



Residents Group

Bay news

CONTENTS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

FIRE BRIGADE

ESTUARY STUDY

DREDGING

OYSTER LEASES

COASTAL PATROL

SAFETY ISSUES

WINTER SWIMMERS

RSL CLUB

PROFILE

BRIEFS

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our Spring edition of Bay News. In this issue, we report on a wide range of matters including features highlighting the Brisbane Water Estuary Management Study and Plan, the channel dredging, the Volunteer Coastal Patrol, the winter swimmers, important safety advice from our fire brigade, and other items of local interest.

We are pleased to support the Killcare Surf Club as an important and vital part of our community and congratulate it on the fine new clubhouse.

The winter quarter was a very busy one as our various sub-committees continued to work on a broad range of matters, of long and short-term consequence, which are relevant to our community's welfare.

Special thanks to our members and friends, plus the many others for the wonderful support they provided in voicing their concerns over the proposed Unit Development.

We always look forward to receiving your comments and extend a warm welcome to our many new members. A reminder, also, to everybody that annual membership renewals are now due.

We commend our website as an ideal communication source for all local matters.

Sincere good wishes,
Adrian Williams,
President

BRIGADE CAPTAIN WARNS OF “HIGHLY PROBABLE” RISE IN BUSHFIRE INTENSITY

At this stage of the year, the members of the Killcare Wagstaffe Rural Fire Brigade are already preparing for an approaching bushfire season as Steve Farrell, the KWRFB captain warns of a 'highly probable' increase in intensity.

“With an El Niño event developing, the latest outputs from computer models indicate the period will reach its peak late in the year”, says Steve.

“These events are usually, but not always, associated with below normal rainfall and this could lead to an increased level of fire activity”, he adds.

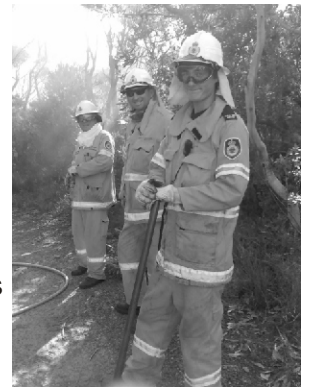
“Couple this with an ongoing stream of information coming from the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission and it would certainly reinforce our message of being a 'FireWise Community'.

“Community information and preparation are subjects of much discussion within the Royal Commission. In fact, it was recorded that 'it will not always be possible to issue timely and accurate warnings, particularly when a bushfire commences in a vulnerable area and impacts assets within a matter of minutes following ignition.'

“This can also emerge as a consequence of other emergencies such as gas explosions, building collapse or additional incidents. The community residents should implement measures to prepare their properties and to take appropriate action to minimise the impact of bushfires on their lives and properties.”

In recent months, local brigade activities have included street meetings and when these occur in a particular area, KWRFB members organise a letter-box drop a few days before inviting residents to join the brigade personnel for an informal discussion about property preparation. At the same time, an inspection is made of any available assets such as fire hydrants and SWS signage to ensure they are in good order.

Another street location will be planned before summer begins and details will again be furnished by means of another letter box drop.



KWRFB officers at a local hazard reduction exercise

Sept 2009

According to Steve Farrell, a further opportunity for the community to obtain information will surface at this year's RFS OPEN DAY, to be held on Saturday, September 26th. This event will correspond with the commencement of the fire season and will provide brigade members with the opportunity of recruiting new members as volunteers, involve the audience in demonstrations, conduct fun activities for the children, explain FireWise to the community and encourage people to wear Personal Protective Equipment.

"At this time of the year, depending on weather conditions", warns Steve, "local residents will start seeing smoke in the sky as Gosford District Brigades will be involved this year, as part of the Fuel Management Plan, with a combination of 14 Hazard Reduction burns planned in our local area between now and August, 2010.

"If residents would like to prepare their properties, several conditions apply and we advise them to contact the RFS District Office at 43402911 or go to www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

"As far as our membership goes, it continues to strengthen with most of our juniors now progressing well in their preparations to become active firefighters by this coming summer.

"The continued support we receive from the residents, various groups and local businesses is most heartening and emphasises to us just what a great community we have here", Steve concluded.

