



BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST INC

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www.2119.org.au

bcct2119.blogspot.com

BULLETIN 4

September 2011

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BCCT was established in 1964 and has been protecting our community for 47 years.

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The Trust now has a blog, to provide information on current and evolving topics relevant to the residents of Beecroft and Cheltenham. You can find it at bcct2119.blogspot.com. Correspondence may be sent to the Secretary as above or to comment@2119.org.au

BCCT Spring Walk - Sunday 18 September, Thornleigh Oval, 2 – 4pm

Meet at Thornleigh Oval, corner of Handley Avenue and Ferguson Avenue, Thornleigh at 1.45 for our spring walk. See the magnificent wildflowers, the spectacular city view and learn the history of Lorna Pass and Conscripts Pass. This walk goes from the heath like vegetation and open sandstone woodland on the ridge, into a beautiful valley and gorge at the headwaters of the Lane Cove River and through a small forest at the shale and sandstone transition. The track is very good but a small part is steep. After the walk, enjoy afternoon tea. Enquiries: Ross Walker 9875 4446

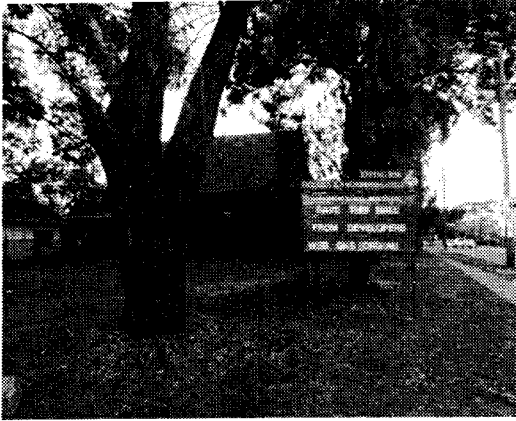
**All welcome although this time dogs are not allowed as we will be walking in Lane Cove National Park.
Wear sturdy shoes, sun hat and bring water.**

Beecroft in Bloom – Friday 9 and Saturday 10 September

Support the Beecroft Cheltenham Lions Club Beecroft in Bloom Festival. On the Friday night you can enjoy a cocktail party with excellent refreshments, entertainment and the opening of the art show. Tickets for the Friday night event cost \$20 and are available from Ray White Beecroft. All day Saturday it is free. As well as flowers, you can enjoy the art exhibition, stalls, bands and displays and many activities for children including an animal farm, jumping castle and face painting. The Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust will have a display. Come by and see us.

Proposed Abolition of Council's Heritage Committee and Proposed Sale of Old Church in Cheltenham

Last month, Council considered various cost saving measures including the abolition of Council's Heritage Committee. Many community representatives including the Trust and the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group spoke against the proposed abolition. Heritage is important across the Shire and having no heritage committee sends a very clear message to the community that heritage is not highly regarded within council. Council has deferred the matter for further consideration. While the Trust considers the retention of a Heritage Committee as essential we also believe that Council should recruit for permanent appointment to the heritage officer position. The Trust believes a committee needs an inhouse professional who can lead and advise on day to day matters. The alternative arrangement proposed by Council to engage a heritage consultant on an ad hoc basis is a backward step in the protection of heritage in our suburbs across the shire.



With less than 1 week's notice, the Golden Kangaroos Hornsby Concert Band learnt that Council Staff proposed the sale of the property on the corner of Beecroft Rd and The Promenade, Cheltenham. This site contains the one remaining Church building in Cheltenham and the original Cheltenham Kindergarten. The old church is used by the band for rehearsals, library and storage.irate residents rallied and emailed Councillors to reject this proposal and keep this site in public ownership and to support the band.

If you believe heritage is important then contact your C Ward Councillors Their contacts are: mhutchence@hornsby.nsw.gov.au ; rbrowne@hornsby.nsw.gov.au ; amartin@hornsby.nsw.gov.au

BCCT Public Meeting – Beecroft Shopping Village – What Next? Monday 31 October, Cheltenham Recreation Club, The Crescent Cheltenham, 7 for 7.30pm

- ✓ **Meet your Councillors, your State MP and your Trust Committee**
- ✓ **Discuss significant issues affecting 2119 including heritage, rail, transport and development**
- ✓ **Find out what might happen to the Beecroft Shopping Village with changes in State Planning**

BCCT Meeting with Transport Minister Flange Noise from Trains in Cheltenham/Beecroft

The BCCT have received a significant volume of community feedback regarding the significant high pitched flange noise emanating from freight trains going around the curves in the Cheltenham / Beecroft section of track.

