



Residents Group

Bay

news

HARDYS BAY RESIDENTS GROUP INC

"WORKING FOR A POSITIVE LIFESTYLE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT IN AND AROUND HARDYS BAY"

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WELCOME TO BAY NEWS

Welcome to our first quarterly issue of Bay News, the newsletter of the Hardys Bay Residents Group Inc.

Our group's commitment to the residents of Hardys Bay and the neighbouring communities is to assist in providing and sustaining a healthy environment and lifestyle. We firmly believe its effectiveness is based on the positive approach of finding solutions rather than seeking objections.

Our blueprint embraces a broad range of issues, of short and long-term consequence, which contain matters of vital relevance to the local community's welfare.

No particular political alliances are sought. The aim is to work positively with all parties for the benefit of all who enjoy the wonderful lifestyle our delightful havens offer.

In this initial issue, Bay News provides a comprehensive review of the various issues the Hardys Bay Residents Group is currently addressing. I would like to thank the many people in our community who are supporting us and working so hard to achieve successful outcomes.

We look forward to receiving your comments on any particular matters of community relevance. These can be forwarded to HBRG at PO Box 4123, Wagstaffe, 2257 or to our website www.hardysbay.com

Sincere good wishes,
Adrian Williams, President
Hardys Bay Residents Group Inc

SALT MARSH MOSQUITOES

Control, not eradication, is Killcare Heights resident Sandy Robinson's formula for coping with the threat posed to the local communities by mosquitoes. In particular, she nominates the salt marsh species, which spreads diseases such as Ross River fever and Barmah Forest virus, as the problematic mosquito, with high numbers found in the Hardys Bay, Killcare and Wagstaffe areas.



Sandy, a member of the Hardys Bay Residents Group, has waged a committed campaign against the mosquito menace for four years since she first moved to the region. Her crusade has gained significantly in momentum in recent times with increasing public awareness being created through broad media recognition of her efforts to introduce a control program and undertakings of financial support from concerned members of the community.

Shortly after settling into their new home, she and her husband, Anthony, discovered that the salt marsh mosquito problem had been prevalent for at least 20 years. Keen to learn more about the insects and the potential dangers they pose to the public, she has gathered information on the subject from the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at Sydney University and the Department of Medical Entomology at Westmead Hospital who manage a salt marsh mosquito program for Sydney Olympic Park authorities in Homebush. Closer to home, Central Coast Health has revealed, in a recently-conducted survey, that there has been almost a threefold increase in Ross River and Barmah Fever outbreaks in the Gosford area from 23 reported cases in 2005 to 80 in 2006.

Sandy Robinson has joined other members of the Hardys Bay Residents Group in spearheading the move to encourage the relevant authorities to apply a protein bacteria larvicide called BTI (bacillus thuringiensis israelinis), a recognised environmentally-safe salt marsh mosquito control agent, in the local areas as recommended to Gosford Council by Westmead Entomology. When tested previously, this remedial strategy emerged with flying colours, significantly controlling a mosquito plague at Sydney Olympic Park.

"For this trial to go ahead here, it must be effected prior to November, at the latest" says Sandy. "We can't afford to delay this vital program any longer. It is a serious health, local business and nuisance issue."

BAYWATCH

Gosford City Council is shortly expected to invite 'expressions of interest' in the installation of a marine sewage pump-out station at a privately-owned marina on Brisbane Water, south of the Rip Bridge.

This follows the abandonment of earlier plans to build the facility on the Hardys Bay public wharf in Araluen Drive.

Gosford mayor, Laurie Maher, backed by Councillor Jim Macfadyen, praised the endeavours and perseverance of the Hardys Bay Residents Group who spearheaded a concerted community drive in which they reinforced their objections by providing realistic alternatives.

August 2006

HARDYS BAY RESIDENTS GROUP - WWW.HARDYSBAY.COM

Oyster Leases

Responding to concerted community pleas throughout an 18-month campaign, the Department of Fisheries, in liaison with the Gosford City Council, gave its seal of approval to the dismantling of derelict oyster leases in Hardys Bay in October of last year.

