



# Naremburn Matters

December 2006 Vol.2, No.3

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The newsletter of the  
Naremburn Progress Association (NPA)

## Welcome to this edition of Naremburn Matters

*This edition of Naremburn Matters deals with issues around our health and general wellbeing. I'm not sure we think much about our health when there are festivities and parties at every turn during this season. But perhaps a few of the articles here will inspire you to get out, walk, cycle, save some energy at home and consider the planet and your place in it. And while you're at it, have a very happy holiday season with your loved ones and friends. Thanks to readers and supporters of Naremburn Matters for your support this year.*

*Katherine Raskob-Esman  
Editor*

### In this issue:

- ▶ NPA 2006 Report Card
- ▶ Take Five – with Tony Boustani of Naremburn Natural
- ▶ Letter to the Editor
- ▶ Footpath Cycling
- ▶ A Walk in the Park
- ▶ Bush Poetry Reading at Dusk
- ▶ An Interesting Chapter in the History of Hallstrom Park
- ▶ Naremburn Neighbourhood Watch
- ▶ The Health and Wellbeing of the Planet

## Naremburn Progress Association 2006 Report Card

Now that the 2006 calendar year comes to a close it is time to reflect on the achievements of the NPA during the past 12 months.

Early in the year Council released its Property Plan summary and this raised the possibility of closing the Naremburn Library in Central Street. This would allow for an enhancement of the Artarmon Library. The NPA wrote to Council asking for a discussion paper to be prepared on the existing Naremburn Library facilities and ways of promoting its facilities within the Naremburn community. Council has responded to say that there are now no plans to have this community asset closed down. We would encourage those of you who have not used the library before to do so and thus further secure its future.

The Greening of Naremburn project continues with the assistance of residents, WCC and Planet Ark's National Tree Day in July. Some 70 street trees were planted.

In June members of the Association gave evidence before the Lane Cove Tunnel Joint Select Committee at Parliament House. The NPA's proposal of having 'the RTA consider constructing a scale model of future projects for public display, in order to assist residents visualise the project as a whole' was adopted into the Committee's report.

On a lovely July Saturday Naremburn's beautiful new children's playground was opened by the Mayor, Councillor Pat Reilly, to great acclaim. The sand pit and its water pump was a big favourite on the day. In August Naremburn's own welcome sandstone sign was erected opposite the village shops.

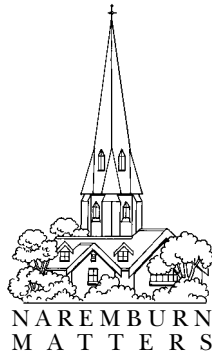
We have been successful in our application to Council to assist with having an outdoor film evening and this will be held in the New Year.

*continued Page 5*

### NAREMBURN VILLAGE SHOPS

Photographic artwork by:  
David Waters  
7 June 2005





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Central Street, Nareburn  
Second Thursday of each month

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**Nareburn  
Progress Association  
Year End Meeting**

The final meeting for 2006 will be on 14 December at 7.30pm in the Nareburn School Hall, cnr Willoughby and Dalleys Road. All residents and businesses within Nareburn are welcome to attend.

As it is our last meeting for the year we will finish formalities earlier to enable some festive cheer and chatter. Tea, coffee and bubbles are provided, feel free to bring a small plate of food to share.

## Take Five...with Tony Boustani of Nareburn Natural



Tony Boustani and his brother Ray opened Nareburn Natural (NN) in March 2005. Tony is unique in Nareburn's small shopping strip in that he actually lives above the shop. "I am a business owner but a Nareburn resident first."

*Photo: George Farrell*

Tony was christened Antoine. "My Mum chose the French form of Anthony. She was a great fan of a French actor with that name." Boustani literally means 'gardener' a quality embodied by Tony's green thumb mother. Although she was a chef at a ski resort in Lebanon, and after her arrival in Australia, in charge of the St George Hospital canteen, her passion is Fuschias. She grows them and an array of these and other potplants is offered for sale at NN. From her home kitchen come the basil pesto, hommus, kehbe, tabouli and pastries. She is ably assisted by Ray's wife, Clarita, who also serves in the shop on Saturdays. "It's yummy food, old style preparation. Everything is natural; the only preservative that is added is olive oil. This gives our prepared produce a 4 day shelf life in contrast to many of the preservative boosted similar products found in the average supermarket."

