND SURROUNDS INC



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 9 February 2020, 4.30pm  
Tandem Bar Newtown

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### ATTENDEES

<b>Ariane Blanch - Chair</b>	<b>Madeline Fountain</b>	<b>Andrew Lau</b>
<b>Allison Mulle - Treasurer</b>	<b>Kat Cowling</b>	<b>Alicia Boyd</b>
<b>Lyndal Moore - Secretary</b>	<b>Dale Matthews</b>	<b>Eman Galanos</b>
<b>Leanna Pugliese</b>	<b>Natalie Corn</b>	<b>Belinda Parkes</b>
<b>Layla McNeill</b>	<b>Bea Pierce</b>	

### MEETING OPENED AT 4.42PM/1642

### AGENDA

#### 1. **Opening address - Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country**

I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal of the Eora Nation, the traditional custodians of this land and pay my respects to the Elders both past and present. Sovereignty was never ceded.

#### 2. **Confirmation and adoption of minutes from AGM held on 31 March 2019**

Ariane moved to adopt minutes, Layla seconded, motion passed.

#### 3. **Chair Report**

Now in our second year, we now have 76 financial members. It has been a year of continuing to put policies and procedures in place, and has been stifled by the lack of Treasurer and Secretary for a while.



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We now have a new Treasurer and Secretary in place so a hell of a lot has happened since they took over the roles. We are looking forward to sorting that out and getting our housekeeping in order to make things easier going forward.

Decom was amazing, thank you Dale and Kat. 420 people attended and we made a profit of \$11500.

All the goals we wrote down after last Decom we achieved, and we made new new mistakes.

Thank you again Dale and Kat for all the work that you did.

Increased art grants from \$900 to \$3000, that went towards 5 projects. 4 of which came to Decom in one form or another.

Newcastle sub-committee had another huge year. They moved and found a new home for Sparkhaus. Leanna will speak more about that and give a report.

We have carried on holding Public Liability insurance that covers all events held by BOSS members, and a few theme camps have made use of that this year.

Zoom account used extensively, and we are looking at increasing that subscription as there was a traffic jam leading up to Burning Seed. We may consider having a second account so that two meetings can happen at the same time.

We are still looking into making the membership process smoother.



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Otherwise, thank you to everyone on the committee for all of your efforts, speaking on behalf of myself and Aidan.

Allison moved to accept the report, Leanna seconded, motion passed.

[View the Chair Report here](#)

#### **4. Treasurer Report**

Income last year was just over \$15000 which is increased from last year.

Spent \$3349 on grants in total, including art grants and Decom contributions.

5 art grants which Ariane already mentioned, and 78 memberships.

Treasurer numbers different to the Chair as Treasurer counted payments during the Financial Year, and the Chair used numbers as of the AGM date.

Bank account currently has \$24018 dollars.

Lau moved to accept the report, Madeline seconded, motion passed.

#### **5. Newcastle Subcommittee Report**

Newcastle is doing great and Sparkhaus is doing great.

Sparkhaus is a burner run community hub, and Makerspace. We offer Theme Camp storage at competitive rates (below corporate rates), as well as private studio spaces for people to build, create, make...whatever they like. Email for more info, check out [www.sparkhaus.studio](http://www.sparkhaus.studio), or follow on facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/sparkhausstudio/>

Sparkhaus has a couple perks for BOSS members

1. You can become a member for a discounted rate of \$35 p/month instead of \$40 p/month.



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2. BOSS members are entitled to one free studio day per year in the makerspace, please email [info@sparkhaus.studio](mailto:info@sparkhaus.studio) for more info (you will need to schedule in advance).

It can be difficult for Sydneysiders to get to the makerspace, but it's worth it to be able to use all the tools, especially if you have a big project.

Newcastle is hoping to do a pre-compression, or another event in the near future.

Allison moved to accept the report, Lyndal seconded, motion passed.

### **6. Appointment of Committee Members**

All positions declared open. Nominations have been received for all positions.

The nominations are:

- Ariane & Eman - Co-Chairs
- Lyndal - Secretary
- Allison - Treasurer
- Layla, Lau and Leanna - Ordinary Members

As there will be no voting we will just accept the nominees in one go and ask if anyone has any objections based on constitutional reasons. No objections raised.

All positions declared as filled until next AGM, which we are looking at holding later in 2020.

Ariane moved to accept all candidates, Lyndal seconded, motion passed



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### 7. **Decompression Report**

We have a draft afterburn report ready and once everyone has had time to review and are happy with it, we will publish it.

It was a very successful year from a revenue perspective, and from a perspective of bringing everyone together in a venue which had a much more 'burnery' feeling.

It had its own challenges, but the results speak for themselves in that we sold bang on the same amount of tickets as the previous year.

The key measures of success were to decide on a date and communicate that to the community early in 2019. Which was done.

