



Residents Group

Bay news

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

FORESHORE

SEASON'S GREETINGS



In this issue of Bay News, among other features, we report on the Hardys Bay foreshore plan, the ongoing battle with the mosquito menace, the continual concerns over sedimentation buildup in the bay and other matters of local interest.

Work on the clean up of the oyster leases is almost complete and we are most grateful to all who have worked so enthusiastically on this project, with particular thanks to its instigators, Kay and Terry Feltham. Further details appear in this newsletter.

Our various sub-committees continue to apply themselves to a broad range of issues, of long and short-term consequence, which are relevant to our community's welfare, and we always look forward to receiving your comments. We commend our website as an ideal communication source for all local matters.

We warmly welcome our many new members and wish to remind everybody that annual membership renewals are now due.

The Hardys Bay Residents Group extends cordial Season's Greetings to all and wishes everybody a safe and happy holiday period.

Adrian Williams
President
Hardys Bay Residents Group

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OUR FORESHORE ... SAFETY FIRST



Safety, open space, a minimalist approach, maintaining the ambience of our bay and, above all, common sense.

These were the conclusions which were emphatically drawn when a Gosford Council-convened meeting was held at the Hardys Bay Community Church Hall on Wednesday, November 28th, to assess the merits of an issue which has created an unprecedented wave of community debate.

The draft plan submitted by council officers .Peter Dunn, Sharen Ryan, Brett Eddy and Kim Radford, included a range of options which addressed all safety concerns previously raised by the Hardys Bay Residents Group in July 2006.

These covered remedial “fixes” embracing the installation of crossings at Killcare Road, a bus stop, well-defined edges, road-widening for clearly-identified parallel parking (which would, in contrast to angle parking, maximise the foreshore's green, open space and promote safety), turning areas to the east and west of shops capable of safely handling future traffic flows, and the enforcement of speed restrictions.

The Hardys Bay Residents Group's president, Adrian Williams, and his colleague, Bill Egan, the vice president, agreed it was clearly apparent the foreshore topic had created huge interest in the community. Safety concerns and pleas for the retention of the area's unspoilt charms were matters commonly proposed by those in attendance

At a meeting in late 2006, it was mutually agreed by all parties concerned that a “minimalist” approach should be sensibly applied in-developing the foreshore. This was strongly endorsed by the HBRG when focusing on the importance of maintaining as much open space as possible, restricting the height of trees to preserve residents' views, minimising signage, ensuring an absence of wide concrete paths and being mindful of the needless provision for a third playground, since the local area already provides two safe amenities, one near Stanley Street, east of the Killcare shops, and the other at Turo Park, Pretty Beach.

The council intends to conduct a further meeting, with a

DEC 2007

confirmed January 10 date, to cater for those who missed the initial gathering. Council has also committed to another meeting after public responses have been assembled on the deadline of January 24th, in order to provide feedback on its final proposal.

Our website hardysbay.com will provide further updates.

SEDIMENTATION

"Whilst the entire process has been slow, it has been an exacting one and hasn't left any stones unturned.

"There is certainly a light at the end of the tunnel.

"An optimistic Graeme Smith, a member of the Hardys Bay Residents Group, who has conducted extensive research into sedimentation concerns for many years, firmly believes that the prolonged issue, which has provided its campaigners with few joys but numerous frustrations, is gradually approaching a satisfactory outcome although, he concedes, "it will still take a little time".

According to Graeme, a highly respected authority on estuary sedimentation matters, and the local area representative for the Brisbane Water Flood Study and Plan, the Floodplain Risk Management Plan for the contentious Mudflat Creek has reached its final stage, and a compilation of the preferred flood mitigation measures has been agreed upon by rating all options, using a multi-criteria matrix assessment method.

In paying credit to the Gosford Council for its "thorough professionalism in covering all bases", he pointed out that the council was working as fast as possible but was bound by a State Government set of procedures which must be observed prior to gaining access to State Government co-funding for council flood mitigation projects.

Addressing the respective measures at a recent meeting, the plan's consultants, Webb, McKeown and Associates, nominated the preferred floodplain management measures which focused on :

- Channel improvement works to 20 metres downstream of the Noble Street bridge
- The provision of siltation control, monitoring and a review of sedimentation processes.
- Undertaking regular creek maintenance.
- Reducing the likelihood of blockage at Fraser and Noble roads.
- The establishment of drainage easements.
- Diverting runoff along Fraser Road using pipes, swales, etc.
- Providing kerbing and guttering along Fraser Road.
- Modifying east-west alignment of Fraser Road.

