

Gateway

Newsletter of the Brooklyn Community Association Inc

February 2019

(Next Issue June 2019)

President's Report

We hope you can join us for our first meeting for 2019. We have changed the time of our meetings to 3pm to make it easier for families with children in Saturday morning sport to get involved and attend the BCA meetings.

We have many items to discuss and would like your input. The BCA committee met with Hornsby Council late last year regarding the Masterplan. Council have decided to conclude the Brooklyn Improvement Masterplan process and are now going forward with their new "placemaking" approach with a focus on achievable improvements using early work completed by the consultants.

Even before the official statement, the BCA began work with the Council to activate the Hawkesbury River Arts Cottage for our community. We see the cottage as an important space for connection, creation and discussion. We have had a couple of meetings with Council officers to discuss the renovation and use of the cottage, and we will review the formal proposal we made to the Council at the meeting.

NSW State Property arranged a walk around Peat Island on the 10th of February. The zoning plans are now with the Central Coast Council and following zoning approval, will be put up for community consultation. Whilst there have been great improvements to the first plan, we are still concerned that there are plans for 268 dwellings which will put a demand on current infrastructure. And unfortunately, there is not a current study on the cumulated effects on the surrounding communities across the river. We continue to ask that this is included. The plan is for zoning only at this point. Peter Davis and Juno Gemes have put together an alternate vision for Peat Island. Pete will be discussing this at our meeting ahead of a workshop at the Mooney Mooney Chapel the next day, Sunday March 3rd at 10:00 am.

We have also written and talked with both Hon Matt Kean MP and the General Manager of the Hornsby Ku ring gai Hospital regarding the Brooklyn Community Health Centre. We asked for their commitment for the centre as it is today to remain, which they have given. We will discuss further at the meeting.

And more good news, the grant for the permanent stage at the Rest Park has been approved and the money is on the way. We are working with the Theatre in the Park group to get work started soon and will plan to have the stage completed before the next wonderful play to be produced in November.

Di Bowles, President Brooklyn Community Association

president@brooklyncommunity.org.au

Brooklyn Community Association General Meeting

**3pm-5pm Saturday 2 March 2019
Brooklyn Community Meeting Room**

Opportunity to catch up on local events and activities

BCA Members, Guests and Friends welcome.

Meeting Dates

3pm Saturday

2 Mar 2019

15 Jun 2019

7 Sep 2019

30 Nov 2019

Brooklyn Public School Dates

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| ➤ Seniors Cruise Year 6 | Tue Feb 19 | ➤ P&C 2019 AGM | TBA |
| ➤ Meet the Teacher | Thu Feb 21 | ➤ Zone Swimming Carnival | Fri Mar 8 |
| ➤ Asquith Girls High School visit | Tue Feb 26 | ➤ Year 6 Leadership Camp | Wed/Thu Mar 13/14 |

The Gateway is published by the Brooklyn Community Association. Contact the BCA on info@brooklyncommunity.org.au. While every attempt is made to publish content as submitted, some editing of material may occur during publication.

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.

Hornsby Council Community Tree Planting Day

Saltpan Reserve Brooklyn

Sunday 10 March 2019 from 10am -12.30pm

All welcome: Behind the RFS building, enter via Cole St or Brooklyn Rd.

All plants and shovels are supplied by Hornsby Shire Council's Community Nursery.

Participants need to wear their own gloves, long sleeve shirt, hat, long pants, sturdy enclosed shoes, sunscreen and bring a water bottle.

For more info call Donna Fitton or check Council's web site <http://trees.hornsby.nsw.gov.au/events/>



Donna Fitton

*Environmental Scientist - Bushland Operations | Natural Resources | Hornsby Shire Council
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Hornsby Council Native Plant Giveaway

Ward A Residents

Sunday 24 March 2019 10am - 12pm

Hornsby Community Nursery

28-30 Britannia Street, Pennant Hills

Come and collect 4 free native plants for your garden.

This plant giveaway is for residents of Ward A (Asquith, Arcadia, Berowra, Berowra Heights, Brooklyn, Berrilee, Calabash, Cowan, Canoelands, Dangar Island, Dural, Fiddletown, Forrest Glen, Glenorie, Galston, Glenhaven, Hornsby Heights, Laughtondale, Mt Colah, Mt Kuring Gai, Maroota, Middle Dural and Singletons Mill.)



