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BEECROFT - CHELTENHAM

**CIVIC TRUST**

I N C O R P O R A T E D

P.O. BOX 31, BEECROFT. N.S.W. 2119

**BULLETIN 3**

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### SPRING WALK—ALL WELCOME

Join us again for a walk through the bushland of eastern Beecroft and Cheltenham.

- WHEN Sunday 20th August starting at 2.00 pm
- WHERE Meet at the end of Day Road, Cheltenham
- BRING A hat and some water and wear sturdy footwear.

The walk will take about two hours and as usual afternoon tea will be served at the end of the walk. We look forward to seeing you there. A representative from the History Group will be attending to discuss local history.

Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust  
invites you to attend this important

### PUBLIC MEETING

**Beecroft Public School Hall Mary Street, Beecroft  
Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September 3.00 pm**

Guest Speaker:  
**Associate Professor Ray Kearney,**  
Head of Department of Infectious Diseases and Immunology,  
University of Sydney

### **Health Impacts of Vehicle Emissions Within and From Road Tunnels**

The Hon Philip Ruddock MP, Member for Berowra has accepted our invitation to attend.  
Other Parliamentary and Council Representatives have been invited.



## What The Trust Has Been Doing For You.

The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust has a committee of dedicated volunteers who spend many hours discussing and lobbying for issues that affect our district. These include:

- Reviewing Development Applications lodged to Council and writing to Council on those which do not meet the requirements of the Heritage DCP or are inappropriate.
- Approaching Council where incidents of unauthorised development or non compliance with development applications are suspected.
- Preserving our environment, trees and bushland and supporting the work of volunteer bush regeneration groups.
- Maintaining road and pedestrian safety through 50km speed limits, lights at Cheltenham Rd and urging for lights at Kirkham St.
- Achieving improvements to Beecroft Village in Hannah St and the War Memorial and donating and maintaining the Notice Board in the Village Arcade.
- Commenting to Council on policies in general.
- Recording and archiving of local history and the publication of several books and articles through our History Group.
- Informing residents of local issues through our public meetings, our website [www.2119.org.au](http://www.2119.org.au) and our Bulletin which is delivered by volunteers to every household in 2119 postcode.
- Organising a Spring and an Autumn walk each year, each attracting between 50 and 100 participants.

We welcome contact from residents by phone, mail or email and are often able to refer them or take action. The Trust enjoys a good relationship with our Councillors and welcomes their support on many issues.

**The Trust needs your support.** We deliver 4000 bulletins yet our membership is around 400. Membership is not expensive- \$15 for families and \$10 for singles. **If you are not a member or have not renewed your membership** this year, please send a cheque together with your name, address, phone no and email address, if applicable, to The Treasurer, PO Box 31, Beecroft, 2119. This will help us do our job even better.

We also need people to become members of the Committee, to help with the assessment of Development Applications and who are willing to attend Council Planning Meetings. We have subcommittees which include the History Group, Housing and Development, Parks and Bushland, Website and The Bulletin. If you can assist or would like to join any of these groups, please contact the President or Secretary.

## Historic Scout Hall In York St.

The Trust and local residents have serious concerns about the proposal to demolish this historic building in view of the inaccuracies and errors submitted by Scouts Australia in their development application to Council. These include statements that the hall is 60 years old and has no heritage value. Trees marked on the application are clearly incorrectly placed. As residents are aware, the hall was built in 1927. It was built on land donated by local identity Ida Byles. There was a plaque in the hall dedicated to her son who was killed in World War I. Many local families have been involved in scouting and in the maintenance and upgrading the hall and grounds. It adjoins Chilworth Reserve and the local volunteer bush regeneration group have been responsible for cleaning and weeding the area and removing rubbish. Public access to Mary Street is through a well constructed pathway beside the hall.

The Trust has requested that a qualified heritage consultant be engaged to research and document the history of the hall and the land. Boundaries and the position of trees need to be identified. Should demolition be approved, we ask that both during demolition and any subsequent development, public access to Mary Street be maintained and the adjoining Chilworth Reserve be protected.