"My Christian Lebanese parents migrated from the mountain area of North Lebanon to Australia in the late 1960s. As such they are strong-willed, disciplined people. In their families, everyone, male and female, pitched in to do the daily chores. My Dad is a builder. Since he came here he has built over 500 homes around Sydney." Tony worked in and around his relatives' fruit shops from the age of 16, but he honed his business and customer relation skills as a Manager of a KFC store and more recently as Manager of DecoRug in Chatswood. "It was from that job that I got to know Nareburn, delivering rugs to homes in the area. People here seem more laid back than other suburbs of the North Shore."

While taking five minutes of Tony's time, I note an interesting passing parade in the shop: the regulars, the browsers, and of course, the children. Tony reckons that some 90 children have been born in Nareburn since March 2005. "The kids are very good in the shop, not even an egg broken!". I think an incentive is the treats he offers the kids – some of his Mum's pastries. "You know they have no sugar, she cooks with Rosewater."

Tony's brother, Ray, is the early bird collecting fruit, produce and flowers at the markets. Tony describes Nareburn Natural as a 'pick up and go' operation, distinct from a supermarket and offering personalised service.

Have the road works in the area affected his business? "Not really, though I hope TJH leave ASAP and so remove the building in progress look from the area. Secondly, I hope landscaping will be completed to give a greener look to the place."

And with Christmas approaching, any tips? "I will be selling Christmas trees again this year, and we can cater for Christmas parties and groups." Tony's Tip – "the bean salad, a real favourite of mine".

Part of Nareburn's long standing fabric has been the many migrants, industrious people who have added their colour and special gifts. The Boustani family has added to this 'work in progress' story.

*Kevin FitzPatrick, Central Street*

## To the Editor

Contributions to PO Box 393, St Leonards 1590  
or email NareburnMatters@yahoo.com (150 word limit)

I am writing to congratulate the Nareburn Progress Association on dedicating an edition of this great local publication to the issue of wellbeing.

This topic covers such a broad aspect of our daily lives and it is so important for us to stay vigilant in ensuring our local environment and our community activity provide opportunities for all of us to focus on general health and happiness.

Whether it be considering what mode of transport we choose, what we prepare for our dinner or what recreational activities we participate in during our spare time, there is no doubt where we live has a major impact on the choices we have.

As your State Member I am committed to ensuring the residents of Nareburn have access to good public transport and essential services within a safe and pleasant urban environment.

Congratulations again or tackling this broad-ranging and critical issue!

*Gladys Berejiklian MP, Member for Willoughby*

## Footpath Cycling

As summer approaches we see many young family groups enjoying a ride around the neighbourhood. There are many places they can cycle. Apart from shared paths through the lovely Bicentennial and Artarmon Reserves, children under 12 and accompanying adult bicycle riders can legally ride on the footpath.

While footpath cycling is a relatively safe place for families to ride, the community needs to be aware that there are still dangers on the footpath at driveway crossings and road intersections and there is much they can do to reduce the risks. Dangers at driveways are more marked for children on bicycles as they travel faster than walkers and thus have less time to react to a dangerous situation.

Parents need to be aware of these risks and should accompany their children on cycling excursions. Children should not be left alone to cycle the footpaths until they are old enough to comprehend the road rules, understand the potential dangers and apply what they know to avert those situations. Most primary school aged children are not ready to ride alone, but this is an excellent opportunity to teach your child and prepare them for the independence that must come in high school days. This is also the time to teach them the courtesy and consideration due to other people on the paths.

The local community can also do much to reduce the risks. Motorists are required to give way to people on the footpath, whether they are walking, riding a bike or a skateboard or in control of a mobility scooter. This is difficult when their visibility is reduced. One way to overcome this problem is to check over your driveway, looking for potential obstructions. If you are building your front fence you can ensure you have a safe design with good visibility. In established yards, vegetation may need to be trimmed back or perhaps even replaced with more appropriate landscaping.

Where you know you have a visibility problem, a little forethought could save a child's life. If possible reverse into your driveway, so the vehicle can be driven straight out. Always slow as you approach the footpath and check for people on the path. If all else fails, use your horn to warn people that a vehicle is approaching.