ESTUARY MANAGEMENT STUDY AND PLAN

Gosford City Council and the Department of Environment and Climate Change are currently preparing an Estuary Management Study and Plan for Brisbane Water. This initiative is supported by the NSW Government Estuary Management Program, in line with the State Government's Rivers and Estuary Policy, 1992.

The purpose of this study is to identify and recommend appropriate actions to manage the environmental, social and commercial aspects of Brisbane Water Estuary and is designed to establish a strategic framework for the future management of Brisbane Water.

As part of this process, the council has engaged Cardno Lawson Treloar Pty Ltd to prepare the relevant Estuary Management Study and Plan.

Various Issues and Options Development Workshops were held at Erina Fair, Wagstaffe, Gosford and Woy Woy between May and June and a total of over 190 management issues involving the various types and the recommended remedial action were identified and discussed.

At Erina Fair, in May, the issues included:

- # Poor water quality and sedimentation associated with stormwater outlets and creeks

- # Sedimentation and foreshore erosion
- # Safe passage through navigation channels
- # Safety issues in relation to boat traffic (e.g. speeding)
- # Low rates of tidal flushing in some locations

Consequent to the above management issues having been formulated, community members at the Wagstaffe, Gosford and Woy Woy workshops worked in conjunction with Cardno Lawson and Treloar in June to suggest the necessary forms of relevant action.

These were featured by:

- # Rehabilitate the saltmarshes at Yattalunga Bay
- # Promote Brisbane Water as an eco-tourism destination
- # Undertake a program of dredging to improve navigation
- # Provide an additional culvert under Brisbane Water Drive causeway to promote tidal flushing.

At the Wagstaffe workshop, and being mindful of the trial dredging action, members of the Hardys Bay Residents Group suggested that Hardys Bay should, indeed be utilised in the operation in order to establish a benchmark.

What's next ? The Draft Brisbane Water Estuary Management Study is expected to be placed on public exhibition for comment in September. After all submissions have been compiled and addressed, the Management Study will be finalised and work will begin on the Brisbane Water Estuary Management Plan.

Further information, including notes and presentations from the various workshops, can be found on Council's website at:

<http://www.gosford.nsw.gov.au/customer/document/gallery/bwemp>

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COUNCIL'S "PLEDGE TO DREDGE"

Jubilation in many quarters, scepticism in others.

The recent decision by Gosford City Council to match the State Government's figure of \$250,000 in offering to dredge Brisbane Water's narrow entrance channel has been greeted with a mixed response by the public with many applauding the verdict and others offering a wary "we'll believe it when it happens" assessment of the judgment.

At council's weekly meeting on Tuesday, July 7th, when the determination was delivered, it was carried by the narrowest of margins with five councillors voting in favour of the motion and four against. Those who supported the move were Jim Macfadyen, Laurie Maher, Peter Freewater, Vicki Scott and Terri Latella, whilst Chris Holstein, Craig Doyle, Amy Houston and Chris Burke voted against. Jeff Strickson was absent from the meeting.

In the wake of the culmination of this long-standing dispute, which stretched out over 12 months, the beneficiaries will include recreational and professional boaters, marine rescue groups and members of the public, including many school pupils who regularly commute on the ferry services in which an unobstructed entrance to the Brisbane Water is imperative for general safety purposes.

When serious concerns over a buildup of siltation initially surfaced in mid-2008, Palm Beach Ferry Service general manager, Matt Lloyd, warned at the time that unless dredging operations were to be carried out before the peak boating season, services could be severely disrupted if ferry masters considered the heavily-silted channel to be dangerous.

In applauding the council's decision to enter into a 50/50 agreement with the State Government on the costing issue, Richard Manning, a Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol spokesman, enthused: "This is a welcome outcome, particularly when one considers the dangers vessels have faced whenever entering or leaving Brisbane Water."

He emphasised that his organization's major responsibility has always been to ensure the safety of lives at sea, or there could be fatal consequences.

"Hopefully, we can look forward to prompt action now that the matching funds are available and the work is carried out", he added. "We understand, too, that four additional areas will be tabled by council in October for early attention".

Peninsula Chamber of Commerce president, Matthew Wales, offered the hope that "this positive move could represent the beginning of a genuine and continuing partnership between the council and the government" while Greens councillor, Peter Freewater hailed the agreement as a "genuine victory for the local community".