Plants provided in the giveaway are locally sourced and grown at Council's Community Nursery by volunteers and council staff. Please bring your current Hornsby Shire rates notice and ID and pick-up some free native plants for your garden. Limited stock on the day and limited car parking near the nursery.

Profile: Ambrose Reisch

30 years painting on the Hawkesbury River

Living and painting in Brooklyn for the past 30 years has both sustained me as an artist being exposed to a robust unpredictable river environment, and as a local being part of an evolving dynamic community. We moved to Brooklyn in 1988 with my wife Miriam and daughter Anna. Dylan our son was born that same year.

For most of this time I exhibited in the city though all my painting was realised here in Brooklyn. My first exhibition was at the Patonga gallery in Patonga in 1989, one year after we arrived and we travelled there by boat from Brooklyn, which was a wonderful induction for a 'tenderfoot' from the city into the 'river mythology'. In those early years I also had the good fortune to have designed the current Brooklyn Public School badge.

Last year I was invited to submit an article celebrating 30 years of living and painting in Brooklyn on the Hawkesbury River. The article, '30 years of Hawkesbury Dreaming' was published in Ozarts magazine, Spring Edition, No. 16, November 2018. The article is biographical and surveys a 'painter's journey' that highlights my intellectual and artistic interest. You can view the article in the Ozarts Magazine or on my website in publications 'Hawkesbury Dreaming' at www.ambrosereisch.com



Ambrose Reisch 0450 302 615 ambrosereisch210@gmail.com

Jazz in Brooklyn!

Enjoy a local evening's entertainment with a difference:

Olivia Simone and the Ray Alldridge Trio present sweet and hot jazz and Latin grooves

Angler's Restaurant on Saturday 9 March, 7pm – 10pm

Bookings advised 02 9985 7860

Olivia Simons <olivia.simons4@gmail.com>



Expired Marine Flares

Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) has published details of the 2019 Expired Marine Flares Collection Program, which will be run at various NSW locations and times in January and February during the summer boating season. Locations are available on the interactive map, or view a list of locations by region.

The RMS program is the only regulated way to dispose of expired flares. There may be some limited exceptions to this in some locations, however the most important thing to remember is to dispose of an expired flare safely, remembering also that it's an offence to set off a flare unless it's an emergency.

Andrew Fenwick CMM Fenwicks Marina 02 9985 7633.

KNC Volunteer Program - Calling YOU to become involved...

The Kur-ing-Gai Neighbourhood Centre (KNC) Volunteer Program is up and running providing services to those in the Brooklyn and Dangar Island areas.

The KNC Volunteer Program provides services that are targeted to seniors who are frail or may need access to rehab, etc. with such assistance as:

- Meals on Wheels - the service needs drivers to deliver meals for a few hours each month.
- Easy Care Gardening - Do you love the outdoors? The service needs volunteers to help in small friendly teams to create low maintenance gardens.
- Neighbourhood Aid - Help a frail or elderly person stay independent. Drivers are needed to provide transport to appointments, visit sick relatives in hospital, shopping and social visits.

If you would like to take advantage of any of these services or ask questions about your particular need, all it takes is a phone call to KNC on 02 9988 4966, who are waiting to assist you.

And if you want to become a volunteer, here's a great way to contribute to your community and also enhance your own health and happiness. Please register your interest in becoming a Volunteer with:

Jo Scarsbrick: 0414 240 342 Vicki:9985 7177

Shop for Rent

Retail/Office Space in Brooklyn Village

24 sq metres, fully restored shopfront with down and spot lighting, large window display. Includes storeroom/change room. Suitable for retail, professional office or equipment wholesale/distributor.

Inquiries – please phone Miriam on 0414 464 375 for further information or to arrange viewing.

Ads in the Gateway

- \$25 for business card size
- \$35 for quarter page
- \$50 for half page

Send your ad text in Word format, with logo/picture if required, to

info@brooklyncommunity.org.au

Tomatoes

A Story by Ted Roberts

This is probably a yarn, meaning it might or might not be true. So I can't tell you who passed it on to me, and I can't tell you the real names of the people involved. But I'll tell you anyway.

