

## **Inquiry into Triabunna Woodchip Mill & Future Development Opportunities for the Triabunna Region**

### **Attention**

The Secretary  
Community Development Committee  
House of Assembly  
Parliament House  
Hobart, Tas 7000

### **Submission from Jane Tenniswood**

452 Strip Rd.,  
Little Swanport, Tas 7190  
Email [windsong@skymesh.com.au](mailto:windsong@skymesh.com.au)  
Ph 0362577583

### **Introduction**

I welcome the opportunity to present a late submission as, having attended part of the Inquiry and read some of the submissions and press commentary, I am concerned about the focus on the past rather than the future. In this submission I would like to comment on Terms of Reference (b) & (c). I am not speaking formally on behalf of any organisation. Prior to moving to the East Coast in 1998, I was an alderman in the Burnie City Council for five years and chair of the Burnie Business Enterprise Centre for four years whilst Burnie, as an industrial town, was facing dramatic changes in the forestry industry and industry closures such as Tioxide.

From this background I understand some of the grief and anger surrounding the demise of the wood chip industry in Triabunna. However, prior to this Inquiry, I believe most in the Triabunna community were adjusting and beginning to move on and many were, and are, excited about the passion, commitment and vision Graeme Wood is bringing to the Municipality.

### **Past & Current Background Relevant to Submission**

Part Owner of Wind Song Bed & Breakfast at Little Swanport  
Voluntary Project Manager of "The Village", Triabunna  
Project Manager of "Communities for Children" Village program  
Chair of Blooming Tasmania Association Inc.  
Regional Director representing the East Coast on the Area Consultative Committee, Tasmania now Regional Australia 2003-2008

## **What was happening in Triabunna before Triabunna Investments Acquired the Mill**

- Triabunna, like many regional towns across Australia was heavily dependent on a forestry industry and slow to realise the impact the gradual demise of the woodchip industry would have on the area
- Gunns had over the years been steadily reducing workforce and four years ago Greg L'Estrange, chief executive of Gunns Ltd., announced that "the clear felling of native forests was no longer economically sustainable".
- Many log truck drivers complained that Gunns were "screwing them into the ground" with rates they were being paid
- There was an air of pessimism over the town

## **My Specific Experience with Graeme Wood & Spring Bay Mill Development**

Invited to media launch as Chair of Blooming Tasmania

Attended first event in the "Tin Shed"

Toured the Mill Site through "Stepping into the Future"

Met with Mill Manager, Stuart Loone at The Village re connecting projects

Participated in "Triabunna Tomorrow" & provided exhibition space at The Village for some of design work from the Project

## **What has Graeme Wood Already Contributed to Triabunna & Surrounds**

At the media launch Graeme Wood outlined his vision, whilst at the same time acknowledging the past history of the site. The first event held in a tin shed on the site was a musical one and sold out. It was connected to MONA FOMA & Brian Ritchie was part of this event. Many locals attended and mingled with the guests who travelled across the State to attend. Many of the proposed projects Graeme Wood spoke about, are not about short term tourist visitation but are aimed at the growing market often identified as "life - long learners" engaging in culinary pursuits, art workshops, and other activities which would encourage longer stays in the area bringing benefits to many small businesses beyond the high peak tourist season.

Through the Graeme Wood Foundation, Triabunna District School has received funding for a school garden project based on the successful Stephanie Alexander model that Kirsha Kaechele from MONA is initiating in some Tasmanian schools.

Graeme Wood & the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council have funded the "Triabunna Tomorrow" project led by the two architects for the Mill project, Ross Brewin & Anna Gilby, who are also lecturers at Monash, and Helen Norrie from UTAS. The teams of young architectural students engaged in extensive community consultation and presented many ideas building on existing town features. This work is well documented. Ross & Anna have also done work at MONA. This project has allowed people to "dream" about possible futures and share their visions with talented young architectural students who have built on what they have learnt from the many community members who participated in the project.

In my role as Chair of Blooming Tasmania, I have heard directly, from key personnel from Royal Tasmania Botanical Garden already working in partnership with Graeme Wood, about how significant and exciting the proposed Botanical Garden at the site could be for the future of the area and Tasmania. The Tasmanian Bushland Gardens at Buckland would benefit from this project as well as its members having great expertise to offer.

At a recent Chamber meeting Graeme Woods, as a guest speaker, showed a chair made from plantation timber that could be possibly produced at his proposed Innovation Hub obviously leading to direct employment opportunities for local community members.

