

# Gateway

Newsletter of the Brooklyn Community Association Inc

August 2017

## **MEET YOUR WARD A HORNSBY COUNCIL CANDIDATES**

### **Who do you want running your council?**

When: August 19<sup>th</sup> - Saturday 10am -12pm

Where: Brooklyn Health Centre meeting room

Who: All Lower Hawkesbury residents!

#### **President's report**

Our Council has been making the news lately. The council supported amalgamation and the process started with the Hornsby Shire losing the area south of the M2 including Epping and Carlingford which was transferred to the City of Parramatta. Then after the State government changed their decision about forcing amalgamations, the rest of the process stopped. Now the Hornsby Shire is smaller with less revenue but according to the amalgamation process, they are unable to reduce staffing for three years from the beginning of the process. So, once again the ratepayers are bearing the brunt end of the deal.

What can we do about this? Council elections are scheduled for Saturday September 9th. The BCA is holding a Meet the Candidates forum on August 19<sup>th</sup>. We have asked Ward A candidates to come and tell us why we should vote for them. What do you want for the future of Brooklyn and our shire?

Updates: Brooklyn Masterplan- the CRG members received the following update that was posted on the BCA-Masterplan facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BCAMasterplan>

The project consultant, McGregor Coxall has been busy collating feedback which identified the community's favourite places, critical issues and opportunities. The consultant has also been discussing opportunities with relevant State agencies and progressing additional traffic modelling, parking investigation and economic opportunities.

On 21 June 2017, Councillors received a briefing on future opportunities and next steps in the Master Plan process. Councillors agreed that as the Council election is to be held in September 2017, further progression of the project should be deferred until the next term of Council. This would enable the new Council to be briefed on this important project before commencing the next phase of consultation. After consideration by the new Council, a further update will be provided before the end of the year.

Di Bowles, President Brooklyn Community Association

[president@brooklyncommunity.org.au](mailto:president@brooklyncommunity.org.au)

We would like to acknowledge the contribution to the BCA of RW Corkery & Co who kindly provide committee meeting facilities and print the Gateway newsletter, and Gary Robertson, Brooklyn's postie and musician, and his associates, who kindly deliver the Gateway in the community.

## PARK SECOND TO NONE

### BYGONE BROOKLYN

Tom Richmond

When the railway arrived at Brooklyn in 1887, it changed the whole pattern of river trading. Before the station opened here, farmers and orchardists along the river had to send their produce to market either through Windsor or by sea to Sydney. From 1887, goods could be transferred from river vessels to the railway, improving the speed to the market. Seafood was also loaded onto the trains from river boats.

At first, the main wharf at Brooklyn was the “Gordon Wharf “at the end of Long Island. As the use of the area as a harbour increased, there were strong arguments for developing port facilities closer to the station. In 1907, the Brooklyn Progress Association lobbied successfully to have a mud bank heavily dredged to give access for large vessels to the embankment near the station. The mud that was lifted from the river was used to reclaim what used to be an inlet but is now Dangar Road. A further large area was reclaimed, forming what is now McKell Park. All of the park’s flat area is actually land reclaimed in 1908/9.

Gradually, railway sidings were added down to the main wharf so that cargoes could be easily transferred to railway wagons. The reclaimed area remained in State Government control through the NSW Government Railways, which operated the park as a camping ground and picnic area. The railway actively promoted the park to encourage tourism and use of the trains. The park became known as the “Railway Reclamation Reserve” and the supervisor had the powers of a special constable. A shelter shed was erected and it was used by the locals for bazaars and other events. Strangely, amidst all of the change over the years, the shed is still standing, behind the Seniors’ cottage. It may well be the only such building remaining from the period when the railway operated its own tourist facilities and it is a fine example of bush carpentry. There have been claims that the palm trees were planted for the royal visit in 1901, but such claims are absurd because the park did not exist then. From old postcards, it would seem that they were planted not long after the Reclamation Reserve opened. They were certainly there when the kiosk opened on the location now occupied by the Teahouse.



The Park not long after the reclamation. Note the Shelter Shed that still stands today, behind the Seniors’ Cottage.

Four boatsheds were also built in the park, where the Marina now stands. All of them did a brisk business and it was reported in 1909 that the fleet of hire craft at Brooklyn could accommodate four hundred people at peak periods. It was a splendid holiday venue. During the Second World War, gun emplacements were built into the park to provide defence for the railway bridge, which was a prime target for any invader. The soldiers who manned the defences camped there and the toilet block at the lower level was added to serve their needs. In 1941, Hornsby Council urged the State Government to pass control of the area to the Council. This was done in that year and, in 1942, the newly acquired park was named after the Premier, William McKell. Council had many urgent post-war tasks, but in 1951, the President, Cr Charles Somerville, who had a strong interest in Brooklyn, posted a minute that he believed that Brooklyn was second to none as far as a holiday resort was concerned because of the proximity of McKell Park to the railway station. Other councillors spoke at a September meeting about how the actions of the Council's workers, at McKell Park, had turned a "wilderness into a paradise". Cr Paterson commented on the need for a road to the upper level to move parking away from the baths, which were then being constructed.