Nevertheless, apprehensions over a perceived lack of conviction in council, due to the slender voting margin, persisted in several quarters with one respected observer suggesting that "there could well be a drawn-out dredging process due to the tight decision in council in July with the possibility of a rescission motion of some kind emerging from a disgruntled faction".

However, despite a reluctance in some quarters to accept convincing evidence, it seems that the matter has been finally resolved. The "Dredgeloek" - as the Central Coast News described the situation - could well be over.

THE GREAT OYSTER LEASE CLEANUP - STAGE 3

Progress on the removal of debris from abandoned oyster leases in Hardys Bay and the subsequent clean up is expected to be resumed in October when the Stage 3 operations will be co-ordinated.

The long history of the campaign stretches back to mid-2004 when its pioneers, Hardys Bay Residents Group members, Kay and Terry Feltham, pursued the early negotiations in obtaining official removal permits to dismantle the derelict leases, which eventually paid off when the Department of Fisheries and the Gosford City Council agreed to give the project the green light.



Terry & Kay Feltham

The Stage One scenario involved the removal of the roofing tiles, rocks and concrete from the northern side of the extension wharf in Hardys Bay Parade. At the front line of operations were Kay and Terry who directed the arduous assignment in conjunction with other volunteers. Many tonnes of waste materials were removed throughout the activities by the willing workers, all of whom had the singular purpose in mind, namely, of helping to restore the bay and the foreshore to its old charms and justifying its claims as offering one of the most picturesque outlooks in the Brisbane Water network.

The initiative in originally launching the project was openly praised for a number of reasons, not the least being a desire of its negotiators to see the foreshore returned to its natural state and, in turn, to protect seagrass beds and provide habitat for small marine life.

This "groundwork" was duly recognised by the authorities and became the forerunner to a decision by the State Government to provide a

generous financial grant which, throughout a Stage Two crusade, enabled the Residents Group to plan and develop a more sophisticated system in transferring the left-over piles of roofing tiles, concrete slabs, rocks and other unsightly substances from bayside to shore where they were employed for council roadworks purposes.

Funded by the Federal Government's Caring for our Country - Community Coastcare program, which is a government initiative conducted under the jurisdiction of the Minister for the Environment, the Stage 3 operation is expected to get underway in early October when more favourable weather and the lower tides will be more conducive to the debris removal.

According to the Felthams, working rosters will be posted on the HBRG website, www.hardysbay.com and reminders will also be emailed prior to the commencement of the work.

A worthy operation, indeed.

THE COASTAL PATROL - PROVIDING A MARINE SAFETY NET



It is a situation where training is a never-ending process.

Royal Volunteer Coastal Patrol volunteers commence training as soon as they join the organization and the subsequent process is virtually ongoing. All training is competency-based and the skill levels meet, or exceed, the requirements for commercial and industrial operations.

A Coastal Patrol charter expresses these high expectations when emphasising that "members are expected to gain and maintain truly professional competencies in all forms of boating and safety skills".

Volunteers operate a continuous 24-hour radio watch on weekends and public holidays in providing a marine safety net for the recreational boating community.

This special dedication to duty was illustrated, for instance, when Central Coast Coastal Patrol skipper, Cameron Veacock, and his crew on Central Coast Lifeboat, which included Hardys Bay Residents Group vice-president, Bill Egan, were recently combining a training exercise in the Woy Woy Channel with a trip to Booker Bay to refuel their vessel, when they observed smoke

coming from the rear of a moored 8-metre fly-bridge motor cruiser, just west of Lions Park.

The crew immediately checked the vessel and confirmed there were no persons aboard the cruiser before hastily notifying the Patrol Base by radio. In turn, the duty radio operator, Pat Fayers, contacted the Water Police and a police vessel from Broken Bay arrived on the scene without delay.

The smoke was billowing from what transpired to be an electrical fire below deck in the engine room at the rear of the vessel and Bill Egan, who played a prominent role in the team's rescue operations, used a fire extinguisher to eventually overcome the thick smoke in disconnecting the boat's batteries in order to stop the overheating.