One proposal expected to receive serious consideration is the building of a retaining basin adjacent to Wards Hill Road to provide a buffer storage zone for flash flood runoff from Killcare Heights.

The meeting was informed by the consultants that

channel improvement works any further downstream than 20 metres past Noble Street bridge would not significantly improve the flooding threat, would be costly and could encounter environmental opposition.

The committee's State Government representative, Greg Bernard, assured the meeting that the government would be reluctant to fund any flood mitigation work that involved the removal of mangroves and dredging. It was agreed by all that the buildup of sediment at the mouth of Mudflat Creek remains a serious concern and is under the close scrutiny of the Brisbane Water Management Committee as part of the formulation process of the new Brisbane Water Plan of Management.

Graeme Smith anticipates that the draft Floodplain Risk Management Plan for Mudflat Creek will be compiled and presented at the next meeting, the date of which will be shortly determined.

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OUR MAYOR



A chat with Councillor Jim Macfadyen, who was anointed as the new mayor of Gosford City last October, could be described as a refreshing, even therapeutic, experience.

The Pretty Beach resident's *curriculum vitae* reveals a wide-ranging background in which loyalty, service to the community and compassion have featured prominently.

An account of a fulfilling journey down the times by Jim Macfadyen can provide a fascinating essay.

After completing his schooling at Newtown Tech, in Sydney, he served his apprenticeship at the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board (now Sydney Water) where he graduated through the ranks, which included, along the way, being entrusted with the responsibilities of an inspector for the organization's southern districts network before eventual appointment as a senior manager and political adviser.

He retired after 43 years' service with the Board. He was closely involved with the scouting movement in the Newtown area and became a life member of the Newtown Rugby League Club. Jim and his wife, Pam, who married in 1966, later moved to Bass Hill, where they bought a home. His immediate interests at that time focused on the Bass Hill RSL Soccer Club, where his two sons, Brad and Troy, played and enjoyed many happy character-building sporting moments with other children. Their sister, Kim, was a team manager. Jim's genuine commitment to the well-being of these youngsters was recognised by the club which honoured him with life membership. He was also president and a life member of the Bass Hill Diggers Bowling Club and was accorded similar honours at the Bass Hill RSL Youth Club where he helped to institute playing programs and facilities for over 700 children.

A highlight of his many selfless endeavours over the years occurred in 1999 when he received the Australia Day Citizen of the Year Award from the Bankstown City Council.

A member of the Labor Party for almost 40 years, he is currently President of the NSW branch of the Electrical Trade Union and became a councillor with Gosford City Council in 2004.

He has been a member of the Killcare Surf Life Saving Club since 1959 when he and a number of others from the Newtown/Erskineville areas in Sydney were introduced to the club by long-serving stalwart, Jim Tubby. Jim Macfadyen originally served as club president from 1975 until 1983 and is currently undergoing a second term which commenced in 2002.

Jim and Pam moved to Pretty Beach in 2000. With their sons, they formed the Macfadyen Racing Syndicate and own six horses, with five currently trained at Gosford and one at Rosehill.

MOSQUITOES

As local and state authorities issue their annual reminders that the mosquito season is again here, and extreme care should be taken by members of the public by covering up, remaining inside the home and spraying with repellants, many people are questioning the wisdom of these ongoing precautionary measures.

At a recent conference on infectious diseases, Dr. Tony McMichael from the University of NSW, speaking on climate change, reportedly expressed concern over rises in temperatures and water levels, resulting in an increase in mosquito-borne diseases such as Ross River and Dengue fevers and the consequential health risks.

Central Coast Health confirmed that cases of Ross River Fever and Barmah Forest Virus increased 350% between 2005 and 2006. The Hardys Bay Residents Group has continued to highlight the advantages of a broad scale treatment of the mosquito larvae, a measure which focuses on 'control, not eradication' in dealing with the dreaded saltmarsh species, with a major breeding ground of this variety being identified at Empire Bay.

Despite irrefutable evidence confirming that a larvicide control spray agent, Bti, has been successfully used in dramatically reducing mosquito numbers safely in various saltmarsh environments, the Department of Environment and Climate Change has embarked on yet another survey.

