

MASS ISLAND PROTEST!

**Saturday November 8th 9am Macleay Island 2pm Russell Island
STOP THE PARKING FEES NOW!**

The Mayor and Councillor Townsend will be attending Macleay Island on 8th November at the Progress Association Hall at 9 am then will be at the Russell Island Community Hall at 2pm. **Now is the time for us to protest at the way we are being treated.** We need as many people as possible to attend and **protest LOUDLY** against the proposed parking fees and the continued taxing of the islands and giving little back. We need to make them hear very clearly that we have had enough and that they must treat us fairly.

Let's have the biggest demonstration the islands have ever had!

Time to show our solidarity and demonstrate to the Council that will no longer accept the way we have been treated and we demand justice in having our rate money spent on the islands, every last cent! I am going to **both** meetings. I have registered on the council website that **Mark Edwards & Friends** will be attending both meetings.

Make some signs, gather your friends and encourage all your neighbours to attend.

Be there! Prepare to demonstrate! Make our views heard loud and clear!

WE HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF REDLAND CITY COUNCIL

Time to decide our own direction

The Great Island Debate & Have Your Say was a fantastic success that exceeded our expectations with approx. 250 people attending. Your kind donations have enabled the production and distribution of this flyer. Russell Island Community Hall was packed and there was good representation from all the islands. We have a wonderful family of island residents and at meetings like this, I feel privileged to be amongst you. Whilst there is a divergence of opinions on the importance of what needs to be done on the islands, the overriding consensus is that we need to take more control in determining our future and that the current system of non-representation will continue to rob us of our rate money and deliver little in return. **We have real issues that are not being addressed.** If we have true control of our rates payments, we as a community, would be able to determine our own issues and solve them. But that is unlikely to change in the short term and we will continue to pay for mainland infrastructure unless we commence a political process to deliver island control over where our money is spent.

To gain control over our destiny there are several strategies that need to be implemented.

- Lobby for a reallocation of spending in the council budgets so the islands receive back what we contribute. (This will require us to be active in each councillor's electorate to support those on our side and make re-election difficult for those against us.) Three years to the next election may seem long but it is a fraction of the time that we have been waiting and our campaign must begin now. We should also consider the benefits of a councillor representing **only the islands**, not including Redland Bay.
- The Mayor does not seem to understand island issues. We are the largest off-shore community in Australia (excluding Tasmania) and I don't believe the dynamics of island community is understood by the Mayor. We need to either enlighten her to be a true supporter of our cause, not just in words, and our protest on the 8th November will be just a taste of what is to come.
- We need to lobby the State Government for Island control. The government could either instruct the council to return a fixed percentage of income they receive to the islands, create a sub-council for the islands represented by an island committee **or create a separate island's council**. We can't do a worse job by ourselves that the Redland City Council does. There are many remote councils throughout Australia that have less population yet receive far greater funding. We are an island community with separate needs to the mainland and our geographic location should not be the issue at point.
- The Federal Government should also be a focus point to lobby for funding and special recognition of our needs. We should also take our concerns regarding unfair treatment to bodies such as the Human Rights Commission to raise awareness of our plight.
- We also need media, media and media. The islands need to develop a PR arm that works with media providing human interest stories regarding the unfair treatment of the islands that can be used by media groups throughout Australia.

These sound like drastic steps and indeed they are. However after 35 years of being robbed by our council, with our rates set to rise up to 40% more and get nothing in return, to watch people among our island family get sick because of the dust and now for parking fees that will financially cripple us.....**enough is enough!**

For legal reasons, we will need to incorporate a new not for profit body that will represent this cause. The cause will be to gain control over our rates payments so that every other island body, group and organisation will have the ability to access funds without begging to the mainland. We won't have any issue of what needs to be done, that is the decision of what you the island residents want. Our focus is to secure the money, in whatever way needs to be done; so that the money that is currently being sent to the mainland stays here on the islands. We will become the organisation that seeks to get your money returned and either put back into your pockets via rate reductions or spent on the islands the way that you want it to be spent.

If some of you the time and expertise to set up this incorporated body, would you please email me at mark@interport.com.au. I will pay for the registration of the body.

Our new website: Many thanks to Brian Atkin for opening and managing a website for you to view what is taking place in our struggle against the council. It also has a forum so we can discuss issues that affect you. The results of "Have Your Say" are also on the website.

Go to :www.moretonbay.biz and click on the Cow!

The best way to contact me is either email: mark@interport.com.au

or by post Mark Edwards P.O. Box 165 Russell Island