A relieved owner arrived shortly afterwards by dinghy and was full of praise for the efforts of the alert saviours. On this occasion, what could well have been an expensive disaster, was averted.

For the Coastal Patrol, it was business as usual and yet another example of the dedication and professionalism displayed in its ongoing protection of our waterways.

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SAFETY ISSUES - HARDYS BAY

In a June letter to the Gosford City Council, the Hardys Bay Residents Group expressed its ongoing concern for the safety of pedestrians and motorists near the shops at the intersection of Killcare Road and Araluen Drive.

The communication pointed out that “ this particular point and nearby roads are becoming increasingly dangerous due to a combination of the narrow roadway, a lack of signs and street markings and speed restrictions, a lack of pedestrian crossings and a consequent lack of parking space combined with a marked increase in both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, particularly during holiday weekends.”

It was also mentioned in the letter that, following a meeting of the HBRG in mid-2006, council requested, and were subsequently provided with, a ' wish list ' of simple, straightforward things that could be done to improve safety in the area. “ After three years,” it was emphasised in the correspondence, “ little has been done”.

The letter further reminded council that in 2007, a draft plan had been provided by the GCC for the development of the foreshores of Hardys Bay. The HBRG advised that it supported a number of measures included in the plan that would have improved safety on the roads in the area and, at public meetings conducted, council officers indicated that they would take into account the extensive feedback from the local community in the production of a final proposal. “ After 18 months, “ the letter added, “ nothing has been done.”

In a final-paragraph plea, the Residents Group's letter implores the council to “ take urgent action to improve traffic safety at Hardys Bay before someone is badly injured and to present a firm proposal to this community at the earliest opportunity”.

OUR WINTER SWIMMERS

Thirty eight years ago, eight hardy souls conspired to introduce Sunday morning winter swimming competitions to an area widely renowned for its summer pleasures.

The 1971 activities could hardly be described as endurance tests, as reports of those daring times suggested the competitors engaged in a “20-metre outward swim in the Killcare surf, then a return to the beach before an adjournment to the sanctuary of the surf club for 'nips of rum and a hot lunch' . “



A Frigid Digits contingent.. (l to r): Jeremy Linton-Mann, Geoff Graves, Ron Malcolm, John Kearnes, Alan Claridge, Tony Hester, Clarrie Reeves, Norm Little, Lex Cameron, Bryce Cameron, Homer Simpson John Bourne.

Since the ' magnificent eight ' took their first tentative steps in the chilly April waters, the Hardys Bay Frigid Digits have graduated to become an integral part of local community life. In 1976, the club became affiliated with the Australian Winter Swimming Association and shortly afterwards transferred its activities to the Woy Woy swimming pool where the weekly handicap races were contested until 1990.

By this time, the membership ranks had considerably increased and it was decided to transfer the club's headquarters to the northern end of Putty Beach where the general tranquillity of the setting and its well manicured reserve presented a far more suitable venue for the competitions and subsequent social gatherings.

A “club within a club”, the Frigid Digits enjoy a close relationship with the Hardys Bay RSL Club and conduct regular Saturday night raffles at the club with proceeds benefiting charities and assisting with general funding.

During the winter swimming season, which routinely extends from the last Sunday in April until the first Sunday in September, the 60-strong club sends representatives to the Australian and Northern Districts Championships. Other highlights on the club's calendar are the quadrangular meets, with visits exchanged between the Digits, the South Bulli Sea Lions, the South Maroubra Dolphins and the Nelson Bay Blue Marlins.

Last July, a contingent of thirteen travelled to

the fat goose

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Nobby's Beach, Newcastle, for the Northern Districts titles.

For the winter swimming traditionalists who relish near-freezing temperatures, those on offer at the pool must have been ideal. Club stalwart, Jeremy Linton-Mann, reported that some of the long-time competitors claimed that they had never previously experienced such icy conditions at the event.

But the carnival mood was anything but chilly. None of the 'battle of the swimsuits' controversies here, which had plagued the World Swimming Championships in Rome at a corresponding time this year. Certainly, there were no signs of the revolutionary polyurethane Jaked 01 suits at Nobby's, where a light-hearted atmosphere reigned supreme.