The media, too, has taken up the cry for immediate action to be addressed by these same authorities with bold headlines such as "Mosquito Control Wait Has Residents Abuzz", "Mosquito Control Flicked To Government" and "Council Inaction Stings Residents" proclaimed in the local press.

Additionally, the widely-read Central Coast Express Advocate columnist, Bob Staines, writing in his weekly column, concluded a comprehensive overview of the current state of affairs with "To be effective, a trial program must be carried out here on the coast by November at the latest before the hatching season. But, at this

stage, it looks as though we are going to suffer another summer of unrelenting attacks". According to HBRG president, Adrian Williams, the vexing mosquito issue has attracted interest from TV and radio stations, with the Channel Nine Network and ABC Radio, Central Coast, conducting interviews with the Residents Group on the matter. "We have held numerous meetings and exchanged correspondence with the National Parks and Wildlife Service, as part of the Department of Environment and Climate Change", he said. " Their current position is that they claim they need to do further research into the impact on the food chain should the saltmarsh mosquito larvae be treated with Bti. However, there is absolute proof from various authorities around the world that there is no impact whatsoever on the food chain or non-targeted species."

- If possible, wait at a pre-arranged meeting point or in a prominent location for fire services to arrive and to assist them in locating the fire.

While the public's view of the Fire Brigade tends to associate it solely with frontline operations, Steve Farrell points out that there are numerous behind the scenes activities including administration, maintenance and equipment inspections and there are, consequently, many roles available for those volunteers wishing to participate in general duties.

Local businesses offer regular support with Peter Compton's Killcare Cellars providing a prominent outside location for the KRFB 's fund-raising cake stall on the first Saturday of every month and Kerrin Irving's Wagstaffe Store offering a popular book exchange facility within the shop, with all proceeds donated to the Brigade.

OUR FIRE BRIGADE

During recent months, mixed weather conditions have permitted vital hazard reduction work by the Killcare Rural Fire Brigade and reasonable rain has lessened the risk of wildfire activity in our communities. However, with increased chances of fires occurring over the hotter periods, Brigade captain Steve Farrell stresses the importance of reporting outbreaks and outlines simple steps to be observed in this regard.

- Stay calm and call Triple Zero (000) from a safe location.
- A Telstra operator will ask you if you need police, fire or ambulance. Of course, answer " fire" . If you are using a mobile or satellite phone, the operator will ask you for other location information. You will then be connected to an emergency service operator who will take relevant details.
- Stay on the line, speak clearly and answer the operator's questions. Give the operator the details of where you are, including street name and number, nearest cross street and locality. In rural areas it is important to give the full address and distances from landmarks and roads, not just the name of the property.
- Don't hang up until the operator has received all the necessary information.



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Despite some unfavourable November and December tides, concerted efforts by the voluntary teams attached to cleaning up operations throughout the restricted periods considerably reduced, nevertheless, the offshore piles of roofing tiles, concrete slabs and various waste materials during the vital restoration of derelict oyster leases in our picturesque bay.

As a consequence, a bold "early New Year" completion date was forecast by Hardys Bay Residents Group member, Terry Feltham, who, with his wife, Kay, had initiated the Stage One activity, constantly pursued early negotiations in obtaining official removal permits for the cleanup and worked tirelessly, in liaison with other residents and HBRG colleagues, during the various arduous stages.

This eventually led to a financial grant of \$15,000 being provided by the State Government enabling the Hardys Bay Residents Group to purchase a large aluminium barge for the prime purpose of loading the unsightly debris and towing it ashore. In turn, this material has been usefully employed as valuable backfill for Stage Two roadworks along Hardys Bay Parade.



Terry Feltham has paid tribute to the 'wonderful support' provided by volunteers throughout the duration of the cleanup.

"The help we have been receiving since the commencement of the campaign has been fantastic", he said.

"Whenever there has been an enforced break

from our schedule, due to the fickle tides, the boys - and some girls - have worked harder than ever to make up for the time lost. There's always been a great spirit when they're on the job and it's obvious to Kay and me that they're getting a lot of satisfaction in helping to clean up our bay".

By the time the complete removal has been effected, it is estimated that over 400 tons will have been re-located to the foreshore.

"It's amazing to see how the sand is starting to build up again with more tidal flow over the cleared area", said Terry. "It just gets cleaner and cleaner as it flushes out all the silt caught in between the oyster debris.

"And won't it be wonderful seeing the children playing in this area again?"