*Carolyn New, Grafton Avenue*

## True or False

How well do you know your suburb?

- 1** In 1978, a suggestion was put forward that Naremburn Shopping Centre be called Naremburn Place.
- 2** Naremburn has not ever numbered a grocery chain as part of its shopping centre.
- 3** Naremburn boasted its own brass band.
- 4** The new addition to the span for the bridge over the freeway and Willoughby Road, between the shops and Slade Street, came from Singleton.
- 5** Willoughby Road was originally called Flat Rock Road.
- 6** Park Road was originally named Gore's Road.

*(Answers on page 6)*

*Kevin FitzPatrick,  
Central Street*

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## Community Service Recognition Award

At its December meeting the NPA has traditionally recognised individuals who have lived or worked in Naremburn for some time who have provided service to the community worthy of recognition.

If you know someone whom you think 'fits the bill' please contact the NPA executive as soon as possible.

Thank you

## NAREMBURN NATURAL

◆ FRUIT ◆ VEG ◆ FLOWERS ◆  
◆ LEBANESE FOOD ◆

Clarita and the boys would love to thank everyone in Naremburn for another wonderful year. We feel lucky to be here. We have some exciting specials this Christmas:

1. Real Lebanese food for any small or large event – fresh, tasty food made by a great Lebanese chef.
2. Real Christmas Trees, available from the first week of December.

Finally, we would like to let you know that we will be spending some time with our families during Christmas and will be away from Christmas Day to 8 January 2007.

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## A Walk in the Park

"How about we do the walk to Tunks Park?" says The Engineer. He has decided to teach me about my suburb. Oh, and I have just turned 52 and he is worried I'm going down the fat road.



"How far is it?"

"Oh only about four kilometres"

"How much is that in real language?"

"About two miles."

**Bloody hell!**

*Photo: George Farrell*

At 6am we set forth. At the end of Park Road we go under a sandstone tunnel, the home for millions of smelly pigeons, and out on the other side. I spy a sign.

- Do not consume any intoxicating liquor. *(Without the written permission of the Council)*
- Never camp, lodge or stay overnight.
- Don't WILFULLY break glass.
- Don't play musical instruments.
- Do not sing or perform.

I pull out my harmonica and begin playing. I then launch into the nurse's speech from Romeo and Juliet, start singing 'the hills are alive with the Sound of Music', uncork a bottle of champers, drink a bit and WILFULLY break the bottle...suddenly out of the scrub with a blood-thirsty shriek spring four council officers dressed in fatigues and carrying AK47s, they riddle me full of bullets. The Engineer gives me a withering look and taps his foot...

Bicentennial Reserve has an incinerator on it designed by Walter Burley Griffin. Why he felt the need to design an incinerator no one seems to know. Prior to the land being filled, in 1988, to create a grassed valley, it was leased to Ashton's circus who housed elephants there. Wow a valley full of elephants I wish I had been around then.

Henry Lawson lived in Naremburn in 1906 to 1907 and spent many hours in the Crows Nest Hotel exchanging verse for drinkies. When he had enough he would retire to his cave to dry out. Bet HE wouldn't have been riddled full of bullets.

Under Flat Rock Drive is a tunnel covered in aboriginal drawings and a colourful map. Don't think it's authentic but is cheerful. The bush has been de-weeded, the lantana replaced with native grasses and colourful grevilleas.

Just before the wooden bridge we take the Wilksch Walk. It's very pretty with natives aplenty and quite private. The track winds down to the river that has almost dried up. It's a dell of ferns and moss covered rocks where I'm sure fairies and elves have parties.

"How much further, my feet hurt."

'Stop whingeing, we've only been going for 30 minutes.'

"Quite long enough," I mutter, but my grumpiness is halted as a Whip Bird pierces the stillness of the bush. We stop still and try to catch sight of it but it's too swift. The Engineer, who is a keen twitcher tells me on a good day you can hear Kingfishers, Fairy Wrens, Yellow Robins and Dollar Birds. If you're very lucky you may catch sight of a Green Tree Snake or an Echidna. I step gingerly as I'm not fond of snakes and I have no idea what an Echidna looks like.

