

Naremburn Matters

December 2014 Vol.10, No.3

Circulation 3,000

The newsletter of the
Naremburn Progress Association (NPA)

Santa at the shops



Once again this year, Naremburn kids are lucky enough to have a visit from Santa. Local businesses Hockey Real Estate, Maree's Hair and Beauty, Forsyth Coffee and Pete's Naremburn Food Mart have pulled in a few favours to get Santa to come to Naremburn again.

The man in red will be visiting on 5 December at 6.00 pm, but make sure you get there early to nab a spot. And, of course, everyone wants to know if he'll be arriving on the back of a Harley Davidson!

Lucky children will get a chance to greet Santa and get a special treat ... but only if they have been good, of course! And the Flat Rock Brew Café will be providing soft drinks.

Why not make an event of it and book a table at one of the local eateries to enjoy the festivities and catch up with some friends?



Season's Greetings from the NPA

**Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year**

To all our members, volunteers, readers and advertisers

Summer at the library

Stock up on your summer reading and entertainment at Naremburn Library where there is an excellent range of books to suit all ages, plus magazines, DVD's, CD's and e-resources. The library is accessible 24/7 – borrow e-collections anytime, or access your account for renewals.

It's pirate time at the library! There will be pirate craft for children aged 5 to 12 on Monday 12 January from 3.00–4.00 pm. Make a pirate costume and release your inner pirate! On Monday 19 January from 3.00–3.30 pm, children under 6 can listen to a swashbuckling pirate story time. Online bookings for both sessions are open from Monday 5 January at www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/library.

Have you noticed the innovative artwork in the Naremburn Community Centre foyer just outside the library? *Historical Interventions* by L.M. Noonan was part of the exhibition 'Private Practice of the Public Artist 20 April–25 May 2014'. Noonan's work is a collage of paint sample cards and manipulated printed portraits from European 16th century paintings. The relationship between the colour names and the portraits often demonstrates a wry sense of humour. For more information on the artist please go to lmnoonan.blogspot.com. For more information about Council's Public Art Program or the Willoughby Collection contact jacky.talbot@willoughby.nsw.gov.au.

Happy reading and all the best for the festive season.

Diana Revington
Naremburn Branch Librarian

**NAREMBURN
VILLAGE SHOPS**

Photographic artwork by:
David Waters
7 June 2005





Naremburn Progress Association
 Founded 1901
 Incorporated 2004
 ABN 93 907 169 376
 PO Box 393
 St Leonards 1590

www.naremburnprogress.org.au

President

Frances O'Brien: 0416 161 536

Vice President

Viviane Leveaux: 0431 777 547

Secretary

Roger Promnitz: 0419 227 986

Treasurer

Carmen Loecherer: 0409 766 470

Committee Members

Helene Kemp
 Joann Morand

General Meetings

Second Thursday of the month
 excluding January and July
 Naremburn Community Centre
 7 Central Street

Commencing at 7:30 pm with an Open Forum

**Naremburn Matters
 Editorial Committee**

Zoë Harpham
 Viviane Leveaux

naremburn.matters@naremburnprogress.org.au

Typesetting & Printing by

Robin Phelan & Associates: 0407 467 376

The opinions expressed in articles, letters and contributions published in Naremburn Matters do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Naremburn Progress Association or its officers. While all possible care is taken to be accurate, no responsibility whatsoever will be taken by the Naremburn Progress Association, Typesetters or Printers.

President – out and about

As we come to the end of the year it is timely to reflect on the year's events and activities.

The proposed redevelopment of the Channel 9 site remains an area of concern for both the NPA and the community. At the beginning of March the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) handed down their decision in favour of the community and Willoughby City Council (WCC); however, Channel 9 has appealed this decision in the Land and Environment Court. Presentations were made to the court by key members of the community and we anxiously await the court's decision. The NPA will endeavour to keep you informed of any decision.

The Naremburn Library and Community Centre underwent refurbishment. The library, while occupying the same space, looks bigger and has a wonderful welcoming feel. The NPA, thanks to the persistent efforts of Kevin Fitzpatrick and Barry Shaw, has a dedicated room for storage of their archives. There are two meeting rooms for hire in the community centre: a large area where we have our general meetings and which is fitted out with the latest in audio visual equipment for the use of those hiring the space plus a smaller room on the right as you access the building.