### **Moving Forward - *What else is happening in Triabunna!!!***

- **Real Estate**-David Metcalfe, The General Manager of Glamorgan Spring Bay Council, reported in a recent Council Meeting that there had been a 27% increase in the sale of houses in Triabunna in recent months.
- The IGA Supermarket has expanded and the owners have recently built a new home in Triabunna
- Maria Island Walks continues to win Tourism awards & accolades & Maria Island itself will benefit directly with future links to the Mill Development
- **Training** - There is increasing demand from the local community for training opportunities as there has been virtually no training available since the Skill Centre closed about four years ago. The Skill Centre has been outfitted with Federal funding and is part of the South East Training initiative.

- **The Orford Spring Bay Chamber of Commerce** - Membership of the Chamber has grown from 14 to over 70 members in the last year and the new President of the Chamber, Debbie Wisby presented a submission to this Inquiry. The majority of members actively support the new Mill development. At a consultation with Minister Matthew Groom at the Gateway in Orford, several months ago, one business member, summed up the feeling around the table with the statement "The new Spring Bay Mill project is the best thing that has ever happened in Triabunna!"
- **East Coast Tourism** - Under the dynamic leadership of David Read and CEO Ruth Dowty, this team is strategically building on increasing tourist visitation and has just engaged in a proactive campaign to increase tourist numbers in the off season. A very exciting tourism venture has already begun on the "back" of the Mill proposal with the neighbouring farm property owner's purchase of a bus for farm tours and the renovation of a cottage for visitor accommodation. They plan much more for the future and have given the ex Marinova site for use by the Spring Bay Community Boat Shed, now under the incorporation of ERDO. This group is linked to the Wooden Boat Guild and participates in the Wooden Boat Festival.
- **The Village** - In 2003, East Coast Regional Development Organisation (ERDO) bought a large parcel of land opposite the school in Triabunna. In 2006 ERDO received funding to develop The Village receiving \$60,000.00 from the Tasmanian Community Fund and \$68,000 from Regional Partnerships. The Village, is a community space in Triabunna, based on the Creative Living Centre model in Burnie. The Creative Paper Mills, now The Maker's, Burnie, was initially established through the Creative Living Centre as an employment opportunity for young people. A key aim of the Village is to establish a centre for change that promotes and develops solutions to living in the 21st century. **To this end, ERDO and Stuart Loone, current Manager of Spring Bay Mill, have met to explore ways of working collaboratively to develop our projects to benefit the area and Tasmania.** The Village, formally opened in October 2012 includes an art gallery, community kitchen, community gardens, paper making shed and outdoor pizza oven. A Village market is run on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month and this

income significantly contributes to a self- sustaining model. The Village has its own newsletter, printed by Glamorgan Spring Bay Council, facebook page & a website <http://triabunnavillage.com.au> Training organisations and many groups use the space & a partnership with Break a Day Enterprise Centre is leading to some exciting workshops being held in November, one of which "Townpreneurship" will build on the Triabunna Tomorrow Project and be led by Dr Colin Jones, senior lecturer, Faculty of Enterprise at UTAS. Other workshops will focus on "China Ready", "Customer Service" and the emerging new Aqua Culture Opportunities.

- **East Coast Network** -With Colony 47, ERDO facilitates the East Coast Network which now has over one hundred organisations and community members connected who represent the three tiers of government, training bodies, allied Health services and organisations such as Rural Alive & Well. The aim of this network is to identify existing resources to avoid duplication of services and in involving the community in decision making and in management of these processes.
- **Stepping into the Future**-The East Coast Network recently ran a successful employment and training expo at The Village "Stepping into the Future". Forty five booths were set up all with wireless access due to the recent connection to NBN. A visit to the Spring Bay Mill Site was arranged in the afternoon and a night forum with futuristic speakers held at the Triabunna District School. Senator Eric Hutchinson, Minister Rene Hidding & Tania Rattray Wagner MP attended this event. Planning is already underway for a similar expo for 2015.

## **Conclusion**

Through all the above and much more, Graeme Wood has personally demonstrated his ability to consult, connect to community and successful relevant stakeholders such as MONA, Royal Tasmania Botanical Gardens and UTAS. He creates optimism, demonstrates leadership, a capacity to embrace change and a willingness to invest in this amazing island.

I believe Tasmanians need to nurture such developers and work with them not against them for the sake of our ever changing futures in challenging economic times.