



DREDGING: Messing With Nature A Costly Exercise

CHRIS GROUNDS & PAT THOMPSON

WHEN someone goes down at the pub gets a good idea, some joker always agrees that bloody Council should do something about it. In the Shoalhaven like in other places you can get things going by starting a petition. Now who is not going to agree that by spending a few bob and shifting a load or two of sand, we can improve our boating amenity. We all like the water and messing about in boats, as after all that is why many of us chose to live here.

Equally our politicians know a good thing when they see one. A petition with a few thousand names appended to it certainly gets their juices flowing. And so with a little pressure here and a little pressure there, money to at least do a study and see if "a good idea" gels is worth voting for. So \$400,000 of ratepayers money and State taxes is advanced. Never mind that endless previous studies have found that "a good idea" is in fact a bad one. Never mind also that Council's own Management Plan specifically pours cold water on dredging. It states, "Sediment movement is a dynamic process. Dredging will only ever provide short term improvement, followed by natural infilling of the channel from subsequent floods or tidal deposition. In addition to the significant initial costs involved in dredging there is also a sizeable ongoing financial commitment required (Webb McKeown & Assoc., 2006).

THE NEXT STEP

Having engaged consultants Peter Spurway & Assoc. a, Dredging Feasibility Study (available on Council's website)

has been produced. From it we learn that three dredging projects have been recommended and two prioritised, namely Currumbene Creek and Suxxex Inlet, which with Lake Conjola involves an estimated cost of approximately \$2 million. As I write the consultants are busy finalising a Review of the Environmental Factors, which is due to be released for public comment in March before the matter will return to Council for a decision.

Whilst as dredging projects

go these proposals are not large falling below the threshold required for a full environmental impact report, residents should take notice of the cost to ratepayers, the environmental impact and Council's neglect to follow its own planning processes.

CURRAMBENE CREEK

The push for dredging at the entrance of Currumbene Creek comes from commercial pressures with a view to increasing a larger commercial presence

for popular Whale-watching tourism and all-tides access of tenders from visiting cruise ships. Vessels are increasing in size and number to meet tourist demand.

However the Consultant's Report warns: "The sand budget at the entrance of Currumbene Creek is in balance. Over-dredging the sand shoal at the creek mouth would result in temporary loss of sand from the creek's delta system. It would also open up the wharf & moorings to more ocean storm swell.

The likely net impact would be the eventual loss of a roughly equivalent volume of sand from the southern end of Callala Beach from erosion in a severe storm event."

The sand is to be 'de-watered' in bunds on Callala Beach, right near the spit, which is an important bird resting area used by 'Threatened Species shorebirds' and migratory species. The sand is then to be moved up the beach - truck or pumped - for

CONTINUED P. 2

Sand spit at entrance to Currumbene Creek...Chris Grounds



letters

SUSTAINABLE SHOALHAVEN

Over the last three months, six of us connected with Shoalhaven Transition have been meeting and working towards developing a plan for a sustainable Shoalhaven.

The initiative for this project comes from Ian Chambers, a Sydney-based business consultant, and co-author of the book, Plan for the Planet. This book focuses on eleven key aspects of human activity, the urgent difficulties we face involving each of these, and outlines strategies for addressing these challenges using a business management approach. This book provides "a business plan framework to the global challenges we face, and the coordination of the solutions which will enable us to build a sustainable world".

Ian took part in the discussion following the screening in Huskisson of the film "The Economics of Happiness" in August last year. He later linked up with members of Transition, and suggested that we work on a plan for a sustainable Shoalhaven, using the same approach he used in his book.

The areas of activity in the Shoalhaven we are focussing on so far, are: food production, energy generation, waste treatment, transport, and education. Our aims are to investigate what the current situation is, to develop strategies that would move towards sustainability, and to take action in the local community based on these strategies.

If you'd like to contribute in any way, or to find out more about this project, you can contact me at pbecke@bigpond.net.au

Peter Becke, Shoalhaven Transition

LOVE HYAMS BEACH?

I have been dismayed, saddened and downright angry to see the way visitors trash the wonderful Shoalhaven treasure, beautiful Hyams Beach.

You know, the one with 'the whitest sands in the world'

My friends and myself pick up rubbish we find. This season the amount and type of rubbish left behind was incredible. Left by people who 'love' to visit but forget/refuse? to take away their rubbish and 'stuff'.

A staggering amount of cigarette butts, plastic bags, hard and soft plastic, dirty nappies, tissues, food, fishing line, coffee cups, rope, glass and plastic bottles, bottle tops, toys, tents (one left erected after being utilised for at least two nights) Toilets used or bush? We didn't venture in to check.

Unleashed dogs roaming in the bush - faeces - another story!

Apart from polluting the beach, what about polluting the crystal clear waters of Jervis Bay when rubbish is washed in at high tide?

Imagine the impression given to caring tourists enthusiastic to see this wonderful icon of the Shoalhaven only to find it trashed. I am disgusted.

Can we ask questions? Who benefits from tourists or their dollars? Not many at Hyams.

Are any benefits worth the impacts to our priceless natural treasures? I personally think not.

Council, JB National Park and Jervis Bay Marine Parks Authority need to act before the next batch of attracted tourists come and 'love' Hyams Beach.