Anyway, this story, the old man said to me. I heard it when I was a kid about ten or so, and we'd moved across to Dangar from Brooklyn. My father made a bit of a living as a fisherman around the river and he got this old shack cheap from a fishing mate who wanted to move in with his daughter. There were still plenty of mullet, and the old man'd come home every now and again with a big Jewie, a flattie or two, or some bream, so he did all right, and as I was the only kid, we got by pretty well.

I had this uncle, Ned his name was, a real old bloke, much older than my dad, older than anyone I knew on Dangar or even in Brooklyn. He had a bit of an oyster lease just under the cliffs near Wobby, where the ships used to come to water. Beautiful water, a bit of iron in it, reddish, but pure as crystal, out of these big, natural ponds they called the Tanks. He still worked the lease himself, in spite of his age, and I used to like giving him a hand now and again. He had that smell about him old blokes get, you know, a mixture of beer and tobacco and salt. I used to like being near him.

He was quiet for a moment, remembering, so I just waited a bit.

I remember we were poling along in his punt one day, and I'd been asking him about the Guringai people. Whether he'd ever met any of them. He asked me a few questions about why I wanted to know, which surprised me a bit, but whatever I answered seemed to satisfy him, and he said, I'm gonna show you something. And he got out the oars, and we rowed over towards Wobby. We tied up the punt to a mangrove, and he leads the way. Up through the scrub, heading towards the top of the escarpment, near a place they call Tumbledown.

I knew Tumbledown, it was where a couple of huge rocks broke away from the cliff face and came smashing down in a sort of landslide, into the river, taking a couple of fishermen's shacks with them. Part of the legend says a fisherman was sitting on his dunny having a quiet smoke when the rocks hit it. He didn't live to tell whether it was true or not.

Well, Uncle Ned might have been old, he continued, but he was certainly fit, and it was all I could do to keep up with him as we climbed, and then suddenly we were in a sort of flat space, maybe twenty foot square, where there were no tall trees, just a bit of scrub and long grass. It was hot as buggery, with the sun streaming straight down and no cover. When we'd got our breath, he takes me over to where the grass is longer than anywhere else, and he parts it.

You see that? he says? Well I couldn't see anything much, just grass and some sort of weed growing along the ground. That's not weed, he says, Smell it. And he rubs a leaf from the weed and sticks it under my nose. Tomatoes, I say, surprised. Tomatoes, he agrees.

We looked around a bit, but there was no fruit, just the vines, lying on the ground, twisted, looking the worse for wear and lack of water. There were a few straight sticks, too, eaten by white ant and rotten, but they must have once been tomato stakes. Why anyone would plant tomatoes up here, I asked. He started moving off. I'll tell you in the boat.

We rowed back slowly, the two of us with an oar each, it was starting to get a bit late, around sundown, and I can see that sunset over the hills now. Or I think I can. I probably see the same thing every night. But it was quiet, just the splash of our oars and the water sliding past the punt, and the beer and tobacco smell of my Uncle's clothes. The sky every shade of blue and red. And he told me the story. The story I'm telling you.

He started slowly, choosing his words, getting it just right in his memory.

There wasn't anybody much living at Wobby, my uncle said, when Conlan (I'll call him Conlan) got there. Dangar had a few white people living on it, and there were still some indigenous people around, though they kept out of sight, mostly. The sicknesses we brought with us bowled most of them over, and that bastard Dangar did his best with the rest. You know what it's like when people don't understand each other, they get scared of each other. They get scared of us, and us of them. And that can make things unpleasant. Especially when one lot's got guns and the law behind them, and the other hasn't.

Conlan had a ticket-of-leave and he'd managed to get hold of a bit of land, a small bit, that wasn't big enough to feed a sparrow. Then one day he found a bloke selling tomatoes, and he bought one, all he could afford, and the bastard charged him ten times what it was worth. Well, he took that tomato back to his shack, and he sliced it open, and he took out the seeds, one by one and set them aside on a piece of rag, and put them in the sun to dry. Then he ate the flesh, and it was the best feed he'd had in days.

