

# Gateway

Newsletter of the Brooklyn Community Association, Inc

September 2011

## Brooklyn Shared Path Moves to Next Phase



Hornsby Council adopted the Brooklyn Shared Path Feasibility Study at its meeting on September 21st and the recommendation that detailed designs be developed to stage the construction of the path between Brooklyn's Parsley Bay to Kangaroo Point. Funding applications with external agencies will also be explored as the project costs will exceed Council's ability to pay so Council's next step involves applying for state and federal grants as they become available. This will be based on Council's ability to provide matching funds where required.

The shared path will be designed in accordance with RTA guidelines to ensure safe interaction among all classes of road users. Detailed design issues will be addressed in consultation with residents and referred to the Local Traffic Committee for recommendation.

The work program identifies three broad stages of developing the shared path and the associated facilities including bicycle parking, signposting and linemarking. While each stage may take a number of years to complete, each stage would be completed before the next is started to ensure connectivity along the route.

Stage 1— estimate \$538,590

The shared path will follow the road from Kangaroo Point to Brooklyn Road then to Dolphin Boatshed. It will continue along a boardwalk through the mangrove wetlands to Seymour Creek bridge. The path will continue overland to 45 Brooklyn Road. Bicycle parking will be

developed at Brooklyn Public School, newsagency, railway station, McKell Park, Parsley Bay, Brooklyn Park and Salt Pan Reserve.

Stage 2—estimate \$686,250

The path will continue from 45 Brooklyn Road to Salt Pan Reserve. The existing footpath will be widened from Brooklyn School to Dangar Road/Bridge Street.

Stage 3—estimate \$686,250

From Kangaroo Point a boardwalk will continue to Dolphin Boatshed through the wetlands. The existing path from Sandbrook Inlet to Brooklyn Public School and the path adjacent to McKell Park will be widened. A new path will be made from Parsley Bay to George Street.

Construction of Stage 1a is estimated at \$140,000. The RTA has offered 50/50 funds for this stage of the project requiring \$70,000 funds from Council's Traffic Facilities budget.

Council's report points out a number of community benefits the shared path should bring. The first and foremost is to encourage more walking and cycling around Brooklyn by residents and visitors. The section of the shared path through the wetlands will encourage low impact tourism and some great nature watching by users.

Although Council will be looking to find financial support for the shared path, it will need to provide funding for all maintenance into the future.

**BROOKLYN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AGM**

**SATURDAY, OCT 15TH, 10AM, HEALTH CENTRE MEETING ROOM**

**MEMBERS AND VISITORS WELCOME.**

**GUEST SPEAKERS**

## Sydney Water Seeks to Reduce Waste Water Treatment

A filter that should have lasted ten years has only lasted four and the iron used to remove the phosphorous in the effluent appears to be the reason. Sydney Water invited a number of "stakeholders" to a meeting in Brooklyn with the purpose of discussing a proposal to vary how they operate the Brooklyn STP. Stakeholders included people involved in fishing and oyster farming as well as community representatives from Dangar Island and Mooney / Cheero. A representative of Gosford Council was also present.

Sydney Water is making application to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to be allowed to reduce the quality of the water released into the Hawkesbury. As it is the phosphorous that is the problem one has to ask if the increased phosphorous levels in the river will create a problem particularly during drought.

Having built a state of the art facility at Brooklyn, Sydney Water now seeks to lower the bar of water treatment to that of lesser facilities. SW's position is that the present licensed level of phosphorous is unnecessarily low and that the proposed level is in line with levels released into Berowra Creek from STP's at Hornsby.

According to Sydney Water, modifying the limits for nutrient discharges would not affect water quality as the treated effluent dilutes and disperses rapidly within the Hawkesbury River. The release point is located at a well-flushed estuarine environment, 14 metres under water.

All stakeholders present indicated dissatisfaction with various aspects of the proposal. Sydney Water agreed that more data could be made available and they were also asked to advise on alternative solutions to the problem.