**Maureen Webb
Shoalhaven resident**

SAVING TAFE

TAFE is bleeding to death - slowly - with ongoing reductions to their budgets, finding a full time TAFE teacher is almost like finding a unicorn!

TAFE NSW has always been a fantastic place for education, from trade's to diplomas and pathways to work, regional NSW has relied on the TAFE system to deliver programs for our young people and people interested in returning to work or changing career.

The NSW Government has been pouring money into private providers and for profit organisations that are benefiting from new income sources and directly challenging the bread and butter courses that have traditionally been provided by TAFE. Privatisation by stealth. This is a terrible situation for regional areas such as the South Coast where our youth unemployment rates are some of the state's highest. We need to keep and fund our TAFE system to make it useful for training people for the services in the region. Around 60% of the South Coast lives on fixed income and we are a socio-economically challenged area, all but completely reliant on the private vehicle for transport. It makes no sense to force our people to travel long distances to train at TAFE as travel costs are often prohibitive.

In 2014 The Greens put forward a Bill that sought to stop expanding funding for private training and restore TAFE's budget however that was defeated. We don't want NSW TAFE to end up like Victoria where only 27% of training is provided by TAFE. It's bad for our people and bad for our economy. The Greens need your help to take this fight into the election and tell all candidates that TAFE is worth saving.

**Amanda Findlay
Greens Candidate for South Coast**

State Election: It's Time To Act!

After more 30 years of strategic planning and conservation initiatives, the wellbeing of Lake Wollumboola is still under threat from massive development expansion.

Please support the Lake Wollumboola Protection Association's campaign to have the remaining undeveloped parts of the Lake catchment conserved as part of Jervis Bay National Park.

Write to the NSW Planning and Environment Ministers, Pru Goward and Rob Stokes, with copies to Member for South Coast Shelley Hancock and representatives of other parties requesting that they support:

acquisition of Halloran Trust lands in the Lake Wollumboola catchment and surrounds

for dedication to Jervis Bay National Park, to conserve the internationally significant natural values and Aboriginal cultural heritage of the Lake and catchment.

finalising both National Park dedication and rezoning issues as part of the Halloran Trust Planning Proposal process, with a moratorium on further development applications for the Lake and Crookhaven River catchments.

opening up the Halloran Planning Proposal process to community engagement and public comment.

progressing without further delay the listing of Lake Wollumboola as a wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention.

Dredging

Continued From P.1

1.5kms to be dumped over the vegetated fore-dune in front of some houses - 7000m³ of dredged sand to a depth of 1m - unconsolidated. Trucking can be highly damaging to beach sand ecology. This is claimed to be an erosion mitigation action but can only afford some houses protection but not all requiring some protection. The efficacy of the dredging is untested and the admission is that the duration of effect is unknown and depends on nature - really!

SUSSEX INLET

The proposal for here is that dredging is desired to improve depths in parts of current channels. At the Community consultative meetings organised by Council various views were expressed that included comments that the dredging was more in the nature of sand-mining and were driven by "the petition" collected locally and presented to Council. This petition was a major focus for much discussion and was not well regarded across the community.

In the case of Sussex Inlet the Estuary Management Plan should apply and was strongly supported by many comments in the consultative meeting. These comments of course were built on first-hand experience, often over decades. Researchers and community alike can testify that the Inlet is a natural system and is

dynamic in response to natural events such as floods and storm seas. People in the meeting also testified to the Inlet being in a good state and quite usable. There was the clear input that the dredging-sand mining proposal was unnecessary and that given the consultant comments in response to questions of how long the dredging may last, is contrary to good management and expenditure.

COUNCIL

Given the nature of the feedback from a strongly supported community consultative meeting questions arise which must be asked and answered. Consultation requires an acknowledged two-way flow in seeking a response to proposals, in this case dredging, otherwise it is simply information giving. On that basis, it would be expedited that careful notes would be kept by Council at these meetings as a matter of record but that does not appear to have been done. If not, the meetings were not 'consultative' meetings at all. But there is a bigger question to put to Council. Council does have a Community Engagement Policy. Why has Council not applied this policy in relation to these proposals. They do involve significant amounts of rate-payer funds and they are likely to have significant impact, albeit locally.

The Community Engagement Policy sets out the principal that there will be a plan. No such Plan was presented at the consultation meeting nor does one seem to exist. Like the Estuary Management Plan, the Community Engagement Plan apparently can seemingly be ignored. When it is comes to voting contradictory matters can easily be set aside in favour of populist notions. On the up-side it all makes for a good yarn down at the pub. It is that bloody Council again, why do we bother with them!



THE NEW BUSH TELEGRAPH

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Editor.

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Lake Wollumboola

FRANCES BRAY

OVER the last two summers Lake Wollumboola has displayed why it is such an important coastal wetland, and worthy candidate for listing as a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention, attracting at least 10,000 birds including water birds, nesting shorebirds and migratory waders.

Last summer was a great season for the Endangered Migratory Little Terns with 46 fledglings. This summer a White-Rumped Sandpiper is the big attraction. It started its migration in the Alaskan or Canadian tundra on its way to South America. However it took a wrong turn and has spent most of January-February roosting and feeding at the Lake sand bar tolerating the excited presence of hundreds of birdwatchers from all over Australia.