He used those seeds to raise some seedlings in an old wooden bucket, watering them every day, doing anything he could, which wasn't much, to keep the bugs away from them. Then, when he thought they were big enough to plant out, he rowed down the river to Tumbledown, and found the clearing I showed you today.

He'd been coming there for nearly a week, getting a garden bed ready. Clearing away the trees that blocked the sun, digging up the ground and turning it over, mixing in horse dung he'd collected from a paddock in Brooklyn. He slaved over it, but finally, he reckoned it was ready, cut some sticks as stakes, and planted out his seedlings. About twenty or so. His garden.

When he came back next day, to water them, some of them had been eaten by possums, and the rest of them had been dug up by scrub turkeys rooting around for worms in the soil he'd turned. It just about broke his heart, but he found about half the seedlings, the ones the possums hadn't got, were still alive, and he got them replanted and watered and it looked like they might survive. But he knew as sure as night follows day that the possums and the turkeys would be down again to finish off what they'd started.

He took off his clothes and made a scarecrow with a couple of sticks, then he hare-tailed it buck-naked back in his boat to the shack, and grabbed a bit of food and a piece of rotten canvas off the roof. A few other things he reckoned he'd need, and his gun.

Back at Tumbledown, the seedlings were still standing. The scarecrow had worked so far. But the possums and the turkeys were cunning buggers, and he knew they wouldn't be fooled for long.

He made a bit of a lean-to, with the canvas and a few branches, built himself a fireplace, and camped. He had a feed of oysters from the rocks, put out a set-line for fish, and settled down to guard his tomatoes. He kept the fire going all night, sleeping a bit here and there, but with his gun right by his hand. It was bloody cold, and he had nothing but the fire to warm him, but he'd survived worse than that on the hulks, and on the way across, and working like a slave on an officer's farm. The fire kept the marauders away all night, but as the sun was coming up, and the fire dying down, the first scrub turkey took a few suspicious steps into the clearing, still wary of the fire. Conlan's bullet took its head clean off.

For weeks he lived on turkey and possum meat, oysters and fish, and anything green that was edible, against scurvy. The turkeys were skin and bone, the possums tough and gamey, so one night he shot an inquisitive goanna and tried that. It was the last goanna he saw, which he thought was a pity, as it ate well.

Eventually, it seemed the possums and turkeys were getting the idea that this was not a good place to forage, and he began to sleep for longer periods, and more deeply.

The tomato plants thrived, started to put on flowers, and finally the small tomatoes themselves. He watered them and fed them with a mulch of leaves, and tended them like babies.

He could see the future. He would eat his fill of them, and he would sell them in Brooklyn. At the price he paid for his original one, he'd make enough to support himself for months. Or he could trade tomatoes for meat, and vegetables, and fruit. His dreams became full of this bright and well-fed future.

He picked his first ripe tomato. He seeded it as before, for future plantings, then ate the pulp. It was more wonderful in taste than he had thought possible, and now there were twenty or thirty fruit ripening that would be pickable over the next day or two.

He sat by his fire that night, and thought about the past. His past. The fight for very life in the stews of London, the trial, the hulk, the horror of the crossing, with fifty men perking and shitting themselves all around him, and his own gut-wrenching, enfeebling sea-sickness. The floggings that came later were nothing compared to that voyage in that filthy, dark hold, with the vicious night attacks and the buggery from the bigger, stronger men, the thefts of everything you possessed, the fear that the morning would never come, and then the hope that the next night wouldn't. But that was past. There was a future for him now, a future that had begun with a single tomato, an idea, and a few weeks of cold and lack of sleep. Tomorrow, that future would begin.

When he woke next morning, he was annoyed with himself. He had slept through the night, and the ashes of the fire were long cold. If he'd done this while he was looking after the officer's sheep.

He suddenly remembered why he was there, and struggled from his blanket, and hurried to the tomatoes. The bushes stood there, as they had the previous day, no sign of turkeys or possums. Or of ripe tomatoes.

He went from vine to vine, and they were gone, every one of them which had been red or tinged with pink. Just gone. The plants unmolested, undamaged. Only one green tomato had been picked, and it lay on the ground, rejected, with a bite taken from it. A bite which he saw could only have been made by human teeth. He had been robbed.

For the next three nights he didn't light his fire, and he dozed rather than slept, the gun across his knees. Waiting for the thief.

