

## WELCOME

A big welcome to all our members and supporters. We hope you find our newsletter valuable and informative. Please feel free to provide feedback and advice on any items you see or may wish to add.

We held the Inaugural Annual General Meeting in Toowoomba on 13 July 2013. A Management Committee is now formed with members from across the state:

- Stanthorpe: Bob Johnson (Chair) Mary Rofe (IT Officer), Sue Johnson (Membership Secretary)
- Redcliffe: Colin Hewett (Vice Chair),
- Monto: Jack Muller (Treasurer),
- Boonah: Joanna Kesteven (Secretary), Joseph Monsour (Committee Member).
- Childers: David Horner (Committee Member),
- Caboolture: Rodney Hansen (Committee Member),
- The Hills: Geoff McKay (Asst Secretary),
- Waroo: Chris Ellem (Committee Member)

**THANK YOU :** The Committee would like to thank Lex Dow from Monto for his invaluable assistance on the Interim Steering Committee. Lex had valuable insights and contributed to the establishment of our organisation.

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## OUR FIRST ACTION – Commission of Review

A popular idea shared at the Inaugural meeting promoted by several speakers including Lex and Professor Scott Prasser, was for the QLGRA to work hard towards the establishment of a government review of the effectiveness of amalgamated councils. Any company that undergoes a major restructure normally undertakes a review as part of its best practice. However neither Labor nor the LNP have plans to do same. 5 years since amalgamations and very little evidence has emerged to support the original argument. In fact many Councils have only managed to reduce services, increase their debt and dis-empower communities.

Thus inspired QLGRA has now written formally to both Minister Crisafulli and Premier Campbell seeking same. Various QLGRA members have forwarded copies of the letter to Minister Crisafulli to their local member. If you would like to contact your local member please do not hesitate to contact Joanna on [joeandjoanna@bigpond.com](mailto:joeandjoanna@bigpond.com).

### **QLGRA**

#### **Primary goals:**

**I. To promote community acceptable natural Local Government boundaries that reflect locally held beliefs about community and identity, and provide local amenity and service;**

**II. Recognition in the State Constitution of Local Government as a legal entity with a clearly articulated role in governing, such that it can only be changed after a majority vote in a properly constituted referendum;**

**III. Retention and maintenance of reasonable levels of State and Federal Grants and Subsidies to support the necessary and important role of Local Government in providing and supporting rural and regional infrastructure serving not only local communities but also the state and the nation.**

#### **Strategic goals:**

**IV. To promote the benefits of effective, community based 'local' government throughout the general public and as an area of learning and study in tertiary institutions;**

**V. To share the commonality of our cause with all amalgamated shires and promote the sharing of strategy and resources to overcome barriers to de-amalgamation and boundary changes.**

*"An alliance of Queensland organisations and individuals aimed at re-empowering communities.*

*Its main objectives are to lobby strongly for State Government (a) to recognise local authority based on community of interest that reflects commonly held beliefs about community and identity, local amenity and service, and (b) to also articulate constitutional recognition of Local government in the **Queensland Constitution** such that it can be changed only by a referendum."*

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## WEBSITE CREATED

As a group we recognised the value of an effective website. Hence May Rofe (one of cleverer IT savvy members) is now working hard on the website. It's address is [qlgralliance.org.au](http://qlgralliance.org.au) and please take a look. Mary is keen to hear from you on what you would like to see in the Website and would love any articles of interest, links to other sites, photos of your bit of Queensland, activities that your group have undertaken.

## THOUGHTS ON THE FEDERAL ELECTION

Thanks to our Caboolture members and with the impending Federal Election on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2013 the Management Committee has received advice that the Palmer United Party have expressed support for the aims of the QLGRA. **Other Candidates known to support de-amalgamation are Barnaby Joyce .....Matt Wright (Independant for Wright)**

## CURRENT PROJECTS UNDERWAY

- Constitution – Geoff McKay from the Hills Group has worked hard to produce a new Constitution for the group as we work towards formal incorporation . As soon as this is available we will forward to you.
- Communication Technologies: the Management Committee has been using SKYPE and VENTRILO to meet. Neither fully meets our needs, but once we have a system that works effectively we look forward to inviting other members to join our meeting. If anyone has experienced a web conferencing system that is affordable, accessible for MAC and Windows users and can take up 15 to 20 people at a time please let a committee member know.
- Media Guidelines: Chair Bob Johnson and Vice Chair Colin Hewett are working on guideline for members to use when promoting or talking to the media about the QLGRA .

## FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

It is hoped to produce this newsletter on a monthly basis. Your contributions and ideas are welcome. Please send any items to Joanna at [joeandjoanna@bigpond.com](mailto:joeandjoanna@bigpond.com) by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September for inclusion in the next issue.

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