It is concerning that although the Lake is considered as meeting 4-5 RAMSAR criteria, progress with listing has been on hold since 2011, apparently until the future zoning of the Lake catchment is resolved. Ramsar nomination should precede not follow consideration of planning and development proposals for the Lake catchment, as listing would ensure that any environmental assessment is conducted according to requirements of the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act and that conservation measures are consistent with Ramsar listing.

Lake and catchment-expert warnings of catastrophic impacts from development.

It is concerning also that, whilst the Lake bed, sand bar and south west catchment are already part of Jervis Bay National Park, the northwest catchment remains zoned for urban development. Yet this area, most importantly Long Bow Point, has long been recognized as critically important for maintaining the Lake's water quality and ecology as it is a major source of Lake water supply from surface drainage, creeks and wetlands and ground water.

Office of Environment and Heritage 2013 research reaffirms the recommendations of three previous independent Inquiries regarding the sensitive of Lake Wollumboola to development expansion in its catchment. The OEH Report titled "Environmental Sensitivity of Lake Wollumboola: input into considerations of development applications at Long Bow Point, Culburra," Scanes P et al 2013 explains why Lake Wollumboola is considered so sensitive to impacts of development on water quality.

The research report emphasises the Lake's dependence on low phosphorous ground



Royal Spoonbill and teal at Lake Wollumboola. Narelle Wright 2014

water, with the currently widespread aquatic algae *Lamprothamnium* sp. contributing to high primary productivity and overall biological diversity of the lake, saying:

"Given the strong control that charophytes (*Lamprothamnium*) exert on lake ecology and water quality, we consider that the lake is vulnerable to a catastrophic state change if key processes are disrupted by nutrient enrichment and there is significant loss of charophytes and macrophytes."

"The Lake would never recover from the loss of charophytes and macrophytes and the ecosystem services they provide...resulting in loss of swans and other fauna."

Any future development in the vicinity of Lake Wollumboola should be placed as far from the lake as possible to minimise risk of contamination of ground water aquifers which may be directly linked to the lake." (ie ground water aquifers outside the surface catchment.)

"The demonstrated ecological significance of the lake, the relative rarity of its biotype and its sensitivity to catastrophic state change justify the current limitations to development in the catchment." Scanes et al (2013) (ie South Coast Regional Strategy.)

Concerns with Halloran Planning Proposal.

Despite the strength of these warnings, the Halloran Trust is determinedly pursuing development applications for a golf course at Long Bow Point and for residential, commercial and industrial development mainly in the neighbouring Crookhaven River catchment but also in the Lake catchment. Now a Planning Proposal for urban development expansion has been lodged, following the decision by the then NSW Minister for Planning and Infrastructure in March 2014 to defer rezoning of the area from the Shoalhaven LEP to enable a Planning Proposal to be considered.

Scale of development not ecologically sustainable.

The entire proposal is for 6,100 residential lots at Culburra Beach and Callala Bay. 5,400 residential lots, industrial, commercial and tourist development is proposed west of Culburra Beach mainly in the Crookhaven catchment but also the Lake catchment. The proposal incorporates and adds to existing development applications for a golf course and residential, commercial and industrial development for Culburra Beach in both the Lake and Crookhaven catchments.

Gifted proposal-not what it seems.

The Proposal gives some recognition to the high conservation values of the Lake and catchment by offering to "gift" lands in the Lake catchment and at Kinghorn Point and Callala for dedication to Jervis Bay National Park. However the value of this proposed gift is not what it seems.

Firstly the proposal does not include Lake catchment lands most critical in protecting the sensitive lake ecology that is the northwest catchment including Long Bow Point.

Instead Long Bow Point and surrounds south of Culburra Rd are proposed for "low environmental impact community recreation with private conservation zone" to allow recreational activities including a golf course, tourist accommodation, whilst the northwest catchment north of Culburra Rd is proposed for investigation for residential development. OEH warnings are ignored!

Secondly two alternative sites in the same ownership have been identified as more suitable for a golf course. The sites in the Crookhaven catchment are on cleared and degraded land and there are questions in any case regarding the economic viability of another golf course in the region. Moreover, opportunities are also available for residential and commercial development and consolidation with the existing Culburra Beach urban area, opposite the community

centre.

Thirdly the area proposed for "gifting" is inadequate for the extent of loss of native vegetation proposed for the West Culburra development application as calculated by OEH Biobanking methodology. So with a much greater area proposed for development, the area to be "gifted for national park should be much larger and include the most environmentally sensitive area, Long Bow Point and surrounds.

Department of Planning and Environment recommendations compromise values.

The Department of Planning and Environment is currently considering the application and has made recommendations, with conditions for the application to proceed to Gateway approval, the first stage of a 2-year time frame for completion.

The conditions recommended by the Department of Planning and Environment represent a significant improvement on the Halloran Trust Proposal as they recommend E 2 private property Environment Conservation zoning for all the Halloran lands in the Lake catchment, investigation of alternative sites for a golf course and require overall justification for the scale of urban expansion.

However there are problems also with E 2 zoning.

Firstly it is not consistent with E 1 National Park zoning adopted for the area included in the South Coast Regional Strategy 2007.

Secondly Shoalhaven City Council added uses to the E 2 zone, which are clearly incompatible with protecting and conserving Lake Wollumboola and the threatened species habitat and wildlife corridor values of the catchment.