At dawn on the fourth night, the girl was already collecting shell-fish. She had emptied the crab net of the single, small crab that had fallen to it, and had pulled in the set-line which had produced no fish. Her man would be angry with her.

She had been terrified by the sight of the sleeping white man, and the gun he slept with like a wife, but if she could take back one or two of the red fruit that he had liked so much, she would avoid her man's anger.

Conlan didn't know what woke him, certainly the girl had made no noise, but wake he did, to see the dark figure crouched among his tomato plants. He took quick aim and fired, and the scream of the girl shattered the morning quiet.

She was not dead, but her leg, where the bullet had lodged, was bleeding profusely. She whimpered as he dragged her from the garden, spilling the tomatoes she had picked. And when he had beaten her with the butt of the gun and ripped off his belt to lash her with it, she did no more than whimper still.

He stood over her, the fury slowly ebbing away, and stared at her. The long, thin legs, the small breasts, the slightly pock-marked face, the black eyes with their look of defeat. Of knowing what would be next.

Later, he knelt by the river's edge, washing his face, his hands, his body. But he knew he would never wash away the self-hatred, the shame, the horror of what he'd done. On his knees, he tried to pray, but he knew no prayers. All he knew was that he had done something terribly, terribly wrong.

He heard the soft murmur behind him, turned and saw the black, naked man, and as he stumbled to his feet, saw the spear fly.

He tumbled backwards into the river. His river.

I wasn't sure whether I should speak. To be honest, I didn't think I could intrude on the old man's memories. He had seemed, all along, to be talking to himself, explaining something to himself.

Anyway, that's the story Uncle Ned told me. He liked a good story, Ned, so you can take it or leave it. But I did see the tomato bushes. Might still be there, for all I know, self-seeding for bloody decades. A century. Yeah, he liked a yarn, but that one, that one I always kind of believed.

He had a sip of his beer.

What do you reckon?

Submitted by Pat Woolley wildandwoolley@me.com

Marine Rescue Hawkesbury

Marine Rescue Hawkesbury was kept quite busy for the year of 2018 with our 42 volunteer members putting in around 12,000 hours. We assisted over 350 people through the year. The Unit attended multiple special events, such as the Big Swim from Palm Beach, The Hawkesbury Canoe Classic and The Bridge to Bridge Ski/Powerboat Race. We also took part in a large-scale Search and Rescue exercise (SAREX) to ensure our skills are maintained to a high standard.

Over the Christmas to New Year's Eve period, we worked alongside RMS and the Police Marine Area Command, both at the start of the Sydney to Hobart yacht race and the New Year's Eve celebrations on Sydney Harbour.

Late in the year, we completed our 'Find Me on The River' program. This program was put together with the idea of making the water-access-only properties at Bar Point easy to find in an emergency, without having people in distress trying to describe their wharf.

For the program, we placed high visibility signs on each usable wharf showing its designated number. We then put together a dossier with all the wharf numbers, a picture of the wharf, the latitude and longitude of each and any hazards or other information that may be needed about each wharf. The information was then distributed to all local Marine Rescue units, Broken Bay Water Police, Police Marine Area Command and the local Police commands. Now, every Service that may be involved has a copy for use in an emergency response.

With the same special events planned for 2019, along with a large emergency response exercise alongside the Rural Fire Service in March, it is already shaping up to be a big year for our volunteers.

As always, we will be holding several Recreational Boat License courses, so keep an eye on our Facebook page – Marine Rescue Hawkesbury – for more information on those.

*Jamie Abnett-Miller, PR and Media Officer, Marine Rescue NSW Hawkesbury Unit
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BYGONE BROOKLYN

By Tom Richmond

Brooklyn may well be a candidate for the Guinness Book of Records as the most planned location in existence. A letter to the *Advocate* written by Richard Kearney in 1990, and reproduced here, refers to a period of twenty years in which four plans had been produced.

Subsequently, we have had The Brooklyn and Environs Management Plan (1990), the Brooklyn Traffic Parking Management Report (1998), the McKell Park Conservation Management Plan (2000), Hornsby Shire Parking Strategy Review Working Paper (2002), Kangaroo Point Masterplan (2005), The Waterways Review (2005), Brooklyn Estuary Management Study (2006), Scoping Report on Parking Management in Hornsby Shire (2009), Development Control Plan (as amended 2010). In addition, we have more recently had the Brooklyn Masterplan, with input from everyone who has ever stuck a toe in the water here, whose content has never been revealed.