The long-awaited decision to permit the cleaning-up of the foreshore area along Hardys Bay Parade was greeted with relief by the local community who had endured, for so long, the unsightly appearance of rows of roofing tiles, concrete and rock, which severely blemished one of the most picturesque outlooks on the Brisbane Water.

This eventual blessing from the authorities signalled an immediate call to arms by the community members and work on the offending debris commenced without any further delay. At the front line of operations were local residents, Terry and Kay Feltham, who directed the arduous assignment in conjunction with other community volunteers, and aided by a number of oyster farmers.

The old "tile and rock culture" has consequently been surrendered by the pearl farmers to Fisheries, now known as the Department of Primary Industries. The oyster lease clean-up has featured a broad planning strategy.

Stage One has involved the removal of the roofing tiles, rocks and concrete from the northern side of the extension wharf in Hardys Bay Parade. More than 35 tons of debris have been removed and re-located to create a sea wall in the cul-de-sac near the extension wharf.

In a Stage Two campaign, oyster farmers have removed the bags and lines from the lease which has been passed on to Fisheries. The posts are expected to be removed during the next few months.

The Hardys Bay Residents Group has requested that Fisheries designate this area to an 'orange zone' so that it can no longer be re-worked by oyster/pearl farmers.

Hardys Bay resident, Terry Feltham, has been honoured with a Community Service Award, presented by Woy Woy Rotary. In bestowing the award, it was noted by the donors that he had "contributed greatly to the welfare of the community through his tireless efforts." This follows closely on his significant role in the Hardys Bay oyster leases issue which culminated in such a successful outcome.

Terry's involvement with the leases dates back to June, 2004, when he and his wife, Kay, noticed new oyster fences being erected along their foreshore from the extension wharf, in front of their home in Hardys Bay Parade, to the eastern side of the bay front.

"Along the foreshore of our street were "Rock Leases" which, actually, were not rocks but old terra cotta tiles and slabs of old concrete and debris ... you name it, and they had used it to make up the leases", Terry recalled.

"When we saw the new oyster fences being erected, we started to check what was required in regard to the old leases that were no longer being used. They were supposed to remove any of the old infrastructure from the leases but Fisheries let them get away with it. Consequently, nothing gets cleaned up. They had blocked all access along the street to the bay by erecting this new lease, so for the next 18 months we lobbied the various authorities and the Oyster Farmers to get a permit to clear an area on the northern side of the extension wharf to allow a navigable passage for boats to get to and from the beach in a safe manner. Environmental issues, small fish, marine life ... these were stated objections to our continued requests.

"Ian Crisp, the oyster farmer who erected a new lease is actually farming pearls and has worked in with us. He has been fantastic. Pearls aren't the issue. In fact, pearls have less visual impact than oyster leases and don't attract all the rubbish around them. Ian was a tower of strength. He provided a huge barge when all the removal permits were eventually issued last October and this was used to load up all the derelict rubbish and rocks at low tide. It went on for day after day, week after week. We would be out there in the bay with his barge at 11pm on many occasions and recruited helpers from around the area. Two men, in particular, who provided wonderful support, were Greg Meyer and Noel Gurney. My job, it seemed, was to provide the cold bottles at the end of the shift! "

Terry added: "It has been a rewarding journey when you reflect on what a difference you can make if you really believe in something. From all the kayaking we have done on the bay, it has made us realize what a disgrace the waters have been left in through the actions of some irresponsible people who have just walked away.

"We just want to see the foreshore returned to its natural state so that it can be used by everyone. With community support, it's amazing how many people are prepared to help out. It just takes one person to make that initial start in any project. "

Traffic & Safety Issues

Gosford City Council has recently confirmed that it will develop a traffic and parking management plan for a section of Araluen Drive, Hardys Bay, following a request from Councillor Jim Macfadyen. It has also resolved to provide line marking on Araluen Drive, west of Killcare Road. A council report stated that pedestrian safety concerns had been raised due to the parking of vehicles on both sides of this section during busy periods.