E 2 zoning would allow dwelling houses, bed and breakfast accommodation, home businesses, eco-tourist facilities including temporary or short term accommodation and recreation areas such as community sporting facilities, public park,

reserve, gardens and provisions for clearing native vegetation under the Native Vegetation Act.

These uses are also incompatible with the advice of Office of Environment and Heritage scientists, that uses such a golf course are likely to cause "catastrophic" impacts on Lake Wollumboola and on the catchment, thus diminishing the conservation values of Jervis Bay National Park.

Acquisition for Jervis Bay National Park.

Government should also consider acquisition of the undeveloped Lake catchment lands for dedication to Jervis Bay National Park via donation or purchase. Whilst the high cost of purchase of residentially zoned land and the possibility of compensation claims associated with national park dedication is recognized, such costs should be weighed against ongoing costs to Government and the Culburra Beach community of irreversible environmental, cultural, social and economic damage to Lake Wollumboola and the Crookhaven River from massive over-development.

Moreover expansion of Jervis Bay National Park immediately west of Culburra Beach would provide long term benefits to the local economy through opportunities for nature and Aboriginal cultural tourism. Interest in the Lake as a significant habitat for birds has resulting in large numbers of Bird observers visiting Culburra Beach, with benefits for the local economy.

Acquisition of the Lake catchment is particularly significant for the Jerrinja community as Jervis Bay National Park is identified under the National Parks and Wildlife Act for return of ownership to traditional owners and joint management with NPWS, should the traditional owners and Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council agree to negotiate such arrangements.

Finally whilst the Planning Proposal process involves Shoalhaven City Council, representatives of the landowner and Government agencies, the community is shut out of the process until the very end, when a 60-day public consultation period is proposed.

The local Culburra Beach community, particularly the Aboriginal community and those concerned with the future well-being of the Culburra Beach environment and the general public, are entitled to expect that decisions regarding the Planning Proposal and associated developments are not driven by development interests.

Instead decisions should be made on merit in the longterm public interest, within the existing legal framework, consistent with expert advice and following community consultation, engagement and scrutiny throughout the process.

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Arthur Boyd: An Active Witness

A Bundanon Trust touring exhibition, Jervis Bay Maritime Museum, 28 February to 19 April 2015

In conjunction with Bundanon Trust, Arthur Boyd: An Active Witness opens at the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum on 28th February and runs until 19th April 2015.

The exhibition honours the work of this internationally recognised Australian artist and the potential of the artist to influence society through their role as an active witness.

It is the first major exhibition to consider the social and political consciousness that influenced Arthur Boyd's art and contains a rich collection of significant artworks by Boyd and his dynastic Australian artist family members.

Curated from the Boyd Collection at Bundanon, this will be the only presentation of the exhibition in the area and represents a collaboration between two of the finest cultural organisations in the Shoalhaven.

The exhibition contains a range of artworks including large paintings,

drawings and ceramics.

Alongside the Boyd collection will be a small archive of photographs, letters and other documents that provide insight into Boyd's historical, cultural and social milieu. Also included are selected works by his significant modern Australian contemporaries, such as Sidney Nolan and Charles Blackman.

Arthur Boyd: An Active Witness launches the exhibition program for 2015 at the Jervis Bay Maritime Museum, (formerly known as the Lady Denman Maritime Museum).

Kangaroo Valley Arts

DI BUCKLEY

THE Kangaroo Valley Arts Festival is held every 2 years and 2015 is shaping up to be bigger and better than ever. From Friday 1 May through to Sunday 3 May the Festival will be a celebration of music, art and sculpture. Intimate recital concerts with leading performers and creative artists will be complemented by a general festive air within the village. Local providers will also be showcasing



their produce and products.

An expanded Sculpture in the Valley is also on the agenda and is expected to once again attract large crowds. The Exhibition of outdoor and indoor sculpture is being held at 'The Willows' – a spectacular property in Grahams Road Kangaroo Valley. The idyllic setting is a perfect backdrop for the exhibits which are all available for purchase. The prize money this year is \$20,000.

A Photographic Competition is also being held in conjunction with the sculpture exhibition and is open to all visitors to 'The Willows' during the 3 days of the Festival. Parking is free and unlimited and there will be lectures twice daily by leading landscape architect Michael Bligh.

For further information please visit www.artsinthevalley.net.au or phone 0467 209 819

Fiona Phillips

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People Power: The Heart Of Huski

KATE BROADHURST

WE have to do something about this!" said Ben Hutchings, owner of Paper Bark camp. It seemed an insurmountable task.

Jervis Bay Tourism had called an urgent committee meeting, and top of the agenda was the imminent sale of the empty block of land at the centre of Huskisson, owned by the RSL. Wendy Smith, President of Huskisson Chamber of Commerce was already on our committee, and we had invited Garry Kelson, from *Huskisson Woollamia Community Voice* to come along.

The three local associations had come together almost a year before, to try to persuade council to buy the 59 Owen Street site. All three groups firmly agreed that the block's iconic view and potential as public space was critical to the economic and social future of Huskisson, Jervis Bay and indeed, our whole region.

We were all somewhat in a state of shock that day, because not only had Shoalhaven City Council voted not to buy the land in a recent meeting, but we were now being told that the RSL (now called Club Jervis Bay), had decided to put the block up 'for sale by tender' within two weeks' time. The tender's end-date was only three months away and the timing, right across the busiest December and January period, could not have been worse as most of us run tourism related businesses, and work every single day for the entire summer season.

