



BEECROFT - CHELTENHAM  
**C I V I C T R U S T**  
I N C O R P O R A T E D  
P.O. BOX 31, BEECROFT. N.S.W. 2119

**BULLETIN 1**

**February 2007**

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## **Meet the Candidate for Epping**

**Monday 12 March 2007**

**7.30pm**

**Cheltenham Recreation Club, The Crescent, Cheltenham**

The Pennant Hills District Civic Trust and The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust join to host this event. All candidates for the seat of Epping in the State Election have been invited to speak. Questions can be asked. This is your chance to be better informed when you vote.

## **Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust Inc. Annual General Meeting**

**Monday 30 April 2007**

**7.30pm**

**Cheltenham Recreation Club, The Crescent, Cheltenham**

Guest Speaker: Richard Whitaker, formerly of the Bureau of Meteorology.

Richard is a very well respected weather expert and a very entertaining speaker. He will be talking about changing global weather patterns and how these might affect trees and plants growing locally and other interesting topics. So come along with your weather questions and enjoy the evening.

## **Autumn Walk**

**Sunday 20 May 2007**

**2.00pm – 5.00pm**

Advance notice – full details in the next bulletin

## The North West Rail Link

The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust has been actively working with a team of volunteers to identify and report on problems with the proposed North West Rail Link. We have had ongoing meetings with TIDC (Transport Infrastructure and Development Corporation) who, in the main, have been helpful to our cause. Our aim has been to obtain the best outcome for our community and to encourage the development of alternatives which do not have devastating impacts on our suburbs.



In our submission, the Trust made the following points:

- 1) That the proposed surface route, joining the North West Rail Link with the Main Northern Railway by a six track dive configuration and structure at Beecroft, will destroy forever the amenity of the heritage Beecroft and Cheltenham areas. It will overwhelm the village scale and environment that is one of only two such areas remaining in Sydney.
- 2) That there are serious noise and vibration impacts that have not been fully resolved, and that mitigation through barrier walls has its own unacceptable impacts.
- 3) That construction will involve intolerable disruption over an extended period of some 5 –6 years, in some cases destroying community assets, and exposing many homes and families to noise, heavy traffic, dust and nuisance while the dive and other works are undertaken.
- 4) That the environment will be devastated by the removal or damage to nearly one thousand trees, by loss of habitat of an endangered population of Gang Gang cockatoos and other species, and by water quality issues.
- 5) That there are serious rail safety and opera-

- tional issues associated with the proposal.
- 6) That the Cheltenham station precinct and bridge will require complete reconstruction, loss of parking and vegetation, and that the station will take on a scale that is entirely inappropriate for the area it serves.
- 7) That there are alternatives – including the Epping-Franklin Road tunnel option identified in the Environmental Assessment and others – that are superior, both in environmental terms and operationally, to the current surface proposal.

We sincerely thank the over 800 members of the community who wrote submissions. This has been a phenomenal response and clearly indicates that this community will not put up with a proposal with such devastating impacts. We will need to keep up the pressure so that any decisions made have the least impact on our area.



The Trust's submission can be read on our website [www.2119.org.au](http://www.2119.org.au)

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## Water supply and sewerage in Beecroft and Cheltenham

by David Ellyard

*No. 7 in a series of articles on the history of Beecroft and Cheltenham*

The growth of a community like Beecroft/Cheltenham can be charted in many ways; through the lives of the settlers and other early residents, through the building of its homes, shops and public spaces, through the many collective activities of its citizens and, not least, through the development of its infrastructure, the mesh of facilities and services that distinguish a community from a number of isolated

buildings. Communication networks for the telegraph and telephone, (and now for cable) transportation via roads, railway lines and public footpaths, and the provision of water and sewerage, gas and electricity add immensely to quality of life, and make each dwelling a node in an intricate grid of paths and pipes and wires.

For early residents of the area, water for drinking, cooking and washing (and sometimes for firefighting) was free but took some effort to collect, Rainwater tanks hung from most buildings and many householders drove wells into the porous sandstone beneath their feet, lining the pits with bricks. Elsewhere in Sydney, many citizens were beginning to enjoy the benefit of reticulated water, brought by pipes and not dependent on unreliable rainfall, Prospect Reservoir was completed in 1888, drawing water from newly-built dams on the Upper Nepean, but its outflow took a decade to reach Beecroft/Cheltenham.

A pumping station was operational at West Ryde (driven initially by steam engines) from 1892. Three years later water was passing through mains from Ryde to Chatswood and thence to Wahroonga, supplying the North Shore communities. Progress associations began to make a fuss, demanding that the growing settlements along the railway line from Ryde to Hornsby have the same privilege. The push gained momentum from the support of prominent local citizens, such as Melbourne Green, the accountant to the Water Board, responsible for the supply.