As the area around the shops has become busier parking restrictions have been changed and are set to change again to ensure fair and equitable access to the shops by all, so check the signs before leaving your car or you may get a nasty surprise on your return!

There have also been changes at WCC initially with the death of our Mayor, Pat Reilly, followed by the election of his successor, Gail Giles-Gidney, and Stuart Coppock as Deputy Mayor. More recently we have heard of the resignation of Nick Tobin, General Manager.

Our sincere thanks go to the many in the community who have supported us this last year notably those who write articles for *Naremburn Matters*, those who distribute them and those businesses who take up advertising space. Without that support we would not be able to continue publishing your newsletter.

Our President, Frances O'Brien, has been called away to the country on family business which has prevented her from writing to you this time; however she hopes to be back in time for the next Naremburn Progress Association (NPA) meeting, which will be the last of the year.

It remains to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Frances and all the members of the Naremburn Progress Association Executive.

Viviane Leveaux
 Vice President

Who can be a member of the Naremburn PA?

- Naremburn residents – 18 years and over;
- Non-resident Naremburn property owners;
- People who run businesses in Naremburn.

\$15 per person per annum \$10 Concession per person per annum

Fees for the calendar year are set in March and are due for payment by 15 June each year in order to retain membership rights.

New members, please fill out the membership form on www.naremburnprogress.org.au

Membership renewals can pay online using your name as reference:

Acc name: Naremburn Progress Association **BSB:** 032 297 **Acc no:** 20 1474

Next Issue: March 2015

Naremburn Matters is a quarterly publication issued in March, June, September and December.

March issue deadlines

Ad Booking: Tuesday 27 January
 Ad Artwork: Tuesday 3 February
 Articles: Wednesday 4 February

naremburn.matters@naremburnprogress.org.au

Under Copyright Laws a copy of each issue is forwarded to the State Library of NSW

NPA Meeting Dates

**Second Thursdays
 7:30 pm**

11 December
 No meeting in January
 12 February 2015
 12 March 2015

**Naremburn
 Community Centre
 7 Central Street**

Letters to the Editor & Articles

Articles, comments or suggestions should be addressed to:

The Editor,
naremburn.matters@naremburnprogress.org.au

or mail to:
 PO Box 393
 St Leonards NSW 1590

We do not publish anonymous letters. Please include your email address or phone number as we may need to edit items to fit the space available.

Have you been naughty or nice?

It's not too many sleeps now until Christmas and not many more until 2015; can you believe that?

Are you planning barbecues over the summer or even hosting Christmas breakfast, lunch or dinner in the garden – weather permitting of course? Have you completed all the projects I have set for you? The water features, hedges, trimming, paths, lawn improvements etc.

I need the answer to that question now — Have you been naughty or nice ... around the house? I hope you're all nice!

By now your plants and lawns will be flourishing with all the warm weather and rain. You've probably begun trimming and tending to them; if not you will soon need to be.

You will also need to start fertilising everything green inside and out — use a complete fertiliser on the garden beds; some plants like azalea, camellias and citrus will benefit from using a specialised fertiliser – have a look around at the nursery and hardware stores bags are usually clearly marked if unsure ask someone in store. When fertilising don't forget the lawns as well as the hanging baskets, potted plants including your indoor plants.

Once you have fertilised everything (and we'll all know if you have used an organic fertiliser, the smell is a give away!!!) mulch all the garden beds, this will help retain soil moisture and keep the weeds at bay.

To help water that fertiliser in have you considered installing an irrigation system, maybe it's on your Christmas wish list? This will help you save time and money once installed and will keep everything nice and lush especially if this summer is a hot one! It will make it easier too if you are planning to head away on a holiday – your lovely neighbours will be able to water your place with ease or if you have gone the whole hog and installed a totally automatic system, that's easy for everyone!

If you are not going away it's a nice thing (see what I did there) to keep an eye over your neighbour's place (which I'm sure most of you already do) and clear any junk mail, pick up any papers, feed the cat/dog etc.

