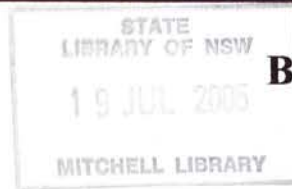


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**BEECROFT - CHELTENHAM  
CIVIC TRUST**  
INCORPORATED  
P.O. BOX 31, BEECROFT, N.S.W. 2119



**BULLETIN 2**

**July 2005**

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**PUBLIC MEETING**

**Thursday 25 August 2005 – 8:00 pm at Cheltenham Recreation Club**

*An opportunity for Beecroft Cheltenham residents to find out more about the*

**BEECROFT HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN**

The following Officers of the Hornsby Shire Council will be in attendance –  
Mr James Farrington, Manager, Strategic Town Planning and Christopher Reeves, Heritage Planner

.....

The Trust is particularly mindful of the requirements of the Heritage DCP which Hornsby Council has recently adopted for the older parts of Beecroft and Cheltenham. In supporting the Heritage DCP, the Trust does not aim to restrict appropriate development. The DCP provides useful guidelines and a framework for development in character with the area.

Residents should be aware that in this respect the position of the Civic Trust towards “Development” is to support low impact development which maintains the traditional housing and bushland atmosphere of Beecroft / Cheltenham. This position is to be promoted through liaison with Hornsby Councillors and the Mayor. A subcommittee of the Trust meets monthly to discuss relevant development applications for the area. Where warranted, a request may be made by the Trust to the “C” Ward Councillors to refer the application to a meeting of Hornsby Council.

**SPRING WALK**

Join us for our wildflower walk in Lane Cove National Park. It is now three and a half years since the bush fire which burnt through the park and the wildflowers should be good despite the dry conditions.

Our walk will start at the Day Road carpark, go up to Pennant Hills Oval, along the ridge fire trail and down to the Lane Cove River. We will then return to Day Road via Devlins Creek and have afternoon tea. The walk is on good walking tracks but there are some creek crossings which may require some agility, especially after rain. Note that the “walk” is approximately 6 k with some steep sections.

WHEN: Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2005 at 2.00pm  
MEET AT: Day Road carpark, Cheltenham  
BRING: A hat, sunscreen, water and good footwear.

**ALL WELCOME**



## OUR NEWSLETTER

To inform residents of Beecroft and Cheltenham of local events and issues, the Civic Trust prints over 4000 copies of our newsletter to be distributed to every residence. Distribution is carried out by a team of some 35 volunteers under the direction of Brian Sippel. From time to time, people are unable to continue to deliver the newsletters or may be away. Brian would appreciate new volunteers or people who are willing to act as reserves to deliver newsletters within a small designated area. If you are able to help, please phone Brian on 9980 6963. The Trust Committee would like to thank everyone who is involved in the distribution of the Newsletter for their efforts on behalf of the Trust.

### **Beecroft Community Centre**

*(No. 3 in a continuing series - contributed by the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group)*

The Beecroft Community Centre has marked its centenary. Opened on 10 December 1904 as the Beecroft School of Arts, it is Beecroft's oldest surviving public building still used for something like its original purpose.

The vigorous self-confidence and optimism of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw an enormous expansion in educational opportunity, and by 1880, primary education was universal and compulsory in New South Wales. Adult education was not forgotten, and so Mechanics Institutes and Schools of Arts were established throughout the British Empire. In New South Wales alone there were some 250 such institutions. What originally motivated their establishment was a middle-class high-mindedness for the welfare of the working classes, but by the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century these institutions were mainly providers of light cultural entertainment for the middle classes. As well as a library, they often had recreational facilities such as a billiards room. Schools of Arts had become social clubs or community centres rather than educational institutions. Ultimately the Beecroft School of Arts became the Beecroft Community Centre, more accurately reflecting its role.

The move to build a School of Arts began as early as 1896, barely a decade after the suburb was established. However nothing was done until 1902 when the Beecroft Progress Association, chaired by Charles Tucker, took the matter in hand. A site was reserved adjacent to the Village Green, and in September 1902, six trustees were appointed. The names submitted to the Minister for Lands were Charles Tucker, Harry Holcombe, William Chorley, George Perry, Charles Dobbie and David McCall. John Lee was later added. A fund-raising fete was held in September 1903 attended by the Governor,

Sir Harry Rawson. The big day finished with a concert at night and at the end of the day £120 was in hand with the promise of further donations. Greatly encouraged, the trustees went ahead with plans to erect the building, thus 'filling a long felt want in this go-ahead place'. A tender for £600 was accepted, £400 of which was raised by mortgage. The foundation stone was laid on 19 September 1904 by Charles Tucker's 16 year-old daughter Doris, who many years later said that she cried herself to sleep for nights before at the thought of the ordeal facing her. She was presented with a beautiful silver trowel to mark the occasion.

Once again, the Governor attended to open the new building on 10 December 1904. His Excellency was welcomed by William Chorley at the flag bedecked entrance to the building. The School of Arts was, he said 'for the education and moral advancement of its members and the district generally'. The Governor told the children that the new institution would help them to become better and more useful citizens. He finished by asking the Minister for Public Instruction to grant a special holiday for the local schoolchildren. There was another monster fete and the profits for the day were £100.

