



**BEECROFT - CHELTENHAM
CIVIC TRUST**
INCORPORATED
P.O. BOX 31, BEECROFT, N.S.W. 2119

BULLETIN 1

February 2006

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Annual General Meeting of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust

The Annual General Meeting of the Trust will be held on Monday 20th March at 8pm, at the Cheltenham Recreation Club, The Crescent, Cheltenham. The Guest Speaker is Tony Cunneen, a member of the Trust, who will talk about "Beecroft and Cheltenham in World War One". The following is an outline of his address:

"Over 150 men and women from the Beecroft Cheltenham district served in World War One. 15 were killed, including the sons of some of the wealthiest families in Sydney. Many have no known grave. Others survived the battles but were gassed, shot, blown up, buried alive by shell fire, lost limbs and more than a few were severely disfigured. Local men fought in some of the great battles of the war including Gallipoli, the Somme, Pozieres and Ypres. The talk will be on the district during the war including the way the local men and women mobilised through such organisations as the Red Cross to support the soldiers; the experiences of local women who went away as nurses and the stories of the local men who went into action in Gallipoli, Palestine, France and Belgium."

Tony teaches English and History at St Pius X College Chatswood and lives in Beecroft with his wife, Joanne, and three children, Sarah, Ben and Emma. He has a great interest in the way local communities responded to the unique challenges of war. He has written many articles on the personal experiences of soldiers, as well as other topics including education, travel and

English literature. He has published a collection of personal accounts of servicemen in a book titled: "Suburban Boys at War" and is currently completing a book on the Beecroft Cheltenham area in World War One, which will be available over the next year. It has the working title "A Great War for a Small Town: Beecroft and Cheltenham in World War One"

Note that a formal Notice of Meeting will be mailed out to all financial members of the Trust prior to the meeting.

Heritage Dinner to Celebrate the Centenary of Hornsby Shire Council

To celebrate the Centenary of Hornsby Council, Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust is hosting a Heritage Dinner to Celebrate the Centenary of Hornsby Shire Council on Saturday 6th May 2006, 7pm, at the Cheltenham Recreation Club, The Crescent, Cheltenham. The cost \$40 a head and the Guest speaker is Maria Circett from 'The Cavalcade of Fashion'.

For further information please visit www.2119.org.au or phone 9876 2366. Look out for more details in our next newsletter. Please also mark the date in your diary

It's Membership Renewal Time

If you are not a member and are interested in preserving your lifestyle in Beecroft / Cheltenham, why not join the Trust –

a minimum cost to help protect a major investment!

Your Membership Application/Renewal form is on the back page – **don't delay do it today.**

Tunnel Rethink Campaign

Pennant Hills District Civic Trust has asked us to assist with this campaign.

On 2 August 2005, a public meeting was attended by over 240 members of the affected community at which a unanimous motion, in two parts, was passed. The first part of the motion called for the proposed tunnel linking the M2 and F3 along the line of Pennant Hills Road to be abandoned. The second part of the motion proposed that the alternative western connection, with a second crossing of the Hawkesbury River, be considered by Government.

The 8 kilometre tunnel proposal is considered to have serious consequences for residents of Beecroft and Cheltenham. These include:

1. Increased Traffic on Pennant Hills Road :

- There has been a massive increase in industry and housing in the South West and North West areas of the Sydney Metropolitan area. With the M7 now open, more traffic will use Pennant Hills Road as the link between the M2 and F3.
- The discontinued use of Sydney Harbour for cargo movements and greater reliance on the port of Newcastle will increase freight traffic movements on Pennant Hills Road.
- Heavy vehicles would not be forced to use the tunnel. Those carrying dangerous goods would be prohibited in the tunnel and would use Pennant Hills Road.
- Diesel trucks may also be prohibited from the tunnel as recent studies found that they generate 100 times more carcinogenic pollutant particles than gasoline engines.
- The RTA plan is for a two-lane tolled tunnel in each direction under Pennant Hills Road. The surface road (ie, the existing road) will be reduced to four lanes which most heavy trucks will continue to use. This will force other vehicles to use the tunnel and only provide an increase of one lane in each direction.

2. Emissions and Pollution:

- Federal funding for the proposed tunnel is on the basis that it is continuous for the required 8 km length and incorporates the latest emission filtration technology.
- Overseas studies confirm widespread disquiet regarding the effectiveness of such technology.
- For tunnels built in Sydney, only emission stacks have been used as best practice with no filtration to remove carcinogenic (cancer producing) particles.
- Unfiltered stack emissions concentrate such particles and would have adverse effects on the health of residents and children attending schools within a 2 km radius of any stack.

3. Other Considerations:

- The study to arrive at the tunnel proposal used methodology that does not properly analyse the volume and mix of heavy vehicles within traffic flow, especially at night.
- A western corridor with a new road linking the M7 at Dean Park to the F3 at Kariong with a second crossing of the Hawkesbury River seems to have been dismissed without proper consideration. This more direct route is 20 km shorter and would not impact on highly developed residential areas. It would offer the only long term solution as well as a gateway to the Hunter Valley for future expansion of Sydney.

The single issue of cancer-producing diesel emissions is reason enough for the F3/M2 tunnel proposal to be abandoned. This is not a NIMBY (not in my back yard) argument. The tunnel proposal is not even a short term solution. Government apparatus must not be allowed to impose this no solution tunnel. The community requires a total rethink on the proposal.