Richard Kearney described the early plans as "Generally uninspiring and lacking specifics, they succumbed to bureaucratic paralysis." This description could well also apply to the later ventures. We have watched as Brooklyn has slowly been converted from a thriving resort to long-term carparking the stand out feature of our town.

The past plans have varied from the bizarre to the inconsequential. A couple have involved massive developments at Kangaroo Point, including one which proposed a small village on stilts above the water. Another wanted to develop land at Dead Horse Bay and build a road from the Hilltop to it, through the hills above the railway line.

Of course, none of the reports seek to make Lower McKell Park a car storage area for offshore residents because their authors all knew that most of the park is a Crown Reserve and it is illegal to use it for parking not connected to activities on the Reserve.

So, if Brooklyn has been so extensively planned, why does it look so unplanned? The explanation may be a continued dose of bureaucratic paralysis.

Tom Richmond OAM

Hawkesbury River Arts Cottage

As part of Hornsby Council's Placemaking Strategy, where community is involved in identifying what activities happen and how space is used in our village, the BCA has submitted a proposal to activate the Arts Cottage opposite the train station. The proposal describes how the BCA would use the Arts Cottage to provide a place where visitors can experience the history of Brooklyn, see work from local artists and craftspeople and find out about the local environment through the promotion of walks, parks and riverside events.

Discussions with Council have been positive, including funding for renovation of the cottage and availability to the community later this year.

We'd love to hear your ideas of how the community could use the Arts Cottage! Please send your thoughts to Myff Sharp or Di Bowles at:

myffsharp@gmail.com or president@brooklyncommunity.org.au



Plans were uninspiring

HORNSBY Shire Council reacted predictably to the Brooklyn Tourist Development report produced by Commissioner Woodward.

Instead of accepting the conclusion that their performance was indifferent, they assert that plans were in preparation even before the commission hearings.

This is a fact — over a period of 20 years at least four proposals or plans for Brooklyn appeared.

Generally uninspiring and lacking specifics, they succumbed to bureaucratic paralysis.

The future is not encouraging. A preoccupation with matters managerial and council in-fighting appears to inhibit effective action.

Richard Kearney
BROOKLYN

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Hawkesbury River Yacht Club

It's been a quiet period for HRYC due to the Christmas and New Year holidays, and some of our members are absent, having gone south for the Wooden Boat Festival in Hobart. Like many of the locals, we suffered from the inclement weather which saw several of our boats suffer from hail damage – but mainly to solar panels, canvas dodgers and the like.

We've just hosted the Broken Bay Inter Club Race BBQ, known as the 'Brooklyn Bash' at McKell Park – an annual event. Those of us manning the BBQ got to enjoy what Brooklyn locals experience every day – a slice of Heaven. We also got to meet several prospective club members, which was beneficial.

The race, which has between 20-30 entrants, struggled to find enough wind, with many of the boats unable to finish within the allotted time. The start is at Palm Beach, and then goes around Lion Island towards Juno Point, then back to Mackerel Beach, and finally finishes off Flat Rock Point at Brooklyn. None of the HRYC boats finished, and the other clubs fared little better, so we had fewer visiting crews for the BBQ than in previous years. That said, everyone who comes ashore loves the Brooklyn area and there are always a range of questions from sailors who are keen to revisit the area at a later date.



RMYC's Alan Bertram giving BBIC race results at McKell Park. (Photo A. Wild 9 Feb 2019)

We are planning to have our next summer Twilight Sail and BBQ on Friday March 15th - so welcome interested visitors. Weather permitting, our boats leave Parsley Bay around 5pm, sail a short course, and then return for a sausage sizzle at the Parsley Bay picnic shelters.

HRYC welcomes anyone interested in sailing – or socialising - and invites visitors to join us as guests, crew, or bring their own boats. Find us on Facebook - Hawkesbury River Yacht Club. For further information, call Cliff on 0425 310 930.

Lee Malone HRYC