At last we come to open ground where The Engineer becomes animated and ushers me onto a wooden deck. It overlooks The Water Quality Control Pond which removes sediment before it goes into the bay. "It looks like a dirty bit of water with a few weeds to me, not a great view."

"Yes, well there hasn't been much rain lately, but if there was it would be a very interesting vantage point."

On the oval are a million dogs bounding, their owners running after them clutching black plastic bags. The 2006 handbag? The dogs have their tongues lolling out of their mouths and have a crazed look on their faces.

*...continued Page 5*

## NPA 2006 Report Card *continued from Page 1*

The Lane Cove Tunnel project is coming to a close. We continue to have input into outstanding issues including the landscaping program, graffiti management and noise walls. The off ramps at Falcon Street onto Military Road may offer some relief to through traffic on Nareburn's streets. However it is uncertain exactly what the impact of this tunnel will be on local streets once opened.

The NPA continues to make submissions to WCC on various DA matters including the St Leonards Strategy, Royal North Shore Redevelopment, Link Road and its Sec. 94 payments and residents' DAs in support of better outcomes.

My thanks for this past year to our Members, to the Executive Committee, Kevin FitzPatrick, Stephen Stapleton, Carolyn New, to our Ward Councillors Councillor Stuart Coppock, Councillor Kate Lamb and Councillor Barry Thompson, to the Mayor Councillor Pat Reilly and the staff of Willoughby City Council, to our Local Member Gladys Berejiklian and to the Nareburn Matters production team headed by Katherine Raskob-Esman, with the editorial team including Trisha FitzPatrick and Kevin FitzPatrick and our supportive advertisers and contributors.

Any system that widens public involvement in the decisions that affect them ought to be pursued. The representative system of democracy which exists at the various Government levels is often a crude democratic system and in some cases has proven to be a negation of the ideal. Nobody can look after their interests better than the person concerned. We welcome those of you out there who wish to become involved to come along to one of the NPA regular meetings.

*Ronan Ahern, NPA President*

## A Walk in the Park *continued from Page 4*

Above the oval is a strange cement walk-way that has padlocked gates at either end. "That is not a walk way," The Engineer declares in a tight voice, "it's a Water Board Sewer and carries effluent from the North Shore to North Head Treatment Plant." Oh yikes! I wouldn't like to be underneath if it got a crack.

On the north side of the park steep stone steps overgrown by bush, lead up to The Suspension Bridge which was built in 1892 and was the tramway link to Northbridge. Its suspenders, I mean cables, have been removed by the RTA.

We walk to Long Bay, sit and watch the boats bobbing on the sparkling water. My legs are really hurting now. "How do we get home"? "We walk". Oh!

*Elizabeth Hegarty, Waters Road*

## Comic Corner

There was a little old lady living in Idaho, USA who was so spiritual that she would step onto her porch every day, raise her arms to the sky and yell, "Praise the Lord!" to the great irritation of the atheist next door. After a month, he could stand it no longer and yelled from his porch, "There is no Lord!"

She persisted regardless, day after day, until one cold wintry day she went out on her porch, raised her hands up to the sky and said, "Help me Lord, I have no more money, it's cold and I have no more food."

The next morning, she went outside and there were three bags of food on the porch, enough to last her a week. "Praise the Lord!" she yelled.

The atheist steps out from next door and says, "There is no Lord. Ha! Ha! I bought those groceries!"

The little old lady raised her arms to the sky above and said, "Praise the Lord! You not only sent me groceries, you made the Devil pay for them!"

## Bush Poetry Reading at Dusk 10th Anniversary

Don Swonnell and Peter Carmody, with Dave Seeney on guitar, present Bush Poetry Reading at Henry Lawson's Cave, Nareburn on Sunday 18 February 2007 from 5:30pm to 8:00pm. There will be lots of interesting things to do and see to mark the occasion. Guests include Rob Stevenson and Tim Thurston.

Please come with a cushion or camp chair to sit on. Bring your own refreshments if you wish but tea, coffee and damper will be served. If you have a local bush poem to share, let us know! For bookings and enquiries, ring 9777 7755. In case of wet weather, a cancellation message will be recorded on the above phone number by 4pm. Alternative date is 25 February 2007.