It attributed the subsequent actions taken by council to the initiative displayed by the Hardys Bay Residents Group when two council officers attended a recent meeting

At the invitation of the Residents Group, John Cragg, from the council's Engineering Services and Traffic Education section, and Martin Dale, the Road Safety and Project Development Officer, embraced a wide range of issues which focused on traffic and safety-related matters commonly experienced by the community.

In an approach similar to an address delivered by Senior Constable Jo Plummer at an earlier HBRG meeting, the guests from the council invited "community participation" in which the audience was encouraged to identify the relevant concerns and notify the authorities accordingly.

Consequently, following a number of discussions with members of the Residents Group's committee, the council has developed plans to prepare a brief for a consultant's design when the appropriate action is expected to be taken.



"Pick up the phone and report it", was the clear message Senior Constable Jo Plummer from the Crime Prevention Unit at Gosford Police Command delivered to a responsive audience at a meeting of the Hardy's Bay Residents Group.

Focusing on the local community's fears of a perceived escalation in various forms of unlawful activities in the area, Senior Constable Plummer advised the gathering that issues of this nature were prevalent and, until recently, the Central Coast region held an unenviable record as a leader in the State for incidents of malicious damage. As a consequence, special task forces were established and a vastly-increased area command was set up to combat the problem. Educational and counselling programs were introduced, with an emphasis on servicing the areas which topped the crime-rate count.

A major contributor to this 'cleaning up' process, reported Senior Constable Plummer, was the co-operation the police had received from the residents of these districts who had been advised to immediately contact the authorities and report anything of concern. Obviously, this message had been absorbed and reports from the public increased dramatically.

"And that is exactly what we'd like you to do here", she stressed "We strongly urge people to phone us at any time with any worries they may have. It may not seem much at the time but, from our experience these situations, which might at first appear to be of minor importance, often develop into something more serious.

"This includes any area. Although we haven't received many reported incidents in the Hardys Bay-Killcare communities in recent times, we suspect that this could be a misrepresentation of the true state of affairs, due to the fact that many people feel uncomfortable in contacting us.

"We can assure you that these calls are important to us in stamping out crime and residents shouldn't be reluctant to phone in.

"Even if there is the merely the faintest suspicion of something that's not right, it is possible that, by phoning us, you could be preventing a serious felony".

The relevant contact numbers are: Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000, Police Assistance Line 131 444. Police, Fire, Ambulance 000

Sedimentation

Under the direction of a committed Graeme Smith, the Hardys Bay Residents Group continues to work for a successful rehabilitation of Hardys Bay and other sediment-affected locations within the Brisbane Water Estuary.

As the HBRG's nominated representative on the Mudflat Creek/Fraser Road Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan, Graeme has extensively researched the sedimentation issue. He is widely respected throughout the local region for his knowledge of this vexing matter. He cites the " mangroves, mud and muck " which clog the outlet of the Hardys Bay RSL creek and an alarming sediment build-up in Pretty Beach and Hardys Bay as major offenders. He will be working in tandem with HBRG vice-president, Bill Egan, to formulate proposed remedial measures prior to the release of a Brisbane Water Processes Study. He is currently examining the Brisbane Water Foreshore Flood Study, a recently-introduced investigation into worst-case scenario flood situations within Brisbane Water which determines the problem areas in any domain such as water levels and flow, the risks faced by the communities and what can be done to reduce these risks.

With regard to general sedimentation concerns, Graeme Smith provides a number of proposals designed to achieve a successful objective: **REDUCE** the size of sediment deltas that have formed since 1900 to recover lost navigable waterway that is now in short supply downstream of the Rip Bridge.

