



Hunters Hill Trust Journal

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Waste Not, Want Not - A Public Proposal

The recycling and composting of most household rubbish could be a feasible - and innovative - proposition in Hunter's Hill Municipality in the near future.

Preliminary investigations and research by Hunter's Hill Trust into the problems of waste disposal are not only producing some convincing arguments in favour of such a system, but also highlighting the comparative ease of instituting such a radical change.

Gone would be the traditional method of twice-weekly collection by contractors, transportation to a transfer station or depot, and subsequent compaction and depositing. With that would vanish some of the traditional costs to the ratepayers.

Under an alternative system, residents could utilise a "self-help" method of waste disposal. But its success would hinge completely upon co-operation....co-operation among the residents, co-operation by the council, co-operation by private enterprise and, to some extent, co-operation by charitable bodies.

Initial inquiries into recycling have centred on three major items in household waste: paper, glass and metals. Private companies contacted by the Trust were not only willing to undertake recycling but also strongly aware of the environmental aspects of these programmes.

Australian Paper Manufacturers indicated that all papers, magazines, boxes, cardboard containers and egg cartons could be recycled. Australian Glass Manufacturers would accept for recycling all bottles and jars, as well as broken glass, which is called cullit. The company's recycling office points out that when rubbish is compacted, less than 14% of glass containers is broken, thus adding to the cubic capacity of the compacted waste and emphasising the preference for cullit over whole glass.

The B.H.P. Company has commenced recycling steel cans, in line with Comalco's established procedure of collecting aluminium cans. Comalco, as an added incentive, currently pays half-a-cent for each aluminium can, thereby encouraging schools, service, sporting and charitable organisations to collect the cans as a means of fund-raising.

Obviously, the common denominator in these recycling schemes is the collection from designated points at regular intervals and in an acceptable manner. As the Trust sees it, the number and location of the collection points and the timing and reliability of the companies' collections would be vital if a recycling system was to provide a viable alternative. Similarly, it would require the willingness of residents to adapt to some alterations in the "Garbage night - put out the can" habit that now forms the total involvement for most people in waste disposal.

Pointing out the environmental advantages of composting is akin to stating the obvious. Nonetheless, if man is to reconcile his present way of life in his world of advanced technology, with his natural environment; if he is to preserve it and encourage it, rather than to continue on his path of destruction; if he is to begin to surmount the current world problems of both feeding an increasing population and disposing of its waste, then composting on a large scale is inevitable.

Estimates have put the waste per person per annum at 10 cwt., or approximately 400,000 tons for the New South Wales population of about four million. Composting could reduce the base figure of 10 cwt. per person to 2 cwt., producing an annual total of 800,000 cubic yards that would cover 6,000 acres in one-inch deep composted material.

Successful waste disposal programmes in other parts of the world include the utilisation of mechanically-produced compost. An example in England is a system where six such machines compost 300 tons of waste per day for the 300,000 population of Leicester.

The financial implications of changing present methods of waste disposal are considerable. To some extent it appears the initial costs could be lessened, and the resultant savings to ratepayers hastened, by a system such as the "multi-community co-operative".

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines this as a "system developed by one community to provide service to itself and several other communities." The purpose is to achieve economies of scale through better utilisation of capital, and enables member communities to provide services not otherwise financially possible.

Editorial

Aorta clean our streets more often, aorta do something about the buses, aorta have community centres, aorta empty more than one garbage bin, aorta keep the rates down.

Pause for a moment to pity this "heart" of our community, the local Council. On one side are pressing demands for services, on the other side the constriction of funds from government and the uninflated taxpayer.

At times of difficulty it is easier to see our collective responsibility for the welfare of Hunter's Hill. It is not enough to elect nine sitting ducks and take pot shots at them for a three-year term during an economic squeeze. If more needs to be done than Council can afford, then each of us should assist by making the Municipality easier and cheaper to run.