*This is a free event organised by Willoughby Council's Bushland Interpretation Program.*

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# True or False An Interesting Chapter in the History of Hallstrom Park

## 1 TRUE

At the Naremburn Progress Association meeting of 13 June 1978 it was noted that following the rejuvenation of the Naremburn Shopping Centre, it should be called Naremburn Place. Obviously Naremburn Shopping area has had a number of makeovers! Anyone know what happened in the rejuvenation in 1978?

## 2 FALSE

Goodlands, with its jingle 'there's a Goodlands Store right near your door' was on the corner of Quiamong Street and Willoughby Road with Moran and Cato's opposite and Derrins a few doors up from Slade Street.

## 3 TRUE

At the NPA meeting of 7 January 1902, a motion was moved and seconded: *"That steps be taken by the Association for the formation of a brass band in the district."* It was finally formed in 1903 and was known as *The Naremburn Model Brass Band*.

## 4 TRUE

HF Hand & Co, who did the bridge work is one of 3 bridge building companies contracted by the RTA for all bridge construction in NSW. They were established in the far north coast of NSW in 1887.

## 5 FALSE

Willoughby Road was originally called North Sydney Road when Chatswood was called North Sydney. It became Willoughby Road in 1890.

## 6 TRUE

Gore's Road ran from Flat Rock Road to William Gore's Estate. Appropriately, the road was named Park Road in 1892, leading as it does to Naremburn Park. William Gore, who had extensive landholdings, gave Artarmon its name.

*Kevin FitzPatrick  
Central Street*

The barbecue area and children's play area at Hallstrom Park in the North West corner of Bicentennial Reserve is a great place to take kids, and many community members have enjoyed gatherings there since the complex was completed. However, it may never have happened without the committed involvement of many local residents. Without serious community action we may have missed out on this great asset.

Late in 1992 a proposal was put to Willoughby City Council that would have created a completely different development in this area. I was the President of the Naremburn Progress Association at the time and a couple of weeks before Christmas I received a phone call from a local friend describing a party she had just attended where Gordon Rugby Club people were talking about their plans to use the oval for training and competition and to build a two storey club house and large car park on the north west corner of Bicentennial Reserve.

This was news to all of us in the local community groups! It was obviously an oversight on the part of Council that we had not been advised of the lodging of the Development Application.

At this time in the history of the use of Bicentennial Reserve there was much community concern about the intensity of organised sporting activities. These were having a significant impact on immediate neighbours, so a proposed increase in this type of sports use of the reserve was not well received. Also, the idea of a single sporting club having exclusive use of a significant area of public open space was thought very unfair.

An initial flurry of community action resulted in an extension to the notification period until after the Christmas/New Year period, a major increase in the extent of the notification and the calling of a major public meeting to be held on a weekend day to discuss the proposal.

Naremburn and Willoughby South Progress Associations joined forces and created an action group to respond to the DA and to propose alternate uses for the area. Meetings took place in a garage at the rear of a Tulloh Street house and much animated discussion occurred. It's amazing how motivating a common cause can be!

There was also much local media interest in the issue with several articles and letters to the editor appearing in local papers. The most impressive feature was a North Shore Times front page item with a striking headline "ANGRY MAYOR SAYS "I QUIT"". This outburst from then Willoughby Mayor Greg Bartels occurred at a public meeting attended by about 200 people on 7 March 1993 at which the Mayor claimed Gordon Rugby Club had not lodged a DA but had only submitted a "proposal". The meeting was then presented with a document from Council's Town Planning Department dated 31 December that was notification of the DA being lodged. There was also criticism of Ald Bartels' position as Patron of Gordon Rugby Club in 1992. "Because of the business before Council I am no longer Patron" was his response.

The public meeting was addressed by local politicians who attacked the loss of public open space and its use by individual sporting clubs. Community representatives voiced a strong desire for a predominantly passive recreation use for the park. Following the meeting the action group decided to survey the local area to determine resident preferences for the use of Bicentennial Reserve.

In May 1993 the occupants of 1,600 surrounding homes were surveyed with a very impressive 500 responses strongly supporting a landscaped park, a children's playground including a bike track and a picnic and barbecue area.

The public meeting and the survey results reinforcing the community's desire for public passive use were the turning points in the evolution of Hallstrom Park. Planning and construction of the delightful area we use today followed.