REPLENISH the eroded bay foreshores of Hardys Bay and Pretty Beach with sand recovered from these deltas in order that people can once again use these foreshores that are, at present, due to excessive sediment buildup and foreshore erosion, being rapidly colonized by inaccessible mangroves.

INSTALL sediment traps on all storm water drain outlets to minimize sediment flow into the bay.

WORK WITH local and State Government departments for the establishment of a bay and estuary maintenance program to retain preset bay and estuary depths and boundaries for our future generations.

Doggie Bags

The placement of bio-degradable bags for the collection of dog waste in the Hardys Bay area has been hailed by members of the community as another progressive step in a clean-up campaign initiated by the Hardys Bay Residents Group.

Responding to overtures made by the HBRG, Gosford City Council officers visited the community to inspect proposed locations for the siting of dispensers and accordingly granted permission for the containers to be installed, with the understanding that it would be the group's responsibility to oversee these units on a regular basis. Accordingly, four dispensers and bags have been placed in Araluen Drive, Hardys Bay, near the pump station and opposite the Community Church Hall, and at each end of the dog walking track leading from Heath Road at Pretty Beach to Araluen Drive.

The supply of the bags in their respective locations and the continuing progress of the initiative have been regularly monitored by members of the HBRG to ensure the program's effectiveness.

COMING UP.....

- Next meeting 29/08 7.30pm
Hardys bay Community Hall,
Araluen Drive
- Ferry service - Hardys Bay
- More letters - please send them in!
- Mosquito control experts' presentation
- Billboard - check for meeting info
- Boat watch - on the bay

NEW MEMBERS APPLICATION

Annual Membership - Pensioners \$5 Members \$10 Families \$15
Post to: The Secretary, Hardys Bay Residents Group, PO Box 4123, Wagstaffe NSW 2257

Name: _____ Phone: _____ MOB _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ Signature: _____ Date _____

letters

SCIENTIFIC SPRAYING IS THE ANSWER

The salt marsh mosquito, a known disease carrier in our community, has been likened in some quarters, rather benevolently, to a "noxious weed".

That is exactly what it is - a "weed" of the insect kingdom, which breeds to unnatural numbers because of the environment we created.

How do we eradicate weeds?

We either remove them by hand or spray with the most environmentally-sound systemic product available.

A well-meaning, but ill-informed observer asserts that personal preventative measures and insecticides are the solutions to avoiding bites. Spraying my own or my children's skin with these chemicals to be absorbed into their systems is an unknown risk I am not prepared to take.

However, the risk assessment study carried out by The Department of Medical Entomology, Westmead Hospital, in 2005 recommending applications of small amounts of larvicide applied to the swamp areas of Cockle Bay at a specific time of year when the larvae have hatched was a sound and formal scientific study.

It states emphatically that the mosquitoes do not breed around our homes (these are a different species). Removal of our banksias, native shrubs (which create breeding sites for small native birds) and shade areas around our homes is useless when the wind emanates from the direction of the salt marsh mosquito breeding area.

These weeds of the insect kingdom are carriers of Ross River and Barmah Fever. Both are seriously debilitating illnesses, recurring often for many years after the first bout.

The numbers of these diseases are increasing in the Central Coast area and over 80 people contracted either one in the past year.

The scientifically-based spraying of the mosquito larvae is, at least, one positive step in the direction of cutting down their plague proportion numbers. Many small steps often get us where we want to go.

Susan Munro Ross

Our family has been holidaying in Hardys Bay for the past 14 years, and our last family get together was one of our most memorable at the bay.

We had 15 grandchildren and family playing on the shore in front of our house in an area that has previously never been safe to play or swim because of all the oyster leases debris.

It is wonderful to see the area near the Extension Wharf in Hardys Bay Parade has been cleared and it is now being used by kayakers and small boats as well.

Keep up the good work Hardys Bay Residents Group. You have certainly got our support with the ongoing restoration of the bay.

Tony and Andrea Fielding

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Was it my packet of OMO that turned the whites
beige this week or are we recycling the mudflats
already?

Marilyn Cartmill