There are many other issues of concern regarding this proposal. To learn more and have your say you are urged to attend the Public Meeting on Sunday, 12 March, 2006 at the Pennant Hills Community Centre commencing at 2:30pm.

The Beecroft Children's Library

On Saturday 10th December 2005, *Giving the gift of reading: Beecroft Children's Library 1942-1998* was officially released. This small book, researched by the Library sub-committee of the History Group and compiled and edited by Emma Dortins, tells the story of the library from its beginnings during World War Two in 1942 until its closure in 1998.

For anyone associated with Beecroft or Cheltenham during this period the book will make very interesting reading. It describes many of the social and fundraising activities of the volunteers and is full of remembrances and comments from many of them. It was through their resourcefulness and dogged determination that the library was such a success throughout that period. The book describes the financial difficulties experienced in the early days when it was established in the School of Arts (now the Beecroft Community Centre), the move into the former Commonwealth Bank building and the final move to a new building in the car park in Wongala Crescent.

The book launch consisted of a relaxing afternoon tea on the lawn of Jenny and Ken Angus's house in Murray Road, Cheltenham. Over 50 guests attended, including many of the volunteers who had made the library such a success during its 56 year existence.

Notable attendees included Grace Kingsford-Smith, whose daughter actually features in the photo on the front cover which was taken in 1952. Audrey Somerville also attended, and as the longest serving President of the Library Auxiliary, before cutting the celebratory cake, gave an amusing speech about her association with the library. Also present were Andrew Tink, the Member for Epping in the New South Wales Parliament, and Hornsby Shire Councillor Felicity Findlay.

Many former volunteers had travelled long distances for the occasion and were thrilled to be able to catch up with friends. Altogether it was a very happy and sociable afternoon as the book was well and truly launched to the sound of champagne corks popping.

The book is available at the Post Office and Denny Pharmacy in Beecroft Arcade, priced at a very reasonable \$15. Any operating surplus will contribute to future publications by the Civic Trust's History Group. This is the third book published by the History Group, the previous ones being *Beecroft and Cheltenham – the Shaping of a Sydney Community to 1914* and *Beecroft and Cheltenham Heritage Walks*.

The Trust Congratulates the following Citizens of the Year -

Manna Mostaghim, who became Hornsby Shire's **Young Citizen of the Year**. Manna lives in Beecroft and attends Cheltenham Girls' High School.

Helen Hill, previously of Beecroft, but now living in Thornleigh, was named Hornsby Shire's **Citizen of the Year**. Helen has had lengthy associations with the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group, Scouts, Presbyterian Women's Fellowship, Eastwood Opportunity Shop and the canteens at both Beecroft Primary and Epping Boy's High Schools.

Also commended were - **Cathy Brodie** (Epping), **Sheila Woods** (Beecroft), **Jan Fulton** (Cheltenham) and **Kate Maguire-Rosier** (Carlingford).

(Northern District Times, 1 Feb 2006)

The Need for Vigilance

The Trust has had significant concerns about the proposed development of 68 – 86 Hull Road, Beecroft. This is a steeply sloping block of land running from the back of the Convent down to the rear of houses on Spring St and Hull Rd. There is a creek gully running down through it. There are a number of Blue Gums, the dominant vegetation in this area, and other species which had formed a rain forest on this land.

We understand that in 2002 there was a DA approved originally for a subdivision into 8 lots of which Lot 7, the largest, was to be set aside as a residue lot for the preservation of the remaining Blue Gum forest, now considered

endangered. This allowed seven building sites. Each site was large enough to allow for the cut and fill needed to build on such a steep slope. We also understand that the original sale allowed for a buffer of 7.5m along the rear of the houses in Spring St.

A subsequent DA in November 2005 sought to further subdivide two of the larger lots (Lots 5 and 8) into smaller lots to allow two extra building sites. The Trust objected to this as it would severely impact on some remaining Blue Gums and because the smaller lots were not appropriate considering the slope of the land.

Apart from the fact that the original approved sub-division allowed for the removal of a number of trees, there have been reports from concerned residents of unauthorized felling of further trees and vegetation. It is believed that only by the vigilance of a concerned neighbour that more widespread felling was averted.

Heavy earthmoving equipment was also reported to be used on the site in contravention of the development requirements. Privet was cleared and mulched instead of being removed from the site, so there is a risk that it will regenerate. Large amounts of soil were brought in and around the steep sides of the creek bed. Some of this was piled high around two Blue Gums which

now appear to be dying. Lot 8 is very steeply sloping land which appears to have had a significant amount of land fill added in an attempt to make it into two building sites. This posed the risks of slip and excessive runoff as there was no vegetation on the filled slope. By now weeds have grown.

A subsequent DA in January 2006 addressed some issues to modify the slope and shape of the fill around the creek from 1:1 or 45degrees to a lesser slope. There has been an attempt to modify the course of the creek but in the recent heavy rain, water flowed along the original creek bed.

As well as residents' protests, the Civic Trust has twice sent letters strongly objecting to the current situation and requesting investigation by Council. As a result, a site visit of Council Officers, Ward "C" Councillors and Civic Trust committee members was arranged for early February. The Trust was told that the Council is taking our concerns seriously. We thank Councillor Dekker in particular for arranging the visit and inviting the Civic Trust and neighbours to attend.

Without their vigilance, the contravention of requirements would not have been known.

BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST
Annual Membership - 2006

Annual Subscription Rates: Family \$ 15.00, Single \$ 10.00

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