For more information phone 1800 006 326, send an email to Sydney Water at [prioritysewerage@sydneywater.com.au](mailto:prioritysewerage@sydneywater.com.au) or look up the website [sydneywater.com.au/Major\\_projects](http://sydneywater.com.au/Major_projects).



## Brooklyn Community Theatre Theatre in the Park Saturday, November 12th

Volunteers are urgently needed to help out before and after the production to construct and deconstruct the stage. Any assistance would be very much appreciated, from fetching and carrying, to trade and creative skills. Volunteers are needed on these days:

Saturday 22 to Friday 28 October  
Saturday 29 to Friday 4 November  
Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 November  
Sunday 13 to Sunday 20 November

If you are interested, please contact Ruth Steel [theatreinthepark@bigpond.com](mailto:theatreinthepark@bigpond.com) as to what days and times you are available, (between 8am and 6pm), and what sort of work you are interested in doing and what skills you can offer. We hope you can help. We also hope to see you all with your friends and family, on Saturday 12 November, for another night of magical family theatre.



## Water over Brooklyn Road

Brooklyn residents will have been only too aware of the water problems we have had on Brooklyn Road during and after heavy rainfall in recent months. The most obvious area has been on the road opposite Sandbrook Inlet Marina. A large pool of water forms across the road creating a serious traffic hazard as car, trucks and trailers aquaplane across the water's surface.

The failure of the road to drain off surface water is caused by mangrove roots blocking the stormwater outlet pipe. Hornsby Council completed a two to three day operation to clear the roots from the outlet pipe. Hopefully, this will control the flooding on Brooklyn Road for the time being.

The community's appreciation goes out to the Brooklyn Rural Fire Brigade for advertising the problem on the electronic notice board. Unfortunately, the problem will reoccur as the roots regrow over time and because the mangrove is protected a conflict between the road users and the environment is unavoidable. Hopefully Council and the relevant environmental protection authority can come to some permanent solution.



# TRAIN WHEEL SQUEAL AND RAILCORP



If you were to generate 97 decibels of squealing noise outside of someone's house the local police would be intervening within minutes, well, maybe an hour in Brooklyn. If you were running machinery next to your neighbour's bedroom in the middle of the night the Council and the Office of the Environment and Heritage might object. You could be prosecuted and fined.

However, if the culprit is a freight train you haven't a worry about the noise you make, we are told by John Hay of the Cowan Rail Noise Steering Committee.

Apparently there are a few things that Brooklyn residents don't know. Rail Corp operates under an environmental protection licence setting targets and conditions and requiring it to try to keep noise down. In turn RailCorp has been monitoring freight trains going into Sydney at Beecroft, since 2007. No trains coming out of Sydney heading to Brooklyn are monitored. If the monitors detect wheel squeal of a certain level, RailCorp notified the freight company, the two biggest being Queensland National and Pacific National, of a defective wagon. That's it. There appears to be no requirement that a defective wagon be fixed or taken off the rail line by the freight company and RailCorp doesn't have authority to require the wagon to be fixed or removed from service or doesn't exercise what powers it might have. As a result, there seems to be no effective noise emission criteria governing the operation of freight wagons in N.S.W.

## NEW PONTOON AT MCKELL PARK

The pontoon recently installed at McKell Park is a welcomed improvement to Brooklyn Harbour and already being use by local boaties and commercial boats alike. Officially commissioned on September 16th the pontoon is a welcome addition to boating facilities in the river community. A NSW government Better Boating Program initiative, the pontoon was jointly funded by NSW Maritime and Hornsby Council using money from boating fees.

RailCorp has a department that controls traffic on train lines such as steam trains or special trains. It decides which trains to give a permit to use the rail lines because the lines belong to the NSW government. One could reasonably ask why can't it deny train line access to identified defective wagons? The problem stems from a lack of will and no power to address this very annoying issue. This is a state wide, even world wide problem and will likely be expensive to fix, if it can be fixed. Airplanes are limited to times during which they may operate because of the noise generated and freight trains should be no different. That would at least allow people a chance to sleep in peace. If you are interested in more information phone John on 9456 3743 as our community needs to join with other communities such as Cowan, Beecroft and Cheltenham in tackling this problem but we need to identify people who are truly concerned about the issue to represent the community in discussions with the powers that be.