Now just before I sign off for the year a quick note, I have had a lot of Naremburnites asking me if I'm moving out as they've heard that I've bought a farm. Well, yes, I've bought a 160 acre farm in Kangaroo Valley and no I'm not moving from Naremburn yet – just splitting my time between both places.



So whatever you are planning on doing over the Christmas and New Year period have fun and enjoy yourself ... and be nice! See you next year.

Andy
41 Central Street



Peter Chauncy and his team at McGrath Crows Nest

The spring season saw some spectacular results for our team. Along with several record sales, Peter achieved elite industry status as winner of the REINSW Sales Agent of the Year award in October. This is recognition for outstanding achievement and is hotly contested by sales agents throughout the state. It is a very humbling honour to be named the best of a highly professional talent pool.

RP Data figures show 2014 has already been a stronger year for auctions than 2013, and it looks like a healthy run into next year. Despite talk of a housing bubble, property experts are expecting annual price growth in Sydney of up to 10 per cent.

Naremburn continues to shine as a lifestyle suburb and buyers are voting with their cheque books. The local housing market has performed admirably with an average 16 percent increase in prices compared with the same nine-month period last year.

In the last eight weeks we successfully sold another 20 properties and posted some amazing prices. Some of our highlight sales include a property in Dawson Street for \$2.1M and one in Grafton Avenue for \$2.25M. A two-bedroom semi in Hamilton Avenue also sold before auction for just over \$1.5M. Great results like these come off the back of careful planning and tailored marketing strategies that optimise a property's appeal in the market.

Want to sell in 2015?

Now's the time to sit down and talk about a February 2015 auction. We already have four local homes signed up for this period and our schedule usually gets quite full before the end of the year. Call us now and we'll design an auction program specifically for your home.

Community ties

We are proud sponsors of the Willoughby Community Preschool in Naremburn and in October helped raise around \$18,000 by auctioning children's artworks and donating funds at the annual cocktail party. The money goes towards helping the school provide facilities and equipment for the kids and it's a great reward for us to contribute to our community.

Peter Chauncy and the team at McGrath Crows Nest would like to take this opportunity to wish you a very safe and happy holiday season.

For the best Real Estate advice, please feel free to contact Peter Chauncy on 0402 036 489.

McGrath Crows Nest

1A/29 Holtermann Street CROWS NEST

Ph: 8115 0400

True or False

How well do you know the history of your suburb?

- 1** The first bridge across Flat Rock Creek (Naremburn's northern border with Willoughby South) was built in 1886.
- 2** The shared pedestrian/bike bridge across Willoughby Road and the expressway near Naremburn shops was completed in 2006.
- 3** Betty and Bronco were two well-known vaudeville actors who lived in Grafton Avenue.
- 4** Naremburn South, bordered by Chandos, Mitchell, Christie and Northcote Streets, had a Progress Association distinct from Naremburn Progress Association (NPA est. 1901).
- 5** In 1993 you could buy a two bedroom unit in Naremburn for \$200,000 and a three bedroom house for \$315,000.
- 6** Prior to 1985 all lanes in Naremburn were designated by a number.

(Answers on page 6)

Membership Update

It is a pleasure to report that our membership is on the up with many renewing for the year 2014 and with several new members coming on board. We are heartened that this may reflect a greater interest in the Naremburn Progressive Association (NPA) from the community. As the NPA is our community representation on many levels the Executive would welcome a greater input in the future direction of your organisation to see it as a truly progressive organisation.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) takes place at the March meeting and, while that may seem far away, it is really only around the corner so to speak. At the AGM all the Executive positions become vacant and nominees for the following twelve months are voted in.

We would encourage any members with an interest in participating in the planning and forward direction of NPA to put yourselves forward. The current members of the Executive team would be only too happy to discuss our roles and the degree of involvement required, which need not be onerous, with you at either our December 11 or February 12 meeting (no meeting in January).

Equally if you are not a member of NPA but interested in joining and wish to know more about its' role come to one of the meetings and meet us.

Viviane Leveaux
Vice President

Letter to the editor

I am writing to express my concern about a proposed development at 32 & 34 Northcote Street Naremburn (DA 2014/116).