Than BCCT Committee is pleased that Greg Smith MP has been able to arrange a meeting for us with Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian and representatives from Department of Transport in September to discuss flange noise and other issues including the NWRL, a lift at Beecroft Station, and the possible additional freight line. This will be reported at our Public Meeting in October.

We welcome any feedback from residents that we can take with us to the meeting. Please email us on comment@2119.org.au with your complaints or observations.

How the NWRL will benefit Beecroft and Cheltenham

The BCCT Committee supports the proposed plan for the North West Rail Link because it will have great benefits for our suburbs. We are pleased the State Government is determined to build this much needed infrastructure.

The proposed tunnel from Epping to Cherrybrook avoids a huge and ugly dive point off the Main Northern Line which would have been difficult to construct with ongoing rail traffic. It would have been 6 tracks wide at the junction and required quadruplication of the entire track as well as rebuilding our stations. The Village Green would have been resumed as a construction depot and residents would have been greatly inconvenienced for a long period of time.

In general, the key advantages of the direct tunnel from Epping to Cherrybrook (green alignment) as stated in the North West Rail Link, Options Review Report are:

- *It would have the lowest life cycle cost, including a capital cost indicatively between \$20 to 60 million less than other options, and reduced ongoing operation and maintenance costs.*
- *It is shorter than the other four alignments by between 230 and 650 metres.*
- *It would have the least construction impacts including the shortest construction period, smallest volume of spoil generation (up to 36,000 cubic metres less spoil) and the least spoil haulage truck movements.*
- *It would provide the best ride quality because it is straighter than the other alignments with no reverse curves.*

The green alignment (Epping to Cherrybrook tunnel) would also have the following additional advantages:

- *It would have the shortest journey time by between 5 and 24 seconds.*
- *It would require the least maintenance.*
- *It would consume the least energy and generate the least greenhouse gas emissions during construction and operation.*
- *It would not impact the approved corridor for the Epping to Parramatta Rail Link.*

As far as Beecroft and Cheltenham are concerned, this tunnel option will have the least impact on all residents. By providing much needed effective and efficient public transport for people living in The Hills district, road traffic and parking in our suburbs will be reduced. It is a great win for 2119.

Know Your Suburb - Fearnley Park

Lesley Goldberg (Beecroft Cheltenham History Group)

Located between Hannah Street and Chapman Avenue in Beecroft, Fearnley Park contains significant remnants of Blue Gum High Forest, once the dominant vegetation occurring on Wianamatta shale soils on the high rainfall ridgelines on the North Shore and northern suburbs of Sydney. Devlins Creek, which rises in nearby Blackwood Sanctuary runs through the park. Its history reflects stages of settlement in Beecroft since the period beginning with the arrival of the first European settlers.

This piece of land was part of farmland owned by John Savage, Assistant Surgeon (1770 – 1838), who arrived in NSW in 1803. Savage acquired 330 acres, farmed for him by emancipist cattle farmers. He was a supporter of Dr Edward Jenner, and in the colony he carried out a vaccination program against smallpox, using a vaccine derived from cowpox. His success brought him into collision with the Principal Surgeon Thomas Jamison who, probably due to jealousy, had him courtmartialled for neglect of duty. Governor Philip Gidley King was sympathetic and Savage returned to England where his conviction was set aside. The Reverend Samuel Marsden supervised his land holdings in his absence. When Jenner obtained a post for him with the East India Company, Marsden was requested to sell the remaining land holdings. Despite at least one attempted sale in 1855 the land remained unsold until Savage's children sold the land in 1880. A later owner of this part of Savage's land was another interesting character, William Walter Davis (1840 – 1923). Davis, who ran away from his Bathurst home at the age of 13 to become a drover, subsequently had a career as cattle dealer, station owner and auctioneer, holding land in western NSW and southern Queensland. He became manager of pastoral firm Davis, Dale & Co. and put down the first artesian bore in NSW in 1886. He served in the NSW Legislative Assembly as member for Bourke from 1889-91 and was re-elected in 1898, serving until 1900 when financial losses saw him retire, although he served two further periods as an MLA.

In 1905 he purchased a Beecroft orchard (of which Fearnley Park formed part). When he died at Randwick in 1923 he was survived by his third wife, Florence and 16 of his 19 children. In 1906 Davis's 11 acres (4.45 hectares) in Beecroft were bought by John Fearnley, who had been in the shipping business since his arrival in Australia in 1880, aged 19. In WW1 he served as District Naval Officer in Newcastle. He extended the existing cottage on the land into the large house he named *Rivington*. It is seen today facing into the park, with its rear to Cardinal Avenue. From 1929 it was leased and in the 1930s served as a 'convalescent home'. After WW11 the Fearnley family decided to subdivide the land, but Hornsby Council requested that the creek be piped before the sale went ahead. Unwilling to undertake this cost, the Fearnleys donated 4 ½ acres (1.8 hectares) for the park we see today, the rest becoming home sites fronting onto Hannah Street, Chapman Avenue and Cardinal Avenue.