In the next few months a library was opened, followed by a billiard room. Within a few years the building was so well used that an extension was necessary. In 1909 this was done at the cost of £1281 to provide a hall, billiard room and a caretaker's flat. There were two dressing rooms, a smoking room, kitchen, a new library and reading room. In the years before World War I, the Beecroft School of Arts Literary and Debating Society maintained an active program of lectures, debates, literary evenings and speeches. In those far-off days before radio and television, and when only a wealthy few possessed a motor car, the School of Arts really was the centre of the Beecroft community. Naturally, there were Gilbert and Sullivan productions and 'HMS Pinafore' was produced on two succeeding nights in 1907 with



several more G & S light operas in later years playing to packed houses. In 1912 there were more than 200 subscribers to the School of Arts. Practically everybody in Beecroft belonged, and by 1914 the mortgage had been reduced to £1000.

Then came war. The Great War was to change the face of the world. Nothing would ever be quite the same again. In Beecroft, the School of Arts was quieter as most young men went to war. Ninety years later, the Beecroft Community Centre continues to serve its community to the present day, but the age of magic lantern slides, lectures on moral improvement, electoral rallies and the like has long since passed. The Community Centre is still a focal point for community events such as fetes and antique shows, and it is the home of the Lapidary Society. It is a monument to the vision and public spiritedness of its founders who did so much to create the sense of community which has always made Beecroft such a special place.

The School of Arts became the Beecroft Community Centre on 3 June 1971. It is now controlled by Hornsby Shire Council and a Management Committee.

## HANNAH STREET

Many residents and shoppers in Beecroft are concerned about the work that is happening in Hannah Street. This is a major upgrade being undertaken by Council to improve the pedestrian safety and appearance of the area. It includes removing the footpath, laying new pavers, new kerbs and gutters and resurfacing the road. Additional seating will also be provided for pedestrians. It was necessary to remove some trees as their roots were disturbing the footpath and causing an unsafe surface. These trees will be replaced with a more suitable species.

This upgrade is supported by our local councillors and the Civic Trust. Whilst there will be some disturbance for a few months, the overall benefit to residents will outweigh the current inconvenience.

## AUTUMN WALK

The BCCT held its annual autumn walk on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June. It was very successful with over 45 people attending. The weather was perfect and so was the company.



*The group in Chilworth Reserve below Mary Street, where tree ferns flourish following an active and successful program of bush regeneration.*

The walk started at Beecroft Railway station and went through Chilworth and Beecroft Reserves. It was followed by afternoon tea. A big "Thank You" to Stuart Braga from the History Group for coming along and helping to explain some of the historical features passed along the way.



*After the walk, walkers enjoyed afternoon tea provided by members of the Civic Trust's Parks Committee in the Reserve near Beecroft Railway Station.*

The walk approximately followed Walk No 8 as set out in the Heritage Walks booklet, recently published by the History Group. Note in your diary the next walk in Spring (see front page).



### PROPOSED TUNNEL UNDER PENNANT HILLS ROAD TO CONNECT THE M2 TO THE F3

Residents may have seen articles in local papers (The Advocate, 6 May and The Monthly Chronicle, April/May and May/June) regarding a proposed 8km tunnel tollway to be built under Pennant Hills Road alignment for the National Highway M2/F3 connection. When the M7 opens, connecting Liverpool to the M2 at Seven Hills, thousands more cars and trucks are expected to exit the M2 and use Pennant Hills Road. It is acknowledged by the RTA that the proposed tunnel will only offer a ten year temporary solution for the National Highway connection.

At a "Meet the Member" night held at the Cheltenham Recreation Club in May 2005, State member for Epping, Andrew Tink, commented that, if this tunnel is constructed, trucks will not be compelled to use it. Federal MP for Berowra, Philip Ruddock, expressed concern that traffic on Pennant Hills Road would grind to a standstill. He confirmed that the Federal Cabinet endorsed the proposed link provided that it was a continuous tunnel with no openings and that the State Government install and maintain appropriate filtration.

This may be a problem as a recent report (April 2005) from the Auditor General's department "Managing Air Quality" which can be found on [www.audit.nsw.gov.au](http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au) states that 'no single NSW agency has responsibility and accountability for improving air quality'. The report deals with the issue of the RTA using tunnel emission standards which

recent evidence shows do not properly deal with health issues. With westerly winds, emissions could be blown over the Beecroft area.

Philip Ruddock confirmed that if Federal money was allocated to this tunnel there would then be no funds available for a long term solution to the problem, namely a new road further west (option C), from Dean Park to Kariong, which would necessitate a new bridge over the Hawkesbury River. This option seems to have been rejected without explanation.

Some concerned citizens are forming The H.I.T. Group (Honesty, Integrity and Transparency) to focus community attention on the critical issues which include:

- No tunnels of this length exist in Australia and few exist elsewhere.
- Oversize and dangerous goods vehicles will still have to use Pennant Hills Road.
- If the tunnel closes because of accidents or power failure, where will the traffic go?
- The tunnel proposal would require considerable additional expenditure (estimated up to \$10 billion) to upgrade supporting facilities.

These are all significant issues for Beecroft which will impact on our daily lives. The H.I.T. Group can be contacted on 8800 3356 if you are interested in finding out more on this issue.

*(The Civic Trust does not necessarily endorse the position taken by the H.I.T.)*

### BEECROFT CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST, INC

Numbers do count – Become a Member of YOUR Civic Trust

Annual Subscription Rates: Family \$ 15.00, Single \$ 10.00

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