Ben Hutchings came up with the bright idea of employing someone to help us run a campaign, so we agreed to get permission from our associations to pool resources and find someone with the skill set and time to help us. It didn't take long to find Rachael Stewart, a visionary campaign consultant, and within ten days we were up and running with our 'Save the Heart of Huskisson' Campaign – even before the 'for sale' sign went up on the land.

Ben, myself, Garry and Wendy formed a committee and very soon after, Belinda Bunter, who has run businesses in Huskisson for many years such as The Waterhouse restaurant, came on board as an enthusiastic addition. Because of my media background I agreed to be spokesperson.

We knew that many people in the Jervis Bay area – business owners and residents alike were all behind us, and we knew that saving the block was a cause that united the entire community, but I don't think any of us realised at the outset, just how huge and widespread the groundswell of support would be.

Within 24 hours of setting up a facebook account and the change.org petition, we had hundreds of fans and signatures, and they were all writing

Within 24 hours of setting up a facebook account and the change.org petition, we had hundreds of fans and signatures, and they were all writing heartfelt comments... In just ten days we had secured more than \$1,000,000 in pledges



heartfelt comments. Media interest picked up immediately with local radio interviews and newspaper articles. WIN TV requested that we organise a few people to come along to the block, so they could film us with the famous view for a news story. After getting permission from the Club President to hold a small rally on the site (we thought about 20 people might turn up at such short notice), we sent an invitation to our facebook followers. The next morning the block was filled with a heaving mass of chanting locals, as well as a few representatives from the Club who had come along to support our cause (from 'arms length'). The Sydney Sun-Herald wrote about us and their story was syndicated in the *Canberra Times*.

Everyone wanted to help. Shop owners donated paint and cardboard for posters. We arranged a public meeting and about 200 people attended, signing up in droves to help on the stall, write letters, raise money and distribute leaflets. At that meeting, several people pledged large sums after Belinda Bunter explained her ideas about crowdfunding: that we could try to raise funds towards a 'Community bid' ourselves.

That public meeting was held only one week after the campaign had officially started, and it resulted in a commitment from Shelley Hancock, Member for South Coast, who promised to hold a meeting with the three tiers of government, and try to see if there was any possible way to get council, state and federal government, collectively, to find a means to buy the block. Out of that 'three tiers meeting', Mayor Jo Gash called a Shoalhaven City Council extraordinary meeting to discuss the block issue to be held in mid January – more than a month away.

Officeworks in Nowra donated our printing costs for our first few hundred urgent posters and leaflets. Integrity Real Estate Jervis Bay and

Ulladulla Printers sponsored ten thousand colour leaflets. In Berry, when shop owners were asked if we could put up a sign in their window, they offered to take a couple, and leaflets too. "Where do you think we go on our days off?" they'd say when thanked. "We love Husky too!"

Behind the scenes an army of volunteers letterboxed the whole Jervis Bay region, and Sandy Smyth organized a roster of helpers for our information stall in the main street of Huskisson. A local IT designer, Alex Penny made us a wonderful website, and another generous helper created a graphic breakdown of the petition by postcode, which helped us back up our argument that people all over the Shoalhaven were supportive, and that Jervis Bay had a huge national and international reputation.

Several respected Shoalhaven elders contacted us to offer advice. Some had the wisdom of decades of local knowledge, and one even had hardcopy archives of development control guidelines and plans, which helped us show how the block had been designated the 'town focal point' with its iconic views 'to be enhanced and protected' for at least 20 years.

As a business community we always understood that any purchase, by any government body, would mean the site would need to be partially developed to become revenue-raising and job-creating. We wanted to show how we believed that the land could be developed possible by building underneath the block and thereby still preserving the space, and the all important view, from Owen Street.

We were contacted by a very experienced Sydney town planner, who put us in touch with Allen Jack + Cottier, one of Australia's award-winning architecture firms. They agreed to create photo-montages and drawings of our idea to turn the site into a 'green-roof' park/amphitheatre with shops and

cafes underneath at wharf level. They donated hours of talent and expertise for no fee at all.

We started crowdfunding after many weeks of research and advice. We'd had to become an incorporated group (not a simple thing to arrange over the Christmas break), with more pro bono help from a Nowra solicitor's firm, Marriott Oliver. The aim was to try to raise an ambitious million dollars towards a community bid – as a way to top up council's bid, or even find a private philanthropist. We also wanted to show how the community was prepared to "put its money where its heart is".

On January 22nd council finally voted at their extraordinary meeting to a) put in a tender to try to buy the block and b) commit to preserving the entire view from Owen Street, should their bid be successful. This was a huge win for us, but we were still very concerned, as all along our goal was for them to negotiate directly with the Club and buy the block outright.

In just ten days we had secured more than \$1,000,000 in pledges with Ozcrowd – an Australian crowd funding platform – but the donations stalled dramati-

cally after the council voted to put in a tender. Ironically, the good news from council meant that everyone seemed now assumed they were going to 'buy the block'. On every street corner and in shops, cafes everywhere, I overheard people saying to each other "No! It's okay! Council's going to buy it!"

