



# BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST

INCORPORATED

PO BOX 31, BEECROFT N.S.W. 2119

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## **Federal Election – Meet the Candidates for Berowra**

**7.45pm for 8pm start, Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> August**

**Cheltenham Recreation Club – The Crescent, Cheltenham**

**Your Trust is pleased to invite interested members, residents & business-owners to this evening.**

All candidates for the Federal seat of Berowra have been invited.

The format will allow candidates to make a short presentation.

After that, some 60 minutes will allow questions from the audience to candidates on issues of concern.

## **Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust – Spring Walk**

**Sunday 22 August, 2pm Day Road, Cheltenham**

*Please join your fellow residents for a walk-and-learn experience through part of our local area!*

Starting from the end of Day Road Cheltenham at 2pm, we will follow Devlin's Creek, and then walk beside Lane Cove River. We will make a deviation around the South Turramurra Environment Protection (STEP) track loop, and rejoin the Lane Cove River track.

We will then walk back along Devlin's Creek to Day Road for a complementary – and well-deserved afternoon tea, around 4pm. Highlights of the walk will be spring flowers, severe weed infestation and contrasting bush regeneration, and recent flood damage. *Please wear safe walking shoes, sun protection, & bring water to drink.* For information and enquiries contact walk leader Ross Walker 9875 4446.

## **Proposed Four Storey Development by Uniting Care**

Following correspondence from concerned residents about rumours of this development, your Trust wrote to Uniting Care to ascertain what they proposed for the site behind the Beecroft Uniting Church. A briefing about their proposed development was arranged by Uniting Care with very short notice, on Friday 16 July 2010. Regrettably, many adjoining residents had not been informed by Uniting Care. Some affected residents attended, mainly from Hannah Street, plus four Trust representatives.

The draft proposal intends some 52 units, 2-4 storeys in height, with 2-3 bedrooms to be constructed, to be owned and leased by Uniting Care. Some 32 of these are for disadvantaged housing and the remaining 20 are Independent Living Units. Parking will be provided for 52 residents, 8 visitors and 1 disabled. At the briefing, concerns were expressed about massing and size of development, solar access, amenity, overshadowing of adjoining residents, overlooking and privacy, tree preservation and the impact of building and excavation on trees, fauna and flora, hydraulic issues, water catchment, traffic (a big issue given existing traffic flows, commuter parking and bus service along Hannah Street) heritage and nearby school zones. A formal development application is yet to go to Council, but residents should be aware that Uniting Care is already in negotiations with the NSW Government about this multi-million dollar proposal.

## **Beecroft town centre – Strategy adopted – more resident concerns**

Following the July adoption by Hornsby Shire Council of the 5 storey Beecroft town centre planning strategy, a number of Chapman Avenue residents have expressed concern about impacts on their amenity. They have properties opposite the proposed 5 storey development, and will be meeting with your Trust, to progress their on-going concerns about the impact of town centre development on traffic, parking and residential amenity.

## **BEECROFT RESERVE [PART 2]**

by Beecroft Cheltenham History Group members Lesley Goldberg and Sheila Woods

*[Part 1 of this article was published in Bulletin No 2, March 2010]*

In 1964, residents concerned to preserve the character of the suburb from undesirable impacts of development and services formed the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust. In July 1964 the first president, Mr F. R. Barnett, received a request from the Hornsby Council Shire Clerk to appoint a committee to supervise the area of 'open space land adjacent to Devlins Creek between Beecroft Road and the Pennant Hills Golf Club'. 'Such areas are extremely difficult for Council to supervise and maintain', he wrote. This was the beginning of citizens' involvement in actively caring for their local bushland.

### **BUSHCARE ACTIVITY IN THE RESERVE**

A bushland sub-committee was formed, convened by John Noble. Their duties were supervising the reserve to prevent dumping of rubbish and garden waste as well as the destruction and removal of bush rock, wildflowers and animals. The volunteers organized working parties to remove rubbish and erected signs informing walkers about penalties for dumping. In 1965 the sub-committee formed one of the first bush regeneration groups in Sydney. They sent letters to householders living adjacent to the reserve and planned a group effort on the first Sunday morning of each month to clear lantana, privet and noxious weeds. The first group continued working together until 1969, although there were gradually fewer sessions and members. John Noble continued working regularly on his own with help from a few others and was convenor of the bushland sub-committee until the 1980s.

By then, his approach to weed control had become the accepted method for recovering the health of bushland threatened by weed infestation. Botanist Jenifer Lewis, whose husband Ivan had been a member of John Noble's original group joined the subcommittee in 1984 and in 1987 founded a bushcare group at the western end of Beecroft Reserve. John Noble suggested the group begin work in Chilworth Reserve in 1991 and this group continues its efforts under the leadership of Sheila Woods.

### **BUILDING OF THE M2**

The growth of Sydney and the need for more transport links led to the proposal in 1965 for a road to link the planned industry and housing developments in north-west Sydney to the city. There was no action on this proposed link until the election of a Liberal National coalition government in 1988, led by Premier Nick Greiner. The new state government declared that they were 'a road building government' and announced a public/private partnership would build a tollway from North Ryde to the northwest, with the route to go directly through the Beecroft Reserve and other areas of bushland in Marsfield and North Ryde. This proposal, supported by the local member Bruce Baird, who was Minister for Transport, divided the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust membership and was a critical issue for the future of the Trust. Despite strong opposition by groups of citizens who formed themselves into a Coalition of Tollway Action Groups, and two formal inquiries, the M2 was finally built and opened in 1997, although the route was moved southward from the original alignment which, if implemented, would have destroyed the Chilworth Reserve. This battle for the Beecroft Reserve raised issues about preservation of land which had been thought to be protected.

### **BEECROFT RESERVE IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

Although the tranquillity of Beecroft Reserve is now disturbed by traffic noise, it still offers many pleasures to walkers strolling the tracks. Bush regenerators, both volunteers and Council contractors, have worked assiduously to restore areas damaged during the M2 construction and continue to remove noxious weeds. It remains important as a wildlife corridor. More than 50 species of birds have been identified, including Parrot species which use the bushland to feed and breed. Among them are Rainbow Lorikeets, King Parrots, Crimson Rosellas, Eastern Rosellas, Sulphur Crested Cockatoos, Gang Gang Cockatoos, Galahs and Scaly-breasted Lorikeets. Other birds seen and heard are Eastern Spinebills, Fantail Cuckoos, Golden Whistlers, Pardalotes, Wrens, Finches, Pied Currawongs, Magpies, Noisy Mynahs, Grey Butcher birds, Australian Ravens and Kookaburras. At night Tawny Frogmouths and Powerful Owls can be heard. However, the Bowerbird who could be counted on to build its bower annually near the creek's northern bank seems to have moved to another habitat since the tollway was opened.

Trees dominating include Blackbutt, Turpentine, Angophora, Blue Gums, Bloodwoods, Red Mahogany and Forest Oaks. There is a large variety of native shrubs, vines and ferns. Jenifer Lewis, who is the compiler of a herbarium of Hornsby Shire, has identified 270 species in this stretch of bushland, including several types of orchids.

Members of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust who responded to a survey in 2008, overwhelmingly agreed that the natural environment must be preserved. Hornsby Council in 2009 began to create walking and cycling tracks which will link the eastern and western areas of the reserve and enhance residents' enjoyment of recreational activities in the Beecroft Reserve.

**The 2010 proposed widening of the M2 means further local impacts on the adjacent bushland and nearby households. Please support the Beecroft-Cheltenham Civic Trust's work to minimise M2 impacts!**