Up until the 1960s, there was a charge for vehicles entering the park. Towards the end of that decade, the boatsheds, which had deteriorated badly, were demolished and replaced by a building owned by Don's Boats. This, in turn, was replaced in the late 1980s by the present marina complex. The kiosk, too, was replaced by the much larger building that now contains the Teahouse. The Fishermen's Co-operative opened in 1951. Much of McKell Park is still Crown Reserve, which means that the area should not be used for "off-reserve" parking, or car storage. Perhaps our new Master Plan will address that problem.

*Tom Richmond, OAM, is a retired high school principal and qualified historian who has written the local history column for the Hornsby Advocate for the past decade. Tom's ancestors arrived in Brooklyn in 1861.*

**THE HAWKESBURY RIVER YACHT CLUB** is a relaxed, not-for-profit club affiliated with *Australian Sailing*.

The club has been based in Parsley Bay since 1992. That said, we don't have a club house, but usually meet on the water for a raft up, or at the local hotel for drinks and dinner after races.

We have an eclectic range of yachts, ranging from small daysailers to blue-water ocean cruisers. We offer point score and single race trophy events, utilising permanent or set racing buoys, making use of the pristine waters in the lower Hawkesbury, Broken Bay and Pittwater areas. We also have a range of water-based social outings, as well as special events in member's homes.



The club welcomes anyone interested in sailing, from complete novice to expert sailors – with or without a boat. Places are often available for non-boat owners who would like to sail. Additional information can be accessed from the club's website at <http://hryc.asn.au/> For more information, please contact Libby Braybrooks on 0417 452 782.



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An advertisement for Breakthrough Church @ Brooklyn. It features a photograph of a large steel truss bridge over a body of water. The text on the advertisement includes:

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# Spot the Dog

Bob Davis

William Shakespeare wrote." What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet". My old mate Geoff Connors agrees, for the following reason. Geoff is big well-built bloke who looks a bit like Sylvester Stallone in the Movie" Rocky Balboa" he served in the Australian Army during the Vietnam War and found it hard to settle back into civilian life when he came home .

At the time my wife Bev and I owned a clinker built, half cabin launch moored at Brooklyn, ideal for fishing, so with Geoff as company, we spent many happy hours fishing on the Hawkesbury.

Anyone who has been fortunate enough to own a timber boat will know that once a year they need to be slipped, scraped and anti-fouled. Geoff offered to help with this messy job and remarked that anti-foul paint reminded him of a motel shower curtain, clinging to all parts of the body.

We worked one each side of the boat and finished the job by lunch time. I asked Geoff if he would like a beer and a pie at The Anglers Rest Hotel." Thought you'd never ask" answered Geoff. So away we went.

We sat on the front deck of the Pub watching the locals and tourists go by as we sipped on our beer. I was first to notice the old lady shuffling along the foot path that runs parallel to the railway station, she was heading our way, bent over and walking with the aid of a stick. Her companion, a large, old dog limped along behind. He was white all over except for one big black spot right in the middle of his back and must have suffered from arthritis because every time he limped he yelped and each time he limped and yelped his testicles, like large dried up prunes, swung from side to side like the pendulum on a clock.

"Who is the oldest Geoff, the lady or her dog"? I asked. "That's any ones guess" answered Geoff, they are both a bit ancient. Though I bet you, a schooner of beer, that the dog's name is Spot". Well, that was pretty obvious, so I asked for some odds. "OK, Two schooners to one the dog's name is Spot, said Geoff. We waited and watched. As the old lady came to the corner. She looked both ways and prepared to cross over.

The dog stopped to relieve himself on the corner power pole just as the lady reached our side. She turned to call and we held our breath as she cupped her hand to call. 'Here, Geoffrey, Geoffrey, Geoffrey. Hurry up Geoff or you will get run over".

Well, Geoff Connors leaped to his feet, slammed his fist on the table and yelled "Davis, you Bastard, you've set me up". I hadn't of course, it was just one of those, once in a life time flukes.

Geoff lives in the country now and loves to tell this story against himself at the local pub. He is known locally as Spot Connor and those that know him well enough, reach up to pat him on his head. "Good boy Spot, good boy" they say. Geoff doesn't bite, he may growl a bit and answers" If you can call a dog Geoffrey, why not call a man Spot, what's in a name"?

Departs 10am daily  
Includes Morning Tea  
& Ploughman's Lunch



Bookings essential, pay on the day

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We are now selling sourdough bread from the famous 'LA TARTINE' bakery! Come in on a Saturday and choose from a classic white or wholemeal or opt for a whole grain, olive or amazing fig, sultana and almond loaf - all are absolutely delicious!

**Come in and join us for lunch.**

We look forward to seeing you soon.  
Open Thursday to Monday - 9.00am to 4.00pm  
The Brooklyn Deli 212 Brooklyn Road Tel: 02 9985 7291