In these last few days before the tenders close, we have written to the board of directors at Club Jervis Bay, to ask them to consider a community commitment to fundraise in order to boost council's bid, if it turns out not to be high enough, to get them to the figure they need to reach. We have explained to the Club's board that we can now directly contact everyone who has already pledged money, plus 3000 of our nearly 5000 petitioners and 4000 Facebook followers. We genuinely think we can raise a serious amount of money, with a new 'keep-all' crowd funding campaign to help bring the community's wishes for the block into reality.

We are also hoping that although the Club's board is bound to act in its members' best interests, they will find a way to 'do the right thing' for this community that they are such an integral part of. We hope more than anything, they decide to choose council's bid over any controversial 'big development' option. No one wants to see a three-storey building block out that magnetic view. As everyone keeps saying to us: Huskisson would lose its magical its point of difference. Without that view, light and space, our town would just become the same as anywhere else.

Whatever happens, we know in our hearts that we have done everything we could humanly do to save the centre of our town, and ultimately turn the block into a breathtaking public space for all residents and visitors to enjoy. We have shown the world that Huskisson is a little town with a very big heart, and, we can all be very proud of our shared passion which has brought our community together like never before.

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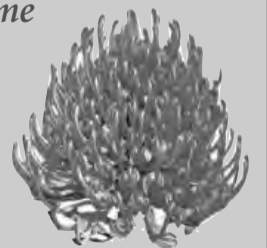
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COMMUNITY NEWS

The NBT supports local business which is such a vital part of our community. We also depend on local advertisers so with each issue of the paper we would like to introduce one such business both to inform and invite your support. This issue we have chosen a new local business that is changing the lives of women in developing communities.....

THE Interior Trading Company is working with women's groups and non-government organisations in south-east Asia to design and develop a range of ethically produced homewares for the Australian market.

"Many women in rural and remote areas of developing



communities have excellent handicraft skills but they do not have access to profitable markets. To make a living a lot of women take up other work and traditional handicraft skills are sadly being lost." says Kelly Upton from The Interior Trading Company.

"I thought that if the product was valued appropriately, then the women artisans should be able to make a good living from their skills, work in their local community and actually increase their income and status by maintaining cultural traditions."

Over the past two years Kelly has been working with women's groups to establish a supply of high quality, ethically made products that are now available in Australia in stores and online.

"In Cambodia, one of the worst environmental weeds is water hyacinth so we have developed a range of water hyacinth woven products. The water hyacinth is harvested by hand, the stems are dried on the rooftops of the weaver's

floating homes then the women work their magic and create beautiful baskets, placemats and floor mats from the raw material. At this stage there is very little being done about environmental weed issues in Cambodia as there are many other priorities. Through this project we are able to provide some basic education about environmental issues and work to create stable employment opportunities for women and their families".

The product range is always expanding and now includes an aromatics range of incense, handmade soaps, candles and bath salts. There's also lots of beautiful batik and raw silk cushions and woven sedge floor mats.

The latest project is based



in Lao where there is a strong tradition of fine silk weaving using all natural dyes to create stunning ikat textiles with detailed designs. Many Laotian

weaving patterns have been lost and Kelly is working with weavers to recreate antique designs using the traditional weaving and dying processes.



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NSW Premier Mike Baird and Gareth Ward MP are delivering for Shoalhaven:



- ✓ **Hospitals:** Fought to secure significant investments in our hospitals, including the Shoalhaven Cancer Care Centre and the Wollongong Emergency Department and Ambulatory Care upgrade, and continues to fight for a major upgrade of Shellharbour Hospital and a better car park at Shoalhaven Hospital
- ✓ **Roads:** Delivered record spends on the Princes Highway with the upgrade at Gerringong almost complete, the Berry bypass project underway and vital planning and preparation work has commenced for the Albion Park Rail Bypass

- ✓ **Transport:** Improving transport with a new station for Shellharbour Junction, station upgrades at Albion Park and Gerringong, new car parks at Oak Flats and Kiama, and an additional 125 express services from Kiama to Central
- ✓ **Jobs:** Secured over \$700 million in investments for our region which has attracted much needed jobs and investments from business and government

Gareth Ward MP

Member for Kiama

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What Do You Know?

GRAEME GIBSON WWW.MORETHANJUSTTALK.COM.AU

WRITE what you know" is a writer's maxim, so here's a few things I know. Or think I know.

Elsewhere in the *New Bush Telegraph* Kate Broadhurst has written about the campaign to bring a block of land in Owen Street Huskisson into public ownership. The land is owned by Club Jervis Bay (formerly the Hukisson RSL).

The Club need to sell the land, which is their right. They need a decent price and are entitled to market value. Their preference has been for Council to buy the land.

Citing financial constraints Council decided, last October, not to buy. The Save the Heart of Huskisson campaign convinced Council (at a January meeting) to attempt to purchase the land.

Save the Heart of Huskisson has been urging Council to meet with the club and the agent and work it out – to everyone's satisfaction. At the time of writing, 10 days before tenders close it isn't known if this is taking place.

But it seems to me a circuit breaker out of left field is needed. And this is where the appointment of the new Greek Finance Minister, Yanis Varoufakis, suggests a creative approach.