*David Lendrum, Market Street*

*Photo: George Farrell*



## Naremburn Neighbourhood Watch

December 2006 Report

### Holiday season

Christmas is upon us and it is the time of year when many of us go on long holidays. We thought we'd publish our list of hints to help make your home as safe as possible while you're away:

- Ask neighbours to collect your mail.
- Make sure the lawns are mown and garden tidy while you are away.
- Don't put the boxes of expensive new Christmas presents out for collection as is, turn them inside out or tear them up and put them in the wheelie bin.
- Have lights on timer switches to make it look like someone is at home.
- Register with the police as a vacant house – they will keep an eye on the place while you are away.

### Identity theft

This is one of the major new areas the police are grappling with. It's easy to do, and there are so many ways. This quarter we have some advice from the police on how to avoid being a victim.

Firstly, a definition. Identity theft is where someone pretends to be someone else to

the extent that they can gain access to that person's bank accounts and other assets.

#### The main methods used by offenders are:

*Stealing mail* – the offender takes your mail, which may have rate notices, credit cards, banking information and personal details, such as date of birth. This gives them information about whom to approach when pretending to be you and also enough information (often in the form of points) for them to obtain a new credit card or change your PIN, passwords and other security information. Police recommend people have a large mailbox that can be locked.

*Email requests* – we've all seen those pesky emails saying they're from our bank or some bank we've never heard of. Delete them immediately! No Australian bank will ever ask you to enter your security information via email.

How do these work for thieves? If you open the link it will take you to a screen made to look very like the bank it says it is from, but it will actually give your user name and password to the thieves when

you type them in. Some of these emails have attachments (sometimes links that don't seem to do anything). These are a method of installing spyware onto your computer which tracks all of your keystrokes and allows thieves to enter your computer as they please and see all that you have done – including your banking. Definitely don't open these attachments.

*Internet/phone purchases* – even if you trust the provider, can you trust all their staff? When you make one of these purchases the provider has all they need to use your credit card. Police recommend that people have a debit card account with very little money in it that is used specifically for these types of purchases and that only enough money is transferred in to cover the purchase that you are making.

*Using other computers* – if you do your banking at work or in internet cafes the next user might be able to access your banking details, including your password. Even if you have logged out and think you have wiped any trace, a good computer technician will be able to recover every piece of information.

Police recommend that you use only your own computer to do your banking and that this be password protected when you are not home. If you are travelling (even overseas) your bank will generally have arrangements with other banks/branches where secure computer terminals are available for customer use.

Similarly, when getting rid of old computers either remove and destroy the hard drive, or use one of the scrubbing software packages that clean the hard drive if you want to recycle it to someone else.

### Next Meeting

Our last meeting for 2006 is:

**Date:** Wednesday 13 December, 2006

**Time:** 8:00pm

**Where:** St Cuthbert's Church Hall,  
Merrenburn Avenue

If you would like to be added to our email report service please email us at [naremnhw@tpg.com.au](mailto:naremnhw@tpg.com.au) and we will add you to the list.

## L.J. HOOKER®

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Amanda's years of first-hand knowledge  
of the local market

(she even lives in Naremburn!)

and her commitment to the area

has earned her the great reputation she has today,  
as well as clients who keep coming back.

It's no surprise that she was awarded entry into  
the L.J. Hooker Multi Million Dollar Captains Club  
as recognition of her outstanding performance.

In both her role as a company director  
and real estate agent,

Amanda's high personal standards and  
unique style are as accessible as ever  
to those wishing for an agent willing  
to go the extra mile.

Amanda's enthusiasm, expertise and  
professionalism are well known  
to property investors in the North Shore area.

Amanda's commitment to you is that she will look after  
your property as if it were her own.

# Noticeboard

We welcome contributions to the community noticeboard. It provides free advertising for not-for-profit community and charity organisations in Nareburn. Please ring Katherine Raskob-Esman on 0419 497 243

## Nareburn Branch Library

Thanks to everyone who contributed their great suggestions to the Nareburn Booklists. Three colourful bookmarks/reading lists of readers' favourite books are available at the Library.

**The school holidays are coming soon**, and as always, the Library is offering some free entertainment for children:

Kids aged 5 to 11 years can enjoy a craft session on Thursday 11 January 2007 from 3.00 pm to 4.00 pm.