The trust welcomes any information you might have on the history of this building and your comments on this proposal.





## **A Hundred Years Of Tennis On The Village Green**

*No. 5 in a series of articles on the history of Beecroft and Cheltenham*

In the latter years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the comparatively new sport of tennis became extremely popular in Beecroft. There were a number of private tennis courts in the new suburb, as many of the allotments were generous in size. In 1895 a group of residents formed the Kennedy Tennis Club, playing on the court of Mr Henry Perdriau in Copeland Road. By 1898, needing more courts, they were able to lease land on the Village Green. Two courts were constructed for £50. Play began in January 1899. A handicap tournament for 'mixed couples' was played in that year and young Joseph and Dora Seale (Dora was to be women's singles champion in 1939) were the winners. A garden fete was held to raise funds for the club and inter-club matches were played. By 1902 three courts and a small pavilion catered for between 30 and 40 regular players.

During World War I Beecroft Tennis Club, along with many local organisations, raised funds to support the war effort, as attested by a framed certificate that still hangs in the clubhouse. In 1916 a Red Cross Tennis Competition held on both Beecroft and Cheltenham Clubs' courts raised more than £50.

### **Between the Wars**

After WWI, members decided to build two new grass courts, convert the three existing gravel courts to grass and extend the pavilion. A £50 bank loan was secured and repaid, but in 1921 additions to the pavilion cost \$201. A fete on the Village Green in 1920 and another in 1921 brought in £145 and £148 respectively. In 1921, now that the Club had become a lawn tennis club, it became affiliated with the New South Wales Lawn Tennis Association, the forerunner of Tennis New South Wales, and began entering teams in the inter-club Badge Competition.

A special loan fund was set up and members lent the club sums at 5% interest. Many of these loans, however, were still not repaid in 1939. Many sums contributed were small but Dr Holt lent £50 as did Mr Robert Vicars of Cheltenham, principal of Vicars Woollen Mills.

The 1930s depression affected the club's finances seriously. Subscriptions brought in £240 in the year

ended July 1930 but two years later, at the height of the Depression, they had fallen to £152 when annual fees had been reduced. It may have been at this time, to save groundsman's fees, that the members were called on during the summer closure to plant grass and do the topdressing. These annual working bees continued until 1982.

Wally Hall, a 'partially paid' fireman at Beecroft Fire Station, was groundsman in the 1930s. His dual roles could conflict. On one occasion Wally was working on the courts when he heard the siren of the fire engine and observed it setting off to attend a fire. Children at Beecroft Public School enjoyed the spectacle of Wally racing back to the fire station to collect his bicycle. He was then seen peddling as hard as he could after the fire engine, cheered on by the children in the school playground.

### **1940s – 1960s**

Beecroft remained small enough for Badge and social players to mix at social tournaments, but men, especially Badge players, remained influential. When she joined in the 1950s Joan Austin was told approvingly that she made a fine cup of tea.

In 1964 Cliff Gibson, who operated a business manufacturing shop fittings and was unavailable to join working bees, designed and constructed the sets board as a gift to the club. Its design ensured players of all standards met and played together and that a fair number of mixed doubles were played. Cliff's sets board is still in use.

By this time, the old timber clubhouse was dilapidated and neighbours regarded it as an eyesore. The only seating was on the verandah, and the minute kitchen consisted of little more than a sink for washing up the cups and saucers after afternoon tea, served by the women members. The toilets were out the back of the building and there were no hot showers. In 1957 Hornsby Shire Council offered £2000 for the building of a new brick clubhouse, and an additional £1000 was obtained as a bank loan. The new clubhouse allowed social events to be held which raised funds to maintain the courts, repair fences, replace equipment and repay the bank loan. The Annual Dance and Presentation of Trophies began at this time. More women played regularly on Thursdays, but Sunday play, especially during church hours, was not approved.