● **ESCAPE ...** In our August issue, we reported on the Sydney Morning Herald's weekly boating feature "Tidelines", in which journalist David Lockwood heaped praise on our local communities and their services. Not to be outdone, Stephen Lacey, writing recently in the Sunday Telegraph's travel supplement "Escape", eulogises over the charms of Hardys Bay, Killcare, Pretty Beach and Wagstaffe, and pays particular homage to the Cockatoo ferry, the Codock 11, built in 1945 as a defence forces workboat, which nowadays plies its trade around the Brisbane Water network. "The Cockatoo ferry is a national treasure but, strangely enough, not too many people know about it", he writes. "This has to be one of Australia's most beautiful ferry trips, plus it's as cheap as fish and chips. Put the Cockatoo over in Europe and it would be jam-packed with eager Germans and Dutch, each paying a fortune for the privilege. It's got to be said, we Aussies take a lot for granted". Currently, the Cockatoo travels from Woy Woy to Ettalong via Saratoga, Hardys Bay and Wagstaffe on Thursdays and daily during school holidays. Private group charters are also catered for. Contact Central Coast Ferries on www.centralcoastferries.com.au or phone 0432 631 212

● **SURF SAFETY ...** With the surfing season again well underway, Jim Willis, the Killcare Surf Life Saving Club's captain, has provided a timely reminder to the public of the importance of surfing safely and responsibly. "In 2007, Australia has celebrated the year of the surf lifesaver, marking a milestone of one hundred years of surf lifesaving, and honouring the many generations of men and women dedicated to the ethic of actively patrolling our beaches to keep the bathing public as safe as possible", he says.

"Please remember, this summer, to only swim at patrolled beaches during daylight hours, and to always swim between the flags. The theory that "if we can see you, we can save you", is well worth keeping in mind".

The Killcare SLSC welcomes membership enquiries which can be directed to Jim Willis at 4368 3954 or Jeremy Linton-Mann at 4360 2160.

letters

Has anyone else noted the spur-winged plovers nesting along the foreshore just where the “ Hardy's Bay Foreshore Masterplan “ proposes putting a Children's Playground?

Could it be a sufficiently endangered species that would save us from having a third playground in the area or should I arrange for a fly-past of Orange Bellied Parrots as well ? If they can save Gippsland from a wind farm, they can surely save us from too much development.

Marilyn Cartmill
Hardy's Bay

Passing Speck's Corner recently, we noted his old property was up for sale again. But wait, does everyone know where it is? Coming up from Hardy's Bay, Speck's Corner is the last sharp bend on the left hand side of Scenic Road just down a bit from the Wards Hill Road intersection. It is unofficially named after German kayak adventurer Oskar Speck who lived on panoramic acreage on the corner for many years, dying in 1995 aged 88.

His remarkable story is honoured at the National Maritime Museum in Sydney but he kept a very low profile in the Killcare area and even many oldtimers did not know him.

Oskar Speck, then 25, set out from Ulm, Germany, in 1932 to look for work as the Great Depression started to bite. He chose a kayak as his transport as he was a very experienced endurance paddler.

His plan was to reach Cyprus and get a job in the mines but there was no work and he kept going. Seven years later, and after many dramas including being shot at by bandits, beaten up and robbed by natives and contracting malaria, he landed on a small island just north of Thursday Island where he was promptly arrested.

World War 11 had started and Oskar was interned for the duration. But while in detention he met a

fellow German who had been an opal miner at Lightning Ridge and he passed his knowledge on to Oskar.

After the war, Oskar headed for The Ridge and as luck had it, made his fortune. He later set up an opal and diamond shop in Castlereagh St, Sydney, before retiring to Killcare.

At one stage, he owned 180ha of ridge top land from Hardy's Bay to Wagstaffe and wanted to set up a retirement village on part of it. But the planning authorities knocked him back and eventually the land became part of Bouddi National Park.

This writer can remember Oskar as a small, wiry man who walked everywhere but kept very much to himself. He did have a lady friend who inherited his home which he originally bought for 25 pounds. And that is the story of Oskar's Corner.

Bob Staines
Killcare Heights

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Communications Allan Wilson
Bay News Editor Allan Wilson
Design Sandy Robinson
Executive.. Graeme Smith.. Terry Feltham.. Fiona Atkinson ..
Alan Bennett.. Brent Walker.. Robert Hill
Email: secretary@hardysbay.com