Younger children 0 to 6 are invited to hear fabulous stories and do craft on Friday 19 January from 10.30 am to 11.15 am. The theme for these sessions is the ocean.

Bookings commence Monday 14 December. Phone 9777 9700 or book when you visit the Library.

**The Summer Reading Club 2007** provides children with great reading ideas and incentives as well. Please ask at Nareburn Library from December onwards.

## Nareburn Branch Library

The Foyer,  
Nareburn Community Centre  
7 Central Street

Mondays & Thursdays 2:30–5:00pm  
Saturdays 9:30–12 Noon  
Ph: 9439 5584 during opening hours  
Ph: 9777 9700 at other times.

## Nareburn Over 50s

Meets almost every Monday at 10:30am in the Community Centre. Come along and enjoy speakers, demonstrations, discussions and leisure activities. Phone Lorna (Secretary) on 9436 3304 or Margaret (President) on 9436 2607.

*(Apologies for the error in the September issue regarding the dearly departed President, Nola Driver. Editors)*

## Northern Suburbs Philatelic Society

Meets on the third Thursday of each month at the Nareburn Library at 7:45pm. Visitors always welcome. For more information phone Paul Storm (Secretary) on 9419 7354.

# The Health and Wellbeing of the Planet

If you were running a high temperature and your calorie consumption was far in excess of a sustainable amount, then others, if not yourself, would have concerns about your health and wellbeing. The same is becoming more obvious on a global scale...and, no, I'm not talking about obesity, but rather about global **sustainability** and its close cousin, climate change.

The loss of most winter crops in SE Australia due to utter failure of spring rains and severe bushfires in early October made headlines at the same time as Al Gore's compelling film convinced many about the 'inconvenient' truth of global warming. These events seem to have come together to show both the public and sceptical politicians that the time for action and change is now.

Your Council has been encouraging greater awareness of sustainability issues through many of its '**e-Restore**' suite of programs over several years. We now have a larger and more loyal group of volunteer bush-carers than any other council in NSW. Our recycling achievements are also the envy of many Councils. The **e-Restore** program was funded by a levy on rates. That levy was introduced and extended with very little objection. So I draw the conclusion that most ratepayers are in favour of our actions – most want healthy bushland and 'slim' garbage. However, a paucity of new faces at **e-Restore** events suggests that many ratepayers remain largely uncommitted. Perhaps they remain 'on the fence' with thoughts such as 'I just don't have time', 'what impact can I have?' or 'what impact can Australia have?'

Some leaders, such as Al Gore and Tim Flannery, exhort us to start the change process with small steps in our own lives – steps like recycling, saving water and reducing our energy consumption. Others, like Clive Hamilton of the Australia Institute, say that we need to be 'told'. He points out that leaded petrol, with its health risks, was not abolished by people deciding not to buy it but by prohibition through government legislation. But which politician or party will be brave enough to propose such legislation in the face of powerful vested interests while the public appears apathetic? Both views are correct: let us have voters demanding political change **and** backing it up with visible actions of our own. Obvious activism in Willoughby City might involve joining a **Sustainability Street** group. We might choose to buy '**green**' power, ie., electricity that is generated from renewable sources. If we believe in the power of the market, we might be prepared to advocate (or at least acknowledge to friends and colleagues) the logic of higher prices for energy and water.

A recent commentary on the level of affluence in present-day Australia mentioned that we now spend a smaller proportion of our income on water and most forms of energy that at any time in the past. The economic 'system' encourages us to use more. How many of us are prepared to concede that, in terms of protecting the environment, the system is not working **and needs to be changed**? Perhaps Australia can be the place that makes the necessary changes and shows that possibility to the rest of the world. Furthermore, can we here in Willoughby City be at the forefront of that change process? We are well-placed to do so: affluent, educated and progressive. It seems to me that this must be where not only our priority but also much of our energy must be directed as a community. For me, many of Willoughby's traditional concerns become inconsequential by comparison. To paraphrase from an epoch-changing book: *What profit for mankind if we gain the whole world but lose the planet?*

Your Council will be addressing the future of **e-Restore** and its stance on sustainability and climate change over coming months. Watch this space. I would welcome any thoughts you may have on how and when we might involve you.

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