And why, you may ask, do wheels squeal? No one apparently knows exactly but it is largely the result of boggies not having a differential to allow the wheels to go at different speeds around corners; one wheel drags along the top of the rail. The touted solution, a top of rail friction modifying applicator, TORFMA, may help as it lubricates the top of the rail but it can't be used on grades where the wheels might slip. In South Australia such wheel squeal has been recognised as a health hazard.

A related local issue that has also been expressed by community members concerns the high level of noise generated by shunting freight trains during night hours along the newly refurbished and extended spur line. Noise generated by this activity should breach EPA criteria and legislative requirements if common sense were applied.

On a more hopeful note, RailCorp's burnt out house at 28 Brooklyn Road has been referred to the Minister by Matt Kean for urgent attention. As most residents would recognize the remains of this structure are a health and safety hazard for locals and train passengers alike. The quicker it is removed, the better.



# TIDAL POOL RENEWED IN TIME FOR SUMMER



The refurbishment of the Brooklyn tidal pool at McKell Park, being carried out by Hornsby Council, is due to be completed by September 30th, making it ready for springtime swimmers on the October Long Weekend. The contractors working on the pool have been putting in extra time to reach the deadline for the west side walkway. The eastern and northern sides have already been completed. Other work to be done include the installation of handrails and the shark netting.

Perhaps we will see some new swimmers in the pool this year, drawn by the pool upgrades and the cleaner water in the Hawkesbury River. It will be comforting to know that we won't be sharing the pools with any of the more sizable of our shark neighbours.

## Loutish Drunken Behaviour

It is not news that over the last few years Brooklyn has experienced an increase in conflict among visitors and residents due to flaunting of laws, regulations and ordinances that apply to all of us in the community equally. Disappointingly, the lack of enforcement has led to the problem of drunken behaviour in public areas growing and extensive clearing and damage to the bushland around the area. Both locals and visitors to the area are seeking the help of the BCA to find a solution to this community problem. A business has closed because tenants were unable to conduct their business in the wake of squatters setting up camp in premises. Other incidents have included physical and verbal assault by louts and drunks on patrons and staff of local cafe. Despite contacting the State Member, Council and Police to address these issues, little is being done. The BCA have been active in discussing this situation and have also sent a letter to the Police describing a physical assault on a staff member of a local business and sealing food from café patrons, noting the accompanying loud abusive language and drinking. The response from the Police noted that it was problem. The community and visitors in Brooklyn know it is a problem. What we need is a considered and appropriately implemented solution.

The community of Brooklyn have been encouraged to report all incidents to the police or when observed in the parks and bushland of the area to Council Julia Morton, Parks ([jmorton@hornsby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jmorton@hornsby.nsw.gov.au)) 9847-6934, and Donna Fitton, Bushland ([dfitton@hornsby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:dfitton@hornsby.nsw.gov.au)). Only this week these Council representatives were in Brooklyn to inspect the illegal land clearing in the bush behind lower McKell Park and the soil degradation and runoff that is the result. Destruction of bushland and misuse of parks or playgrounds must be reported to Council in writing. It needs the Brooklyn community to implore both the Police and Council to enforce the ordinances, laws and regulations equally without fear or favour.

## Heritage Display at Lower

### McKell Park in Need of Repair

Spotted around Brooklyn are several displays that present items of heritage significance for the enjoyment of both residents and visitors alike. It is unfortunate that sometimes a very good idea just doesn't quite work and the display at the McKell Park playground is just one such idea. This beautiful, rustic display is an attractive addition to the shoreline and is a credit to the long and interesting history of the area. Hornsby Council did an excellent job in designing and presenting the exhibit. The problem is that the glass used in the display has not stood the test of time and now makes the display look shabby and neglected—hardly the image a tourist town wishes to present.



*Written by Mathilde Kearny-Kibble on behalf of the Brooklyn Community Association Inc Committee*

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