In 2012 Willoughby City Council created multiple R3 (medium density) zones under the directive of the NSW State Government. The intention of the R3 zone was to increase housing density. The Northcote R3 zone is from Number 32 to 48; the rest of the western side of Northcote Street being zoned R4 (high density) approaching St Leonards station. Two other R3 Zones exist in Naremburn near the corners of Dalleys & Willoughby Roads and Quiamong & Glenmore Streets, allowing building heights up to 9 meters.

The proposal at 32 & 34 Northcote Street consists of a 3 level 15-unit block with 22 car spaces to be built in a residential housing area some distance from St Leonards station.

Willoughby City Council planning officers have recommended approval of the development despite multiple breaches of Development Control Plan (DCP) guidelines such as height, site coverage, setbacks and traffic.

No formal traffic survey has been undertaken. It has been proposed that all traffic from the new development be funnelled into Waters Road over a major storm water drain that is subject to flooding. This end of Waters Road is a narrow cul-de-sac with effectively only one lane of traffic. Over 30 submissions were made from local residents that have largely been ignored.

At the Ward Councillor's meeting in October the residents and developer met to discuss the proposed development. All three Naremburn Ward Councillors unanimously voted to reject the developer's plans, citing the multiple breaches of DCP guidelines and unsuitable traffic access via Waters Road. The matter was then referred to a full council meeting where once again it was suggested to the developer that he should reduce the scale of the development and the matter was unanimously deferred.

However the developer immediately lodged an appeal with the Land and Environment Court with a preliminary hearing scheduled for mid-November. Quite clearly the developer has little regard for community concerns or council DCP guidelines and intends to force a result using legal arguments in court motivated by millions of dollars profit.

The proposal at 32 & 34 Northcote Street will set a precedent for future developments in the newly created R3 (medium density) zones. The State Government appears to be putting unprecedented pressure on local councils to approve multi-storey dwellings with little regard for the local residents or community requirements. Once the current housing bubble fuelled by property investors has reached its predictable end the community and council will be left with the legacy of multiple developments of questionable benefit.

Concerned Naremburn residents should write to their local Ward Councillor to resist inappropriate developments.

Regards,

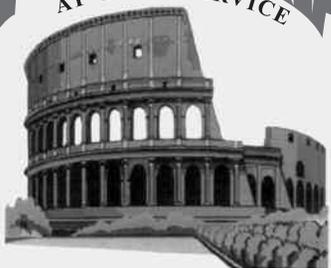
Alex McEwen

(alex.mcewen@icloud.com)

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Parking issues at Naremburn Shops

Parking at Naremburn shops has become difficult over the last few years. A large proportion of this problem has been caused by motorists utilising the unlimited parking whilst they are at work, as North Sydney Council has reduced the number of unlimited parking spaces in the Crows Nest area.

Willoughby City Council has attempted to alleviate these problems, through changes to parking hours.

The parking at Naremburn shops is a work in progress; there have been some changes to the time limits trialled. Rohan St has been reduced to one hour parking. Dodds Lane has a four hour limit imposed on the south side and Willoughby Road (outside the hardware store) has been reduced to fifteen minutes.

The next proposed round of changes will be to adjust the west side of Willoughby Road to half hour parking and to change some of these to seven days rather than five and a half days, as they are now.

If you are parking at Naremburn shops, make sure you check the signage or you may find that you end up with a parking fine.

Wes Waldock
Andersons Hardware

Changes at Willoughby Community Pre-School

From 2015, Willoughby Community Pre-School will change models to fit within the Federal government guidelines for long day-care rather than operating under its current State government funding model.

Dianne Minnett, director of the Pre-School, wants to make it clear that the high-quality of care will remain unchanged. Importantly, the Pre-School will remain a not-for-profit and community-based centre.

The main changes relate to the funding and the hours of operation. From 2015, the centre will be open 48 weeks per year (with a 42-week option) and it will be open from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm rather than its current 9:00 to 3:00 pm.

The Pre-school will continue to offer a 2-day programme (Thursday, Friday), mainly to three year olds, and a 3-day programme (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday), mainly to four year olds.

As a result of the changes, families who are eligible for the Child Care Rebate (CCR) and Child Care Benefit (CCB) will be able to claim a rebate from the federal government.

All places for 2015 have been filled. For more information about the changes or to enrol your child for future years, call 9437 4260.