During the 1930s depression, as was common at the time, homeless persons camped in the area, attracted by the easy access to water from the creek. One was an Aboriginal woman. Another was 'a perfect gentleman' named Syd, who lived in a hessian-lined tent and specialised in making wire baskets, a trade then taught to prisoners. Syd made a living busking on the Manly ferries and doing some gardening for Beecroft families. Alf Bonner lived in a shack constructed from hammered-out kerosene tins, where the playground is now sited. Feeling threatened by the approaching sub-division, he swallowed a dose of cyanide, having handed a note to a nearby neighbour, Mr Alan Whatmore, who owned *Hadley Lodge* (built 1939 and now demolished) at 78 Hannah Street. Police found two bankbooks in his shack that revealed he had considerable savings.

Residents have recalled another occurrence in the park in 1961. Alan Whatmore persuaded Gladys Moncrieff, described as Australia's 'best-loved singer', to visit the park. He organised a ceremony attended by the Shire President, Max Ruddock, and local MLA Eric Hearnshaw. She sang for the assembled residents. Her visit was commemorated by a plaque on a seat placed in a site overlooking Devlins Creek – a replacement seat is still there. In 1987 Hornsby Council undertook one of its first regeneration projects in the park, clearing privet along the small tributary creek and replanting with native trees, including Blue Gums, She Oaks and Coachwoods. From 2005, following the declaration of Sydney Blue Gum Forest as an endangered ecological community, Council began funding an ongoing regeneration project carried out by both contractors and an active volunteer group. It is now a

What is the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust?

It is Australia's First Civic Trust: *a community focused on preserving its environment & heritage.*

On a fine spring day in 1963, residents of one of Beecroft's many attractive tree-lined streets noted a number long timber poles lying on the road verge, and a number of very deep holes dug ready to receive the poles. Several engineering-wise residents of the street realised that the poles were for high tension electricity mains, the erection of which would mean cutting down, or at the least, ruination of a number of fine gum trees lining the street.

Overnight the affected residents were alerted and the Sydney County Council, the electricity supply authority concerned, was inundated with requests to divert its supply line to save the trees. Local Members of Parliament became involved, the press sent its reporters and photographers, and feeling ran so high that Departmental engineers held a street meeting with the residents on the site. The result - a simple solution. It was found that with very minor variations to cable lay-out, and the pruning of only a few branches, the line could still go through as intended, sparing the trees and the character of the street - and the expense of tree felling was saved. More importantly, it led to the formation of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust (BCCT) in 1964.

This, Australia's first Civic Trust, has done much since its foundation, to put the case to both State and Local Government as well as to Statutory Authorities for the survival of what remains of our passive and defenceless natural beauty and for the citizen who wishes to continue to enjoy this natural beauty and other desirable civic amenities. The Trust is run by a committee of volunteers and has elected 10 members and up to two appointed members. At least three must come from Cheltenham and at least three from Beecroft so that both suburbs are represented. They provide expertise in Law, Architecture, History and Heritage, Planning, Science, Real Estate and Property, Engineering, Education, Business Management, Landscape Architecture, Horticulture, Arboriculture and Surveying.

The committee receives throughout each month from Hornsby Shire Council copies of Development Applications lodged within the 2119 post code areas, and is invited to view the application and appended plans / reports and make comments on the application in a written submission to Council by a notification end date within 14-21 days. We frequently advise residents on these matters. The committee liaises with Council, Members of Parliament and Statutory Authorities on a wide range of issues that affect our suburbs and matters raised by residents. These issues include transport, town planning, infrastructure, parks, bushland and street trees. We support local bushcare and heritage groups including the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group.

BCCT currently has 544 members. Membership subscriptions are our only source of income to finance the Trust's efforts. If you have not joined the Trust, please join now to help us continue our good work. Any fees paid in September will make you a member for 2012.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION FORM 2012.

Fees are \$20 household (two adults), \$10 individual

Surname (1) First name (1)

Surname (2) First name (2)

Address Post Code

Street address preferred

Suburb

Phone Number (02) Mobile No.....

E-mail address

Membership fees \$ as noted below. Do you require a receipt? YES /NO

Post this form to PO Box 31 Beecroft with your cheque or

*Deposit BSB 062 113 Commonwealth Bank Beecroft Account 10068238 or

*Electric Funds Transfer from your bank account via computer BSB 062 113 Commonwealth Bank
Beecroft Account 10068238. NB Use your name as reference.

**If you use either of these methods, please send a copy of this completed form or the same information to The Treasurer,*