A save the date was sent out, but unsure if that was helpful or unhelpful. People thought that it was helpful for planning and for theme camps, but doesn't make a difference to ticket sales.

Wanted to choose a venue early in 2019, and wanted one venue for the whole day that was preferably unlicensed. This was achieved.

Ticketing site worked well. Added a donation button to the ticket sales website, as we missed out on donations last year. We only ended up receiving an additional \$290 in donations this year, but the cost of tickets was also higher.

And if we proceed with adding the donation option to the ticket sales website we need to be clear as to where the money is going. It looked to some as though it was a compulsory donation and confused people who were buying tickets. Therefore the donation section of the website needs to be squeaked



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Wanted a better communication with security at venue than the previous venue used, as there were issues with security for the last event.

Wanted to meet and exceed profit from previous year. Previous year was \$8000, and this year was \$11500. The increase was due to increased ticket cost and also decreased venue cost.

The results of the survey contributed to the afterburn report for the Decom event, but there were only 19 respondents to the survey.

Key recommendations for next year:

- Book the venue early again, and use the same venue if possible.
- Another possibility for venue is the Factory Theatre, however it is much more expensive and would require a bigger marketing plan, and to market to people outside of the burning community.
- Engage artists and theme camps prior to Burning Seed.
- Clearer guidelines regarding contributor grants. There was confusion surrounding submitting receipts, rather than engaging a business entity and invoicing for payment. The process would be different if we were engaging a business, as the expectation of the supply of goods/services would be much higher, and we would need to offer the option to supply to multiple businesses (e.g. via tender process).
- Possibility for dedicated decom arts grants. Because a lot of people wanted a lot more art, a lot more interactive art, and more performances. The difficulty with the venue used is that we can't include any fire into art or performances, which is a big part of the burner community.

People loved the Saturday venue, and also the Sunday venue which has been used for previous events and is known and loved.



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For the Manly Dam venue, cars were locked in and one structure remained onsite overnight and was removed the next day. This meant that the Park Rangers thought all attendees camped overnight, which wasn't the case.

We would be allowed to use Manly Dam but we would need to communicate better and ensure that people do not stay overnight.

Check in went smoothly, with the only issue being that because we were at the same venue people didn't realise they had to check in again between the afternoon and evening events. Possible solution is to have two lines at the entry for the evening event, where people who attended in the afternoon and already have a wristband go one way to get checked in again, and anyone attending for the first time that day, go another way to receive wrist band.

Ticket availability kept being extended on the night as we tracked attendance numbers compared to venue capacity. Would prefer a more automated system for next year.

Door shifts at Manly Dam were challenging as people turn up on Sunday expecting to pay cash, and expecting half price tickets. We need to reiterate in all marketing that it's one ticket for all events. Need to be clear that it is an event to fundraise for BOSS, therefore even if you can only attend one of the events over three days, the ticket price needs to be viewed as a donation towards BOSS.

80% of survey respondents say one ticket for both days/all 3 events is preference.

People were frustrated that they bought a ticket prior to the BOSS member discount being issued. Kat confirmed that the link to ticket sales was sent out



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prior but some people didn't receive the email. There was no refund offered for people who had done that, and as there was no Secretary there was no one across that and it will be covered for next year's event.

There was an issue with the mail server sending out the venue address to ticket holders. The issue was fixed but definitely needs to be fixed for next year.

Question was asked if there is a facility to log in and view ticket purchase. We think that only being with admin access can do that, so people can request that information if required.

We received extra data this year due to check in facility, however numbers are not entirely accurate due to confusion around process. There were 120 people checked in for the day event, 284 people for the evening event, and 107 people for the Sunday event.

Clickers suggested to collect numbers, but particularly at Manly Dam this option won't work as the toilets are located outside of the venue space therefore people were constantly coming and going.

There needs to be a better door set up at Manly Dam, such as a table or desk, to capture people entering the event on Sunday and give the event a more official vibe to help with ticket discount expectations.

Shutting down between day and night events worked well, didn't make families feel like they were being kicked out. Also meant that people who were attending both day and evening could go somewhere and eat between events.

Lighting wasn't as strong at the evening event as it could have been. It could have 'popped' more. Probably due to the fact that a lot of theme camps



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couldn't bring along additional decor. That was also due to theme camps not knowing where their equipment was after packing up after Burning Seed. Could be resolved with more planning pre-Burning Seed so theme camps keep some equipment aside and out of storage when they pack up at Burning Seed.

No DJs inside during the day event (just background music), instead display art, BOSS art grant recipients, and to hold workshops inside during the day event.

The program was well received. Difficult to please everyone. Interactive day workshops were great. Though more kids activities needed. Samba workshop was a highlight. We had a lower expected theme camp engagement level. Lots of DJs offered. Survey results said more art at Saturday day event, and interactive art. And more performance at the Saturday night event.

Fire is not possible at the venue. There are flammable materials inside, and the venue operator does not want fire outside in the courtyard which will draw attention to the event and could result in being shut down by authorities.

