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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

May 2005

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Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust Walk - All Welcome

Join us for a pleasant stroll through the bushland of western Beecroft. We will follow Walk 8 described in the Beecroft and Cheltenham Heritage Walks book which was published last year by the Beecroft Cheltenham History group. Members of the History Group will be on hand to point out places of interest on the walk.

This year will have a few surprises. A hazard reduction burn was carried out by the Metropolitan Fire Service on 10th March. The burn was on an area of approximately half a hectare in part of Chilworth Reserve near Austral Avenue. Apart from pile burns there has been no fire in any of this bushland for at least 70 years, so it will be interesting to see how the area regenerates. More progress has been made both by Council's contract bush regenerators and volunteer groups since our last walk there in 2003.

WHEN: Sunday 5th June at 2.00pm.

WHERE: Meet at Beecroft Station near the children's playground in Wongala Crescent.

BRING: A hat and some water and wear sturdy footwear.

Tea will be served at the end of the walk. We look forward to seeing you there.

Special General Meeting of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust

Lengthy negotiations to achieve an amalgamation of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust Inc. and the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group Inc. culminated in Special Meetings held by the two organisations in March, as a result of which an application has been lodged with the Dept of Fair Trading to incorporate the joint organisation under the name Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust Inc.

The Civic Trust and the History Group have much in common, especially the desire to preserve and record the special character of this lovely district. The Civic Trust and the History Group both feel that they will be strengthened by joining together.

A program of publications is envisaged by the Civic Trust, arising from the work of members of the

History Group, which continues as an activity of the Civic Trust.

The opportunity was also taken to revise the Constitution of the Civic Trust (to both accommodate the amalgamation of the History Group and update the existing Rules), and following a short discussion the required Special Resolutions were unanimously passed. Copies of the revised Rules of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust can be obtained from the Trust's Secretary. They will also be placed on the Trust's web site (www.2119.org.au).

Future Trust Social Events

It is planned that the successful Dinner held last October to mark the 40th anniversary of the Trust will be followed by other joint social events, continuing the tradition of Spring Dinners held with much success by the History group over a period of several years.

Annual General Meeting of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust

Following the Special Meeting the Civic Trust held an Annual General Meeting at which James Farrington, Hornsby Council Manager, and Michael Chan, Strategic Planner, gave a presentation on the Council Stage 3 - Beecroft Village Masterplan.

Proposals included –

- retaining the commercial centre;
- encouraging shop-top housing to revitalise the centre;
- streetscape plantings, and
- retention of heritage items, namely The Treasure House, Old Post Office and the gardens adjacent to the Railway Station

Several matters were raised from the floor, including:

- keeping village character of Beecroft;
- the need for nomination of further heritage items (eg. Boronia Cottage);
- heritage listing of trees;
- safety issues with the rough footpaths;
- the opportunity the plan gives for urban improvement;
- the need for seating for the elderly, especially in Hannah Street;
- improving overhead lighting at the corner of Wongala Crescent and Hannah Street;
- the desirability of underground power lines;
- planning strategies would be dependant on property owner development applications under the Commercial Precinct Masterplan;
- concern that planning strategies might be in conflict with maintaining village character as they could require amalgamation of buildings and under-ground car parking.
- possible introduction of timed parking;

It was observed that although the Masterplan was already in place, changes could occur over time. The meeting was also advised that work on the upgrading of Hannah Street, from Beecroft Road to Wongala Crescent, is scheduled and now has been commenced. This would also include work on the excessive camber together with general landscaping and upgrading the footpath.

The Trust plans to have Public Meetings this year to both inform residents and to discuss issues of importance which impact on our community.

Your New Committee

Following the election of the Management Committee at the Trust's AGM, office bearers for the forthcoming year were appointed at the first meeting of the Committee. Brief details of individual Committee members are (more next issue) –

Carolyn Watt (President) – Carolyn has had a life-long association with Cheltenham where her family has lived since 1939. Now retired, her professional career was in Agricultural and Medical Science and Teaching. She is a keen bushwalker and conservationist with a great interest in maintaining the heritage and natural beauty of the area. In 2003 Carolyn won a Heritage Award from Hornsby Council for the alterations to her heritage listed home.