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Swim School

Plunge into swimming classes at Willoughby Leisure

Willoughby Leisure's swim school offers swimming lessons for children from 6 months of age through to adults.

Kids Klub

School holiday program

The Kids Klub school holiday program is a great way to keep the kids active and entertained throughout the school holidays.

Birthday Parties

Let us do all the hard work

Take the hassle out of birthday parties and let our qualified instructors supervise a range of fun water activities and games.

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Kids under 12 have fun on the Giant Obstacle Course

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leisure@willoughbyleisure.com.au
www.willoughbyleisure.com.au

True or False

1 FALSE

The first bridge was built in 1870 but was destroyed in a flash flood. It was rebuilt in 1886 and strengthened for the tramway passage in 1890.

2 TRUE

H.F.Hansen and company, (est.1877) completed the widening of the bridge in 2006. This company is one of three contracted by the then RTA for the construction of road bridges in NSW.

3 FALSE

Betty and Bronco were well known local Grafton Avenue identities.

Betty was the local quarrymaster, Jack Brook's horse and was usually accompanied by Bronco, Jack's dog.

4 TRUE

Naremburn South Progress Association was established in 1988 and closed in 1996. Minutes of its activities are held by the NPA. Our Constitution states that its purpose is '*To promote the welfare and advancement of Naremburn and its district.*'

5 TRUE

In 2001 that two bedroom unit would have cost \$325,000 and the three bedroom house, \$750,000. It seems that upward price growth has continued.

6 TRUE

After 12 February 1985 Naremburn lanes were named after people who had contributed to Naremburn's development. Many NPA past members are remembered this way.

Kevin FitzPatrick
Central Street



Community garden – Summer 2014

Congratulations to Connor of Waters Rd, who won the lizard naming competition. The lizard's name is Louis. There is now a lovely mural of Louis on a rock in the garden.

We are in the process of gradually redoing the beds with a gravel base so that they will be self-wicking. This means that we are able to fill the bottom half with water that the plants then suck up and use. Hopefully this will stop them drying out so much. The first one to be done is the very bottom one.

For summer there should be lots of basil, eggplant, parsley and tomatoes. We generally also have lettuce all year round. The passion fruit vines that we have grown from seed are doing very well and producing quite a few big fat passion fruit. These will be able to be picked on the way past once they are ripe.

We will be expanding our tree collection with a couple of dwarf varieties that should be in early summer.

We can always use more scraps for the worm farms and compostable matter for the compost bins, so feel free to drop in your peelings, cuttings and clippings.

One sour note, however, is that we have noticed an increase in dog droppings not being picked up around the streets near our garden. If you have dogs, please be responsible and pick up after them, it is not fun to have to sort out your kid's shoes just before they get on the bus.

On a brighter note, there is usually someone working in the garden around 10:00am on Sunday mornings, so please drop in and say hello and have a look around. We look forward to seeing you.

Sue Howes
Bongalong Street

Fun for the littlies

Naremburn Playgroup has had a great year in the newly renovated space at Naremburn Community Centre.

We have a lovely indoor/outdoor space that means we can meet whatever the weather. The ages of the kids range from the babies who play happily on the playmat to the more mobile toddlers and preschoolers who love the trampoline, train set, toy kitchen and craft activities. We recently enjoyed a trip next door to the Willoughby Community Pre-School to see their baby ducklings, which were very cute!

Playgroup will finish up for the year on 17 December and will be taking a break over the school holidays but will recommence on Wednesday 4 February at 9.30 am. Come along for a free visit any Wednesday during school term from 9.30 to 11.30 am to try it out.

Playgroup is a great way to connect with the community and you will soon find that you run into the same friendly faces at the local parks and shops.

Zoë Harpham
Waters Road

Thank-you to the businesses who have advertised with us this year:

McGrath Crows Nest
Naremburn Pizzeria
Willoughby Leisure Centre
The Flat Rock Brew Café
Catholic Parish of Lower North Shore
Blue Peacock Beauty Room
Sanctuary Cammeray
How hair on wilkes
Select Health Effects
Through the Wardrobe
Darren Campbell Architect
Healthquarters
Uplift Fitness
Northbridge Physiotherapy
Anita Kocharians

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Talented Naremburn residents band together to raise money



Naremburn has a talented community of musicians living in its streets. Recently several of them banded together with the Catholic Parish of the Lower North Shore to raise money to buy a church-bell for the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in the village of Eraulo, in the Parish of Letefoho, Timor Leste.