Belinda volunteered to do an aerial show at the next Decom.

Ideal outcome for theme camp participation is that if they can contribute in other ways, spots will be made available to their DJs.

Kids camp has a large demographic spread so future planning needed to engage camp members to contribute to Decom.

Only 10-12 kids were in attendance. Need more activities to engage kids. Kat ran only kid specific activity (the chocolate game), and one kid brought along games to play with.



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Bea and Adam would love to contribute more live music at the next event.

Also need to think about how to engage teenagers during the Saturday day event.

Layla suggested offering a Decom art grant for young people. Everyone agreed that that is a fantastic idea.

Feedback from the survey was overwhelmingly positive. 88% of survey respondents gave a 4 or 5 for 'how you would rate the Decom event'. All respondents raved about the venue.

Event promotion included save the date, call outs for volunteers and contributors, and weekly facebook posts.

Paid facebook boosts to anyone who visited the BOSS page, which seemed to work well as there was an increase in ticket sales each time there was a scheduled boost.

Did not have a cohesive media strategy, needs some additional forward planning for that to happen. However with no media strategy the same number of tickets were sold as last year.

Stickers were handed out at Burning Seed. Need more presence at Burning Seed but what we are doing so far is effective. Possibility for more schwag to be given to NSW theme camps to hand out.

Feedback from Red Earth Radio has not yet been received, as they did a live broadcast from the Saturday day event. Understanding was that things went well and they were happy.



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Question asked if there was a MOOP map, which there wasn't. A MOOP sweep was done at Manly Dam and the only issue was that the structure was left overnight, but was removed the next day. It was a miscommunication within Sunset Island camp.

Suggestion for bottle deposit scheme collection, however it is not possible at the Mothership venue as they have their own recycling program. We don't get charged a cleaning fee because of that.

Recycling bins that were used at Seed could be brought along to Manly Dam next year.

Extra bins were purchased for use at Mothership, however we need to focus more on ensuring Decom attendees take out what they bring in.

More targeted posts containing information about dedicated topics, rather than including multiple pieces of information could be part of the social media and comms plan for next year.

Reports can be sent to Richard at Burning Man Australia to be added to that website. So that all Australian burner event information can be found in one place.

Thank you to everyone on the team. Everyone worked together cohesively.

Ariane moved to accept the report, Madeline seconded, motion passed.

### **8. Discussion - BOSS Grant Program**

Question was put forward to members - What do we want to spend our money on?



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We made a profit of approximately \$10000 once overheads are taken out. We are essentially running to a model that the profit we make one year we then spend the next year. And we have built up a buffer so that we have money in the account should there be a year that decom is unsuccessful. We have already had some suggestions throughout this meeting, such as Decom specific art grants, kids grants.

We have also had suggestions that we would like to run some workshops that members get for a nominal fee, or members entry is free and non-members need to purchase tickets to attend.

Other previous suggestions are low income tickets for Burning Seed and other burns. Art grants for other burns, so far our art grants have only been for Burning Seed.

Question asked as to what the policy is with the overlap for grants given by Burning Seed Org. The response was that priority is given to projects not covered by other grants - e.g. art cars, which are not covered by Burning Seed grants.

Madeline doesn't want to exclude people who have already received a grant from Burning Seed as their grants don't cover the entire project.

Ariane wants to support Northern NSW members taking art to Modifyre.

Ideas for practical workshops, instead of creative workshops: how to hook up a water pump, theme camp set-up, camping set-up, dealing with law enforcement, solar power, programmable led, and el wire.



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Layla wanted feedback on the grant amount. First grants given were \$300 but feedback was that that is not enough to make it worth while applying. The amount was increased to \$800 and received more positive feedback.

Suggestion to increase art grants to \$1000 maximum. That amount is equal to the small art grants given by Burning Seed Org. Everyone agreed to increase the amount to \$1000.

Leanna moved to increase grant maximum, Dale seconded. Motion passed.

Question asked as to how projects are chosen for funding, response was that to date all projects have been funded due to the low application numbers. As the interest and applications increase, there will be an assessment criteria applied which is outlined in the application process.

The main expectation is that the artwork, or some form of or subset of, is brought to Decom.

Belinda asked if performance art would be included as an option to apply for a grant. The response was it is possible but its limited as to what the grant would fund and full details would need to be discussed separately.

Alternatively the out of pocket expenses could be reimbursed as a Decom contributor grant.

### **9. Any other business**

Ariane flagged that the AGMs that have been held to date have been held at the wrong time of year and we need to change them. They need to be held within 6 months of the end of the financial year, which is also a really

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inconvenient time for the burning community. Therefore moving forward they will be held sometime at the end of July or early August.

Members should also note that at the next AGM the BOSS Committee will be putting forward some special resolutions will be put forward for voting, including changing the entity to an Incorporated entity.

**MEETING CLOSED AT 5.59PM/1759**