Joan Reid (Secretary) – has lived in Beecroft since coming from England in 1981, married with 2 children and 1 grandson. Joan was a volunteer at the Beecroft Children's Library for several years before becoming President. When Hornsby Shire took over the management of the Library she was the first full time librarian. She left the Library to set up a local knitting wool shop which she ran for 12 years.

She has been involved with the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group for the last 15 years and is currently a member of the subcommittee writing a book on the history of the Children's Library.

Stuart Braga (Vice President) - currently Chairman of the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group. Brought up in Beecroft, where he lived from 1941 to 1945. After nearly forty years in secondary education, he retired in 1998 and returned to Beecroft. In the last seven years he has published several books in military and religious history, the most recent being "Kokoda Commander, a Life of Major-General 'Tubby' Allen", published in October 2004 by Oxford University Press.

Malcolm Bryant - Malcolm has lived in Beecroft for 8 years and has been working with other residents in fighting a number of out-of-character Development Applications in the local area. He works for a large computer company and will assist with maintaining the Trust's website.

John Slade - is an engineer by profession and has lived in Beecroft for over 30 years. He considers that current and future development in Beecroft and

Cheltenham needs to be in keeping with the existing character of the two suburbs. Preservation of trees, on private and public land is a key priority.

Malcolm Powell - originally from the Earlwood area but after marriage to Fran, moved to Hannah Street in 1969. Following arrival of children, they required a larger home and in 1975 moved to their current home in Kirkham Street. Malcolm and Fran consider it important to be actively involved in community affairs to protect the unique ambience and bushland of the Beecroft Cheltenham area which makes it a unique community for family living.

Malcolm is a Graduate in Economics from Sydney University and is Commercial Director of a company supplying mining equipment.

Virginia Braddock – a retired teacher and librarian who has lived in Beecroft for over 30 years. The preservation of environmentally sensitive areas both in bush land and our own backyards is of particular importance. She is opposed to inappropriate development that threatens the unique character of our bushland neighbourhood.

Annika Tults – Retired high school teacher and resident of Cheltenham for 31 years. The preservation of the unique character of the Beecroft/Cheltenham area is important, especially its heritage precinct and natural beauty.

Ron Sim – originally from Maitland however following graduation from Sydney University (Bachelor of Engineering), purchased land in Kethel Road, Cheltenham in 1956 (liked the area as a result of many train trips between Maitland and Sydney). Building a home in 1964, Rod has lived in Cheltenham ever since and intends to continue to do so.

Wayne Yeo (Treasurer) – Member of the Trust since 1965 and Treasurer since 1997. Wayne lives in Albert Road, Beecroft.

Beecroft Boys at Gallipoli

This article forms part of research by members of the Beecroft and Cheltenham History Group into men and women from Beecroft Cheltenham and surrounding districts who served in either World War I or World War II. Anyone who has knowledge of such people is urged to contact the author, Tony Cunneen on 9484 2928

A number of men from the Beecroft Cheltenham area served on Gallipoli. Bruce Little, of Copeland Road Beecroft had enlisted in the 2nd Battalion in September 1914. He went ashore on 25th April 1915 carrying his pack, rifle and a small amount of firewood, with that unit on the first day after watching the first wave assault the beach. Also in his unit was Harry Noad, the brother of well-known local lady, Mary Seale. Noad was killed in action the day after the landing. Another man from near the district to lose his life in the first few days with the 2nd Battalion was Captain George Concanon of Wahroonga, who was reported to have been warned about being killed as he advanced towards the enemy. "That's what I came here for," he replied, and was killed the next minute.