The Schubert Shield competition between Beecroft Lawn Tennis Club and Cheltenham Recreation Club, began at this time. It is played once a year on the tennis courts of both clubs. Alan Schubert, a local build-



ing contractor, was at different times a member of both Beecroft Lawn Tennis Club and Cheltenham Recreation Club. When he died suddenly in 1960, the Schubert family donated the Schubert Shield for this friendly annual tournament between the clubs. His son, John, now a life member, joined in 1948 aged 15, served a term as President and still plays with the Veterans' Club.

### 1980s – present

The Club's financial problems were solved when two courts were converted to artificial grass and lights installed to allow night play. These courts became available for hire, ensuring a regular income from hirers. At last the Club was able to employ a professional groundsman to do work previously done by the members. The standard of the grass courts present improved. Saturday nights became social nights for members, who stayed into the evening for a shared meal and social tennis until 10 p.m. A social committee organised whist nights and dances. Stan Bowman (President 1983 – 4) and June, his wife, who served as social convenor, persuaded the committee to found a successful Veterans' Club.

Pat Walker began a career in tennis management when she served as a Beecroft Club delegate to the NSWLTA. She joined the NSW Tennis Umpires Association and was elected its President in 1982. Later, as President of the national body of umpires, she oversaw the design and inception of a volunteer training program for linesmen and umpires to provide accredited officials at major tournaments. As an international umpire, Pat was invited to be a chair

umpire at the Los Angeles Olympic Games, one of only two international women. For a number of years she was Chief of Officials at the NSW Open and worked at numerous Davis Cup ties.

In October 1998 Beecroft Lawn Tennis Club celebrated its centenary at a lunch held at Oatlands House. Geoff Pollard, President of Tennis Australia, and John Whittaker, President of Tennis NSW, attended. Fittingly, in the same year, Beecroft's top Badge team won the 1/1 Badge competition. A club founded by a group of Beecroft families had grown to become a Northern Districts institution.

*Contributed by the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group*

### Hornsby Shire Council Centenary Community Recognition Awards.

In its centenary year, Hornsby Council recognised people and groups in the shire who help build a sense of community. Some 160 nominations across nine categories were received. These were narrowed down to 36 finalists who were invited to a Presentation Dinner on 20<sup>th</sup> July. The Trust's two nominees were finalists and in all four local residents and the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group were represented. We congratulate them all on the fine work they and their teams are doing to improve our community. Finalists in the Environment category included **Dorothy Doolan** (Highly Commended), **Jenifer Lewis**, **Mary-Jo Reeve** and **Ross Walker**. The **History Group** were finalists in the Historical category. Details and photographs of the evening should be available on the Council website [www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hornsby.nsw.gov.au).

### Proposed North West Rail Link.

A brochure issued by Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation in June is available from local libraries and stations. Whilst this project is some years away and no one could question the need for improving public transport to the rapidly growing Hills District, there are several issues which impact on Beecroft and Cheltenham. The Trust has contacted TIDC to clarify some points made in this brochure.

The proposal is to **quadruple the rail line between Epping and Beecroft**. This in effect means there will be four tracks instead of the current two. A 19km tunnel is planned to go under Beecroft, West Pennant Hills, Castle Hill and out to Burns Road. This tunnel will commence between Cheltenham and Beecroft, in an area which looks to be between Murray Rd and the Beecroft Tennis Courts.

**Cheltenham Station will be upgraded.** The plan is for the two existing platforms to become island platforms with a line either side and an overhead connection, with lifts, between them. As yet the design has not been finalised and details are not available. This development will have a serious impact on our heritage district and the Trust has asked for a meeting with a representative from the TIDC. This should occur in September.

Residents should seek information by reading the brochure and by phoning 1800 684 490 or from [www.tidc.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tidc.nsw.gov.au). Feedback on the proposal is welcome on [mail@tidc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@tidc.nsw.gov.au) or to Public Affairs Officer, TIDC, Locked Bag 6501, St Leonards, NSW, 2065. The Trust also welcomes your feedback on this issue. Please contact us with your comments and send in any questions you would like us to ask at the meeting.