The Hunter's Hill Trust has advocated, and pioneered, the use of resident bodies to clean up parklands. Now the Trust proposes another do-it-yourself project designed to save parklands, in and beyond Hunter's Hill, from despoliation as garbage or rubbish tips. Sooner or later a solution must be found to the world waste problem. The sooner it is found, the more parkland we will have left.

The Hunter's Hill Trust suggests that a pilot recycling scheme be run in Hunter's Hill to see if this can be part of a viable alternative to paying to be buried in rubbish. Such a scheme will depend on your interest. Please give us your ideas. In the near future we will publicise collection details. Surely we can have "more heart and less aorta".

(With no apologies to Afferbeck Lauder, author of "Let Stalk Strine".)

TRUST SUBMISSION TO THE P.E.C.

Comments on "Proposals for a New Environmental Planning System for New South Wales" (The Blue Book) were submitted to the Planning and Environment Commission by the Hunter's Hill Trust on June 24.

Preservation of Historic Buildings and Sites. The Trust particularly welcomes the proposal to constitute the Historic Buildings and Sites Advisory Committee established by the Minister in January, 1975. It notes that the Advisory Committee will recommend to the Minister "buildings, sites and areas of social and cultural significance to the State" that should be "declared" in order to preserve them, and notes with approval that this Committee may also recommend the Minister to issue an interim preservation order on buildings, sites and areas in danger of destruction.

The Hunter's Hill Trust very strongly commends the proposals that this Committee should also consider ways in which financial assistance might be given to the owner of a declared property to assist in the maintenance and repair of the property and to ensure desirable use of it.

In the opinion of the Hunter's Hill Trust the novel proposal to reduce the valuation of a declared site so that it would attract lower rates and land taxes might, in many cases, be of even greater assistance to owners than the granting of special financial assistance for maintenance and repairs.

Preservation of Areas of Special Character or Significance. While welcoming the foregoing proposal enabling the Minister to declare certain sites as worthy of preservation, the Hunter's Hill Trust would wish to be reassured that this embraces the concept of "area preservation" (both urban and rural) which the Hunter's Hill Trust has urged since its formation in 1968, and in which it now has the support of the National Trust of Australia.

An historic building can be destroyed by unsympathetic alterations or by incongruous development around it as effectively as by demolition. For this reason the Hunter's Hill Trust called for the establishment of special controls on demolitions, alterations and building inside designated "Historic Districts", in order to preserve their character. To guide the Municipal Council in such matters, it recommended the setting-up of an Advisory Committee to consist of experts (town planners, architects, landscapers, historians) drawn from inside and outside the Municipality, whose function would be to recommend what action should be taken on development applications within these "Historic Districts", as well as calling for statutory limitation in the percentage of ground cover permitted for new private dwellings. New development within the Municipality has emphasised the need for the latter type of control.

These proposals were substantially accepted by the Hunter's Hill Council and incorporated into the draft Town Plan which was sent to the State Planning Authority. However, all of them were deleted by the State Planning Authority, without reference to the wishes of ratepayers or Council, and are absent from the "Certified Plan" which was returned to Council. This Certified Plan appears to be a run-of-the-mill standardised document which might serve for any Municipality.

Public Participation in Decision Making. A major criticism of the Blue Book must centre on the almost total lack of provision for participation in planning by those for whom planning is supposedly being carried out - that is, the general public.

Even when discussing the preparation of local Plans (in which it would be reasonable to expect that ratepayers' and residents' wishes would carry considerable weight), the Blue Book merely suggests that "One possibility will be for local residents to initiate a local detail plan for their area. If this happened, the residents could present a proposal to council, which should then indicate its attitude and then deal with it."

In the case of Hunter's Hill, this is what happened. The Hunter's Hill Trust prepared detailed proposals for the Municipality, which were incorporated into two documents and given to the local Council. The majority of these proposals were incorporated into the Council's Draft Town Plan, but almost all of the special recommendations for the preservation of the area were deleted from the plan by the State Planning Authority. When finally a "Certified Plan" was returned to Council for public exhibition the regulatory measures embodied in the Draft Plan had been so enfeebled and obscured as to retain very little value for the preservation of the Municipality at the hands of a hostile or indifferent Council.