The 2nd Battalion were involved in heavy fighting and Bruce Little suffered a gunshot wound in action above Anzac Cove within ten days of landing. He was transferred to hospital by ship. Little returned to Gallipoli after recovering from his wound, but was again evacuated after falling victim to severe stomach problems – not surprising in the appallingly unhygienic conditions where flies moved from the unburied waste and open latrines to the men's food without a break. Over the next three years of the war he served in France and suffered from numerous illness as well as trench foot, shell shock and was eventually gassed in France just two months before the end of the war. While overseas and recovering from his wounds and various ailments in England, he married the daughter of a grocer in Richmond. Around the same time he was in trouble for going absent without leave – possibly the attraction of his bride was too strong to resist. He survived all of this to return to Australia in 1919 – no doubt a greatly changed man from the 19 year old who had left four years earlier.

Serving on Gallipoli at the same time was Bruce's brother Robert. Their exploits were recorded in the local newspaper, the *Cumberland Argus* and *Fruitgrowers Advocate*. Robert was also wounded in early June while serving with the 7th Light Horse. Not long after his injury his father, Henry, was one of those men in the suburb instrumental in forming a recruiting association to encourage local volunteers. Like his brother, Robert recovered from his mild wound and returned to the front on Gallipoli only to be invalided out as sick with dysentery – another victim of the appalling lack of hygiene on the peninsula. Robert's unit was not at the landing but had come ashore in the second half of May. The unit was commanded by a man with some local connections – Colonel J Arnott, the brother of

Herbert Arnott who built the landmark house Brunoy on Beecroft Road in 1916. The house is now a part of Beecroft Chesalon Nursing Home.

HISTORY GROUP UPDATE - CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

Although the second volume of the History of Beecroft and Cheltenham is some way from being published, several members of the group have been busy putting together a separate small book dealing with the history of the Children's Library. This unique facility was started over half a century ago by

two sisters who were concerned that children at that time were not able to access reading material easily. Over time the library evolved into a thriving facility through the hard work of many volunteers. Many local residents will remember their contribution to that.

It has taken many years of research, but the end result will be a very interesting and entertaining book which will be published later this year so keep your eyes peeled for further updates.

The Cheltenham Recreation Club Ltd

The Cheltenham Recreation Club, with its 90 year history, is located in the attractive garden suburb of Cheltenham - 5 minutes walk from Cheltenham Railway Station. There are approximately 400 members who participate in tennis, croquet, bridge and bowls, or socially as House Members of the Club. If you ask current members what they like about the club, they'll talk about the friends they've made, the setting, and the peaceful atmosphere. A current recruitment drive for a large increase in social members is underway to protect the long term viability of this unique community facility.

We encourage new playing and social members to come and join us - Social Membership is only \$15 pa!

The Club provides recreational activities for all kinds of people:

- the serious competition player,
- the relaxed social player,
- the non-player who wants regular social activities, and
- Restaurant from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, Tuesday to Saturday and dinner on Friday evenings from 6:00 pm.

Facilities -

- 6 tennis courts - 4 mod-grass, 2 lawn - incl. 2 with lights
- 2 bowling greens
- 1 croquet lawn
- clubhouse available for hire with function room, caterer, bar, kitchen, showers
- ample on site and street parking

For general enquiries & Club Membership, please contact - Natalie Dunn on 9876-2629 or Club President David Allan on 0417-707 202 or 9876 8199 (Office).

Bits and Pieces

Congratulations to Jenny Lewis who was a joint winner of the 2005 Hornsby Council Heritage Awards (Category C) for publications. This award was for her "herbarium" of the Hornsby Shire and is well deserved recognition for the enormous amount of work Jenny has put into this valuable project.

Malcolm Bryant, one of the Trust's new Committee members has taken our web site under his wing - if you haven't already done so, have a look at www.2119.org.au and give us your comments and feedback.

Finally, if you are not a member of the Civic Trust (\$15 pa for a family unit or \$10 pa single membership) and would like to assist the Trust in its efforts to maintain the standard and quality of life we all enjoy here in Beecroft and Cheltenham, please give our Treasurer, Wayne Yeo, a ring on 9484 4309. He will gladly send you a membership application form.