A highlight of a number of solid performances was Bryce Cameron's victory in the Over 40 years championship final, while Geoff Graves was narrowly touched out in the Presidents' event. Other finalists were Norm Barnett in the Over 50 years race, Geoff Graves and Alan Claridge (over 55), Jeremy Linton-Mann (over 60), Ron Malcolm and Norm Little (over 65) and Lex Cameron (over 70 years).

Following the carnival, it was decided at a meeting of club presidents and captains that the Frigid Digits would host next year's titles at the Peninsula Leisure Centre, Woy Woy.

Encouraged by the performances at the Northern Districts "warm ups", where the all-round potential of the team inspired a serious belief in the ranks that a triumphant campaign could well be a possibility at the prestigious national meeting, a strong representation of the Hardys Bay Frigid Digits will assemble at Kingscliff, on Queensland's Gold Coast, for the Australian Winter Swimming Championships on September 20th.

HARDYS BAY RSL CLUB

The Killcare Surf Club and the Fire Brigade will be beneficiaries of an innovative lunchtime program of four weekly Hollywood film musicals being presented on the Hardys Bay RSL Club's big screen over four consecutive Tuesdays.

The sequence commenced on August 25th when "Singin' in the Rain" was featured, with old favourites, "High Society", "Guys and Dolls" and "Oklahoma!" completing the brief introductory season.

Included in an attractive price of \$20, which covers lunch and the movie, is a donation to the surf club and fire brigade. Should the initial '4-weeker' prove to be popular, a further run of classic romantic comedies will immediately follow.

According to the RSL Club's president, Steve

Newman, a new "split" Public Address system has been installed in the club premises enabling members to listen to music on the outside deck whilst something else is playing inside the clubhouse. "This, combined with the popular garden area, has enabled the club to allow members to hold birthday parties and other functions", explains Steve.

"The PA has an iPod dock so that the party can have its own music", he added. "There is no charge for this facility. Interested members can call Chad at the club on 4360 1072 for further details.

"We are, in fact, a "Wireless Hotspot" and offer free wireless internet (WiFi) to members and guests."

Steve also advised that the Bay Restaurant at the RSL Club has regular 'Wednesday theme nights' planned, with Mexican fare introduced for August, and an Italian menu scheduled for the month of September. Also scheduled for the near future is the launching of a series of luncheons featuring a four-course meal, plus wine tasting and a guest speaker.

PROFILE

BIRDMAN LES WALKER - THE CHARMING ECCENTRIC

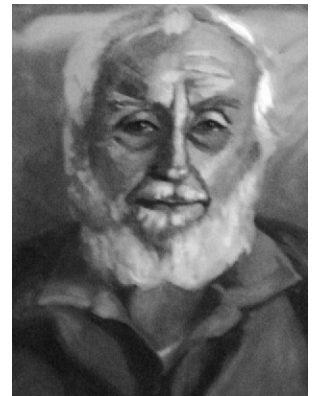
Brent Walker meets up with one of our true characters

Although his family doctor calls him the "Charming Eccentric", his lodge mates call him the "Grumpy Old Man", but only for a laugh.

Laughter is what you get when you talk to Les Walker. Lots of it!

You will laugh, he will laugh and Norma, his wife of 60 years, will laugh. Then, when you come away after spending more time than you intended in his company, your spirits will be uplifted.

Les still calls himself a "ring in" because he and Norma have only lived at 14 Noble Road for 25 years, although he has owned his property for over 42 years. In 1967, Les was attracted to his particular block of land because it virtually had deep water frontage, so he figured that he would be able to moor his boat beside his future dwelling. That year, there were hardly any mangroves in front of Noble Road. The bay then continued around into Mudflat Creek and ended close to where Les and Norma now live.



Portrait by Pauline Donnelly

Les is well known for his love of the local wildlife. For many years, he could be seen in the late afternoon taking a bucket of meat and fat scraps across Noble Road to a relatively built-up area of ground in the mangroves where Gosford Council workers used to dump sand and mud dredged from the creek. He knew many of the kookaburras, currawongs and crows by name as well as many of the sacred ibis that gathered firstly in his place while they waited for him to cut up their meal and then walked behind him across the road to be fed.