In the opinion of the Hunter's Hill Trust, if the Planning and Environment Commission and the Minister really mean what is now said on Page 20 of the Blue book, namely that local Councils will be responsible for the preparation of local plans, then they should take immediate steps to restore to the Hunter's Hill Plan those protective features which were deleted from the Draft Town Plan by the State Planning Authority.

Development by Government Bodies. The Trust supports the general concept of examination and control by Councils of development by Government bodies, including the proposed provision for public objection. It favours the establishment of a system of approved procedures analogous to that provided for by Section 6 of the Australian Government's Environmental Impact (Impact of Proposals Act) 1974, reinforced by meaningful provisions for public inquiries in respect of environmental aspects irrespective of whether or not an environmental impact statement has been furnished - see Section 11 of that Act. In the Trust's view the Minister should be required to abide by any decision of a Commission of Inquiry which reports adversely to a proposed development by a Government body.

Regional Environmental Planning. While the Trust supports the general principle of Regional and Environmental Planning it is opposed to the introduction of another level of bureaucracy. It supports the proposal for decentralisation of the administration of the Planning and Environment Commission and it hopes that the expectation of the framers of the Blue Book that "The N.S.W.P.E.C. will establish regional offices who staff will be given real powers of decision making on regional matters", will prove capable of fulfillment. However, in the Trust's view, this is the only justification for introducing planning at a regional level. The Trust is firmly of the opinion that the main emphasis in any planning Legislation must remain from first to last upon the local Council areas as the appropriate planning unit. The Trust would strongly resist any suggestion that there should be introduced any intermediate level of government. It also is implacably opposed to any suggestion that the need for regional planning should be seen as an invitation to bring in amalgamation of local Government areas by the back door.

Further Discussion and Submissions. The Trust is anxious to take part in further discussions and to make further submissions as the proposals for the new planning system take shape. In the Trust's view many of the proposals in the Blue Book, admirable as they are in principle, could be rendered inadequate or even futile unless the Legislation is appropriately drafted. The Trust submits, with respect, that there are many areas of uncertainty in the present proposals, not the least of which is concerned with the transitional provisions which are to apply to a State where the development of the existing schemes differs from area to area. In Hunter's Hill, for example, the Council is about to consider the Certified Plan in the light of the report by Mr. Commissioner Dale who heard the objections to the draft plan last year and, with respect, many of the statements in the Blue Book would appear to be more easily applied to a State where no Town Planning Schemes at all have been prepared or commenced.

CHARLES EDWARD JEANNERET and "WYBALENA"

Probably the best-known house in Hunter's Hill is "Wybalena", the residence of Sydney University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Bruce Williams and Mrs. Williams. Mrs. Williams has recently made available to the Trust a detailed account of the Jeanneret family sent to her by a grandson of the architect.

C.E. Jeanneret was descended from a Huguenot family which settled in the south of England. The first of the family to settle in Australia was Henry Jeanneret, M.D., L.S.A., S.R.C.S., born in England in 1802. After studying at Oxford, Paris and London, he graduated at Edinburgh in medicine and emigrated to Sydney where he set up in practice in 1829. After several moves, in 1842 he was posted to the Aboriginal settlement on Flinder's Island in Bass Strait, where the indigenous people of Van Diemen's Land, after being rounded up had settled, "for their own protection", and where the race finally became extinct. Here, as Surgeon, Commandant and Justice of the Peace, this humane man did what he could to ease the lot of the unhappy natives. In particular, he befriended the last survivor, Truganini.

Dr. Jeanneret's humanity was not appreciated by those in authority. In 1843 he was suspended from office by the Governor, after he had laid a complaint against the military guard of the island for malpractices against the natives and against the catechist for cruel treatment and neglect of native children. The British Government, however, ordered his reinstatement and in 1846 he