Lisa Lewis (Music Minister), John Lewis (recording and mixing and arranging), Anne Maree Higgins

(singer), Jessica Wells (arranging *O Holy Night*) and Michael Goorevich (drums and percussion), Azumi Lehmann (harp), Tricia Gemmell (singer) are all locals who performed for a CD entitled 'Joy', sales of which will go to purchase the new bell. They joined forces with the children's choir from St Philip Neri School and St Thomas's, along with the combined parish choir.

Lisa reports that the singers were hitting all the right notes in their recording session of 'Jingle Bells' – which is amongst other seasonal favourites to be included in a Christmas CD. All proceeds from the CD, which is titled 'Joy', will go to the purchase of the new bell.

With a fundraising target of \$1,800, the hope is that the CD will be a big hit so they can raise enough money to send a new bell to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. Priced at \$15 each, the Christmas CDs will be on limited release from 6 December through Katherine Pawson at the Catholic Parish of the Lower North Shore Office: Katherine.Pawson@lns.org.au.

Naming our house

We moved to the lovely suburb of Naremburn 4 years ago. One of the many things that attracted us to this leafy inner city suburb was the beautiful character homes set amongst tree lined streets.

As we searched for a house to call our home we noticed that many houses had name plaques, which to me, adds character – it gives a house a sense of individuality and presence. When we bought our home in Naremburn, it unfortunately didn't come with a name so I sought to find one.

I contacted Willoughby local library and they were extremely helpful; within days they did a historical search on our property and emailed me a list of previous owners, right back to the original owner/builder. So now our home has a name, the name of the person that built our lovely cottage in 1917; 'Gardiner'.

Carmen Loecherer
Northcote Street

What's the latest with Channel 9?

On 23 September the Land and Environment (L&E) Court held a conciliation conference at the Channel 9 property in Artarmon.

The conference was attended by Channel 9, the Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) and Willoughby City Council and their legal representatives. At this conference six members of the community addressed the L&E Court Commissioner to represent the community's view of the Channel 9 proposal.

The conciliation conference was adjourned after an initial exchange of views and information by all the parties and the continuation is scheduled for 12 December. The conference will be restricted to the three parties and members of the community will not be able attend. If the parties cannot reach an agreement the matter will be referred to an L&E Court hearing and this would be presided over by a different commissioner to the one who conducted the conciliation conference. At this stage we can only hope that there will be a favourable outcome from the conciliation conference.

Bob Taffel

Willoughby South Progress Association

Comings and goings

You will probably have noticed the recent changes at Naremburn shops, with some new openings and a few businesses changing hands.

Along with the changes have come some traffic issues, which Wes Waldock addresses in his article on page 5.

Sprout Café and its associated Xtend Barre business have being doing great business in the old Montien Thai location. For those who aren't familiar with Xtend Barre, it is a ballet/pilates fusion said to sculpt the body.

The Electric Bike shop has moved out and a new tenant is yet to be found for that location.

The newcomer to the block is Hye Grill, a Mediterranean café and restaurant. We wish them well for their new venture.

Cream has had a change of ownership, as has Harbourside Fitness (located above Delicia), which is now called Naremburn Health. And, finally, Maree has a spray tanning operator above her salon.

We now have quite the thriving local community shopping strip but it will only continue to thrive if we support it by shopping and eating there. It can be easy to default to the larger shopping centres but why not keep it local and support your own community instead?



The Flat Rock Brew Café

A place for locals – a relaxed atmosphere, tasty food and real beer.

Thank you to the Naremburn community for supporting us through 2014 — it has been a pleasure seeing you all return and enjoying yourselves at the Flat Rock Brew Café.

It's fantastic to see you enjoy our beer brewed on premises, home-made soft drinks, our tasty new food menu, Thursday curry nights and kid-friendly options

We will be closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, and are open as usual Wednesday to Sunday throughout the festive period.