If Les had played a mouth organ, one could have easily thought that he was the reincarnation of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. He still feeds the local possums and they become quite possessive of him at night. Their evening arguments with him and among themselves can be quite entertaining for the neighbours.

Les also loves dogs, particularly German Short-Haired Pointers. His car has a special GSP number plate.

A little-known interest of Les' is his letter-writing. Chris Hartcher once told Les that he has had more letters from him than any other single person in this electorate. Gosford Council has also copped a huge number of letters from Les but, despite his efforts, Mudflat Creek was last dredged by Council in 1982. Les is only half-joking when he says that the creek bed will soon be higher than the floor of his house !

BRIEFS

DEVELOPMENT

At the time of Bay News going to press, we were advised there had been no appeal lodged to council's rejection of the proposal, DA35452/2008 which had encompassed a "mixed use development consisting of a commercial component, in this case, retail properties, as well as a residential component". Since the application to develop a property known as "58 to 62 Araluen Drive, Hardys Bay" was initially lodged in late 2008, a huge outcry from the community ensued, with the public outrage confirmed when more than 700 letters of objection were consequently forwarded to council.

At a recent HBRG meeting, it was agreed that the group would provide any appropriate support to council, subject to the appeal being submitted.

DRAFT DINGHY POLICY Following HBRG investigations regarding the amount of progress achieved to date in the ongoing matter, it now appears that a resolution of the proposed draft policy involving dinghies in the Brisbane Water network may not be available until later this year. In response to his subsequent communication to the Brisbane Water Users Group on the Residents Group's behalf, Craig Newbury, Gosford Council's Parks and Foreshores Officer/Open Spaces and Leisure Services, was duly informed, in turn, by the BWUG that the Policy originally prepared by Council was scheduled for discussion at the Strategic Policy Forum on August 18th and "would not be ready for public comment in July/August as previously advised". It added that if Senior Management had no objections to the policy, a report would be submitted to Council during the September/October period.

"The policy would then be available for public comment and presented to our Users Group's meeting", the advice concluded.

PRETTY BEACH PUBLIC SCHOOL

Principal Vicki Redrup and staff are delighted with the recent progress achieved at the school which includes a move into the new administration offices and library. Vicki advises that the new COLA (covered outdoor learning area) is expected to be completed by the end of Term 3.

The school's oval is scheduled to be regrassed during the October holidays and the existing hedge will also be removed.

A vegetable garden will be established during Term 4 and this will supply the school's canteen with food, including lettuce, tomatoes, etc. More work at the school's grounds is expected to begin next year. This will be an internal upgrade of the existing older buildings.

"On track" for early 2010 use is the Walsingham Pre-School when it will take up the site of the Old Principal's Residence at the Pretty Beach School. It is anticipated that the advent of the pre-school in its new environment will usher in an exciting stage for an intake of children expected to be evenly drawn from local and neighbouring areas.

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 _____

KILLCARE SURF CLUB ...Following extensive fitouts, the surf club's new restaurant, Randall's On The Beach, and the kiosk are expected to be open for business in mid-September. Popular identities, Steve and Helena, will again be managing the kiosk.

The new clubhouse, which was officially opened on May 8th, has been highly praised for its layout and imposing appearance, with much of the credit for what has been freely described as an exciting concept in surf clubhouse design attributed to club member and local architect, Karen Burke.

BENEFACTORWoy Woy veterinary surgeon, Dr. Rainer Mettal, who generously answered a call for assistance when Gosford Council withdrew its funding of a dog waste-clearance program late last year, expects to be expanding his practice to include a second surgery at the Empire Bay Veterinary Hospital in late September. Originally scheduled to take up his additional practice in April, the move was delayed due to council regulatory requirements. Dr. Mettal has played a significant role in sponsoring the "Operation Doggy Bag" program which oversees the collection of dog waste between Killcare and Pretty Beach foreshore locations by a committed group of ladies from the Hardys Bay Residents Group who regularly maintain the bio-degradable bag dispensers and, at the same time, help to preserve the cleanliness of the delightful foreshore walk.

The Empire Bay address of Dr. Mettal will be 436 Empire Bay Drive and the new phone number will be 4363 2222.

The facility will be available for all veterinary matters in addition to his current practice at the Woy Woy Veterinary Hospital where he can be reached at 4341 8146.

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