By November 1896, work was underway on pipes to bring water from Wahroonga to Thornleigh, Pennant Hills and beyond. During late 1897, residents in Beecroft were engaging plumbers to connect them to the new amenity, beginning in Hannah Street and Copeland Road. Not everyone could afford to link up (and so had to continue to cart water in times of low rainfall), so the Progress Association arranged for a public "standpipe" to be built in the backyard of Thomas Stobo's general store in Hannah Street. From May 1898, water could be bought there for a shilling for a thousand gallons, though the system reputedly leaked a lot and people got less water than they paid for.

Gradually the network of mains spread, reaching the Public School in 1898, penetrating into Chel-

tenham from 1899, servicing the railway station by 1900 and extending into Welham Street by 1903. By 1907, the community had its own reservoir, with water pumped directly from Ryde rather than the long way round via Chatswood and Wahroonga. Visits to the newly-completed 30 metre high reservoir (with its 18,000 rivets) were a popular school outing. Nowadays of course, every house can have a connection and ample fresh clean water is seen as an inevitable component of civilization.

It took much longer for access to a sewer to gain the same status. Densely populated areas nearer to the CBD had been progressively "put on the sewer" since the 1860s, but the program did not run to outlying suburbs like ours. To deal with human waste, our pioneers relied on cesspits, simply deep holes like a long-drop dunny, with an outhouse built on top. All-but-raw effluent could drain from them into nearby creeks or neighbouring properties, where it could foul the water in wells. By this time, we knew the link between contaminated drinking water and diseases like typhoid, and a better solution was needed, especially as the local population grew.

Householders could chose between the newly invented 'septic tank', in which the wastes were substantially degraded by bacteria before seeping away, and the ultimately iconic 'pan system', with the 'night-soil man' collecting a drum of waste from the convenience near each back fence and carrying it by horse and cart to a depot at Thornleigh. The former was too modern and expensive for all but the wealthiest residents; in consequence, the pan system remained a familiar feature of life for decades.

Beecroft and Cheltenham joined the modern world of sewerage only in the 1960s. The rocky and uneven terrain was a major challenge, met by laying the sewer mains on flat low-lying ground such as the banks of Devlins Creek so the wastes would drain mostly by gravity from sewer lines buried under streets and backyards. By the 1970s, the pan man was out of business, and the wastes of Beecroft and Cheltenham were joining the flood of effluent from all over Sydney pouring into the sea at Botany, Bondi and North Head. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century had arrived.

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## GROUNDSTRIKE DVD ROAD TUNNEL POLLUTION AND YOUR HEALTH

The Trust held a public meeting on 10 Sep 06 on this issue, addressed by Dr Ray Kearney, Head of the Department of Infectious Diseases and Immunology at The University of Sydney.

Widespread publicity over the last 12 months on health issues associated with vehicle emissions from the M5 East tunnel has focused attention on extraction of non-filtered emissions which experts claim will have serious future health effects on the surrounding community. Should the proposed twin tunnels between the M2 at West Beecroft and the F3 at Wahroonga under the Pennant Hills Road alignment proceed to construction, they will be the longest road tunnels ever built in Australia and will require many emission stacks.

EXTRACTION OF VEHICLE EMISSIONS from these tunnels into the atmosphere will assume huge importance for all surrounding communities including Beecroft and Cheltenham. As there are many high enrolment schools along the Pennant Hills Road alignment and the Beecroft Cheltenham valley, expert information on the pollution issue is needed.

Why **GROUNDSTRIKE** is important.

- It **dispels the myth** that stack emissions disappear up into the atmosphere.
- It shows how **concentrated emissions** fall from stacks and bounce along the ground for a **considerable distance**, depending on the weather conditions.
- It shows that health problems from contamination of lungs from fine particulates (mainly associated with diesel emissions) can take **many years to manifest** in a similar manner to asbestos which takes up to 40 years to manifest.

Hence the importance of vehicle pollution as a **health issue for children**

TO PROVIDE AN ONGOING REFERENCE on this critical health issue the BCCT committee is producing a DVD on the address given by Dr Kearney. Production is now being finalised and copies of this DVD may be purchased by contacting

Malcolm Powell  
P.O. Box 139 Beecroft NSW 2119  
Tel 9876 2980 Fax 9869 8280

The DVD also contains an address by the Hon Philip Ruddock, Member for Berowra and Federal Attorney General, who outlined the Federal Government position for funding the Pennant Hills Road tunnel proposal which includes information regarding filtration.

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## Membership

We regret the necessity to increase our fees this year to \$25 per household and to discontinue the single rate. The Trust has been working actively in your interest and our expenses have increased. Our membership subscriptions are our only source of income and the whole community of Beecroft and Cheltenham benefits from our efforts. Please join your Civic Trust so we can continue to fight for the best outcomes for your suburbs and keep Beecroft and Cheltenham pleasant places to live. Subscriptions may now also be paid securely on line by credit card through our website [www.2119.org.au](http://www.2119.org.au)



**BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST Inc.      [www.2119.org.au](http://www.2119.org.au)**

**Annual Subscription Rates 1/1/07 to 31/12/07: \$25 per household**

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Cheques are to be made out to Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust Inc.  
Receipts will not be issued except for cash payments.  
Please post to: The Treasurer, BCCT, PO Box 31, Beecroft, 2119