Please refer to our website for information and email frbc@flatrockbrewcafe.com.au for bookings/functions.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

 Find us on Facebook
to keep up to date and 'Like' us!

0427 466 004
290 Willoughby Road Naremburn

Naremburn Community Centre Activities

There are two spaces available for hire in the community centre. There is a meeting room with its own kitchenette and toilet facilities and a larger area with its own projector.

These spaces can be hired through the Willoughby Park Centre (Ph. 9967 2917 or email willpark@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

Naremburn Progress Association

2nd Thursday (except Jan & Jul)
7:30 pm
0416 161 536 (Frances O'Brien)

Playgroup

Wednesday – for children 5 and under
9:30 am to 11.30 am
naremburnplaygroup@gmail.com

Northern Suburbs Philatelic Society

3rd Thursday, 7:45 pm
Visitors always welcome
9419 7354 (Paul Storm)

Breast Feeding Association

1st Tuesday
10:00 am to 12 noon
abamns.contact@gmail.com

Willoughby Community Pre-School

Monday to Friday
8:00 am to 3:00 pm
9437 4260

Naremburn Library

Mondays – 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm
Thursdays – 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm
Saturdays – 9:30 am to 12 noon
9439 5584

7 Central Street



Update from Cr Sloane

Fit for the Future – an opportunity not an end in itself

Change is afoot in local government and we must develop a solid direction to face the challenges presented by the State Government's plan to make local government 'Fit for the Future'.

Since the mid-1980s, local government's only direct source of tax income has been property rates, which makes up only 3–4% of the total national tax collected, and only one-third of national property taxes, the other two-thirds being an integral part of State governments' revenue base (ALGA 2007). In NSW, to further complicate matters, our rates are 'pegged'. The Rate Peg is the annual rate increase, set not by councils, but by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

This is a hugely inequitable situation, as we know that in terms of sound economic and fiscal management, revenue-raising or taxation powers should match expenditure responsibilities, allowing for redistribution to needy regions and individuals by the national government. Clearly for local government this is not the case. So this brings us to the case for change and the State Government's plan to make local government 'Fit for the Future'.

'Fit for the Future' comes out of a three-year Independent Local Government Review Panel: *Revitalising Local Government* led by Graham Sansom and requested by Local Government NSW (LGNSW). **The Sansom Review recommended that 105 of NSW's 152 councils consider merging and that eight councils in the far west of the state should form a Far West organisation.**

As a result, all of NSW 152 Councils are being asked to assess their current position and submit a 'Fit for the Future' proposal by 30 June 2015. This requires councils to analyse service delivery, scale of operations, financial sustainability and management of infrastructure. They must also contain details about a council's infrastructure backlog, asset maintenance, debt service ratio and its ability to meet its own operating costs, among other things. Councils must then complete a 'roadmap' of how they will achieve sustainability in the future.

Under the arrangement, any new Sydney council formed by a merger would be given a grant of \$10.5 million plus further funding up to \$12.5 million for every 50,000 residents over a threshold of 250,000. However, mergers are opposed by many in our communities.

The Minister for Local Government, Paul Toole has said that **'Councils are losing \$1 million a day and we've got boundaries that were drawn up over 100 years ago. It is clear that "no change" is not an option.'**

Change is definitely here and in my view, the best place for our community to be is 'at the table' ready to discuss options. Willoughby City Council has been a leader in arguing for and establishing shared service arrangements and seeking to identify cost savings and new revenue sources. We have shown that we can embrace change, but we need to do more.

'Fit for the Future' presents many opportunities but as we have seen in Queensland, council mergers are not an end in themselves – like any significant change, there are many factors that will either enable success or render the outcome unworkable.

The challenges for local government are real and a 'business as usual' approach will not be enough to overcome these challenges. Local government and its leadership – elected Councillors and senior management – must rethink how it functions and consider innovative ways for the provision of public services provided to support communities and improve their quality of life.

Local government is so much more than just a provider of local services. It is the tier of government that is the most accessible – the tier of government that showcases democracy in action in a much more immediate and direct way than either state or federal government. Local government is about communities. So let's embrace the changes that lie ahead and work together to craft a sustainable future for the tier of government that can and must do the heavy lifting in terms of creating and maintaining our communities of the future.

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