Varoufakis, a dual Greek-Australian national was an academic in the area of political economy at the University of Sydney for more than 10 years. His specialty of game theory is about getting the best outcome from a difficult situation. It shows how people can rationally come to a decision which is in the best interests of neither – but still provides the best outcome.

Applying game theory to this difficult situation will erase lines previously drawn in the sand. Council will pay a price it can live with. The Club will accept a price it can live with. And the land comes into public ownership. Any development won't impede the view.

Imagine what might be learnt from a new approach to difficult situations. Harmony defeats rancour. Game on.

(Almost forgot the declaration. I live in Huskisson and support the Save the Heart of Huskisson campaign.)

Vandalism of foreshore vegetation at Collingwood Beach, and Council's wavering response to it, reached such a spike of interest tinged with both resentment and disappointment that Council hosted a public forum last July. I previously wrote about this at <http://www.morethanjusttalk.com.au/i-think-that-i-shall-never-see/>

An intended outcome from the forum was the formation of a reference group to make recommendations to Council. This was reported to Council in December:

"Dune vegetation at Collingwood Beach has been the subject of polarised views for some years. Some members of the community believe some vegetation should be removed from the dune whilst others believe a more balanced approach that preserves and enhances the vegetation should be adopted." (Source: SCC Policy and Resources Committee, 9 December 2014)

What's this you ask? A council report highlighting a "more balanced approach" to preserve and enhance dune vegetation! Strewth! The Greenies must be running the show. Views will disappear. Property values must surely plunge. A calamity in the making. This is clearly and un-mistakenly biased reporting from the Council, favouring one "side" in this issue. Something must be done to restore objectivity.

But hold on. I created a falsehood. The actual passage from the Council report is below:

"Dune vegetation at Collingwood Beach has been the subject of polarised views for some years. Some members of the community would like to preserve and even enhance the vegetation on the dune whilst others believe a more balanced approach that involves vegetation removal should be adopted." (Source: SCC Policy and Resources Committee, 9 December 2014)

The emphasis is mine and the emphasis does show a clear loss of objectivity at best, outright bias in favour of a preferred position at worst.

I'd like to be surprised at this. I'm not. Council have not responded to a request for comment.

Look out for the development of a dune vegetation management plan for Collingwood Beach. Although specific to just one area of Shoalhaven it's likely to have implications anywhere there's a tree in the way of someone's outlook.

A proposal for a large development between Kangaroo Valley and Berry has stirred a great deal of interest, the great majority of that interest being opposition. More than 200 people attended a public meeting in Berry in December and well over 100 submissions have been made.

The Rockfield Park Eco Tourist Resort includes 42 accommodation units, 100 car spaces, 120 person function centre, 90 seat restaurant, onsite

CONTINUED ON P. 8

Negotiating A New & Unexpected World

BERNADINE MORGAN

CAN we face the challenge of climate change and still enjoy the ride?

100 years before Plato came on the scene, Heracitus, (my new hero) wrote, "The only thing that is constant is change"

I love change: the kind of change that governs the life of a young child as they negotiate their way around a new and unexpected world. Their life is pretty much a rollercoaster of successes and failures but somehow with care, love and encouragement they flourish.

Well, it is no revelation to observe that our world is not flourishing. As we continue to push the balance of nature closer to tipping point, everyday scientists and environmentalists raise the climate alarm.

Yes, climate change is a BIG story. But it is also a very personal one. It's the story of millions of individuals like you and me: struggling to come to grips with a future scenario full of seemingly insurmountable problems.

This is OUR story of transition to a new and unexpected world.

And our story will unfold according to how we respond to this challenge.

About ten years ago a guy by the name of Rob Hopkins

was teaching Permaculture in Totnes, England. As part of this course he asked his students to imagine a future Totnes, one that was happy, resilient and sustainable for people and planet. Then using permaculture principals, they mapped out what would need to change in order to bring that future into reality.

Walking around their town they identified many endemic practices, economic, social and environmental that not only left the town vulnerable to external pressures (think GFC, low food security, disaffected youth) but also functioned in a way that contributed to our worlds no. 1 problem: the increasing use of fossil fuels.

What emerged from this exercise was a simple but inspirational idea. Starting at the level of your local community - take a proactive rather than a reactive approach - introduce new projects and initiatives and shape the way the future unfolds.

To quote Rob Hopkins, "The time for seeing globalisation as an invincible or unassailable behemoth, or localisation as some kind of lifestyle choice is over. The end of the Age of Cheap Oil is rapidly coming upon us, and life will radically change, whether we like it or not.

Rebuilding local agriculture and food production, localising

energy production, using local building materials, rethinking how we manage waste, all build resilience and offer the potential of an extraordinary renaissance – economic, cultural and spiritual."

Since 2005, thousands of Transition initiatives have been established in diverse communities across the world.

These communities have started up projects around food, energy, transport, education, arts etc. as small-scale local responses to the global challenge of climate change, economic hardship and shrinking supplies of cheap energy.

Essentially, Transition is the opposite of us sitting in our armchairs and complaining about what's wrong. It's about getting up and doing something constructive about it, with our neighbours, in our town.

Of course Transition is an experiment, there are no certainties, but I'd rather live in active hope than in passive despair. (Bound to be more enjoyable, yes?)

What is certain? That with every choice we make today, we contribute in some way to our future story. In my preferred version, we not only survive, but flourish.

<https://www.transitionnetwork.org/>
<http://shoalhaventransition.org/>



nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

FOLLOW THE WOOL ROAD TOUR – 14-15 MARCH 2015

The National Parks and Wildlife Service is celebrating Parks Week with a **once-in-a-lifetime** opportunity to take a guided bus tour exploring the region's **natural and cultural heritage sites**.

This fully catered guided tour follows traditional trading routes from the coast to the highlands, returning via the Wool Road, **camping overnight** at historic **Bungonia National Park**.

Prices start at **\$150 twin share**, including meals and tent hire.

For details visit www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au or phone the NSW National Parks and Wildlife office in Nowra on **02 4423 2170**.

Squid Studio

SQUID Studio Nowra is an artist run initiative and culture hub on the side of the Princes Highway heading south a block down from Terara Rd. This initiative was established in 2012 through a participant proposal to Renew Australia. Stockland acquired the former Clyde Poulton Real Estate building and have included part of this building in their Stockland Spaces project, which provides local arts and cultural industry activities access to commercial property that is affordable.

The basis of tenancy through Renew Australia is not a traditional commercial lease and any of the parties involved in this arrangement can give 30 days notice of termination. A reality that some might find difficult to consider.

On February 1st 2015 Jillian Hayden signed up to explore the third iteration of this site. Over the previous 2 years Jen Saunders and then Lissa Jane de Sailles have built a following for art exhibitions, workshops and performance events that have seen this potentially abandoned site transformed.



Squid Studio V.3 has planned a number of innovations for this year including Squid Studio School of the Arts evenings, music workshops, expanded art exhibition opportunities and participation in international art events that extend into digital art practices.

Squid welcomes proposals from local culture workers who would like to exhibit, perform and stage workshops onsite. Drop a line into the rockpool via squidv.3@gmail.com and we can send you our monthly updates about exhibitions and other activities Squid is hosting.

What do You Know?

continued from p.7

sewage treatment plant, pool/gym and day spa facilities, wildlife centre, and new residences.

Opposition is based on environmental impacts (such as on-site sewage disposal, the amount of water taken from aquifers), the traffic hazard (on narrow, winding often foggy roads), and the questionable permissibility of this development on the land in question.

Under the Shoalhaven Local Environment Plan 2014, the land is zoned RU1 which disallows hotels or motels. Ecotourism IS allowed on RU1, however opponents claim the proposal does not meet the SLEP

definition of an eco-tourism facility and there is nothing Eco about this development – which is really just a large hotel.

Precedent setting is feared. With limited native vegetation and no environmental activities in the proposal this is seen as a ploy to get around the planning controls.

People of course are often tempted to try and get around obstacles. When The Planning Assessment Commission knocked back the residential development and golf course in the Shaolin Foundations plans for Comberton Grange, Mayor Gash said she would be meeting with Shaolin representatives to try and get around the decision. Getting the job done. Well trying, anyway.

One of the most curious aspects of the Rockfield Park claims to be Eco was a proposal to establish a breeding program for the endangered Brush-tailed rock-wallaby. A small population of these does exist in Kangaroo Valley, but there was no likelihood of this ever going ahead. While a creative and superficially appealing approach, this was viewed by many as deliberately deceptive. That part of the proposal has been withdrawn.

Green marketing is an increasingly popular appeal to caring folk to consider the environment in buying their various goods and services. While it is legitimate to market an environmentally responsible approach to producing goods

and services, this is sometimes used in cynical and mis-leading spin.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, provides a checklist in its publication Green marketing and the Australian Consumer Law. This advises:

“Make sure any claims you make about your product can be substantiated. Think about how you would answer a query regarding the environmental benefits you are claiming about your product. For example, what scientific authority could you use to justify the basis of your claim?”

Meet your definitions, in other words.

For more detail see RA14/1004 at DA Tracking on Council’s website. The final decision will be made by the Joint Regional Planning Panel after a hearing in February.

I have a variation on write what you know. It’s “write what you want to know”, which for me means writing as a means to understand. And I want to better understand the conflicted conundrum that is Lake Wollumboola.

With high conservation values and international recognition for its significance as bird habitat there’s a proposal to build a golf course in it’s catchment. Supported by you know who.

Never dull in Shoalhaven. The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

High Flight

Oh! I have slipped in the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds – and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of – wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air . . .
Up, up the long, delirious burning blue
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace,
Where never lark, or even eagle flew -
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

John Magee

My Country

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of rugged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea
Her beauty and her terror -
The wide brown land for me!

Dorothea Mackellar

Do you share our concerns?

Corrupt Liberal and Labor politics benefits a few and the community pays the price

IS THAT THE KIND OF POLITICS WE DESERVE? - NO

Your services are being cut or privatised so you will receive less and pay more

IS THAT FAIR? - NO

Changes to planning laws are taking decision making from local communities

IS THAT ACCEPTABLE? - NO

The Liberals have a plan to tear down our environmental protection laws

IS THIS THE FUTURE YOU WANT? - NO

The Greens are clean and have fought to remove corruption from political donations laws.

The Greens support publicly owned, health, education, transport and electricity services.

The Greens will empower local communities to make the planning decisions that directly affect them.

The Greens care about our environment and will strengthen environmental protection laws.



AMANDA FINDLEY
for South Coast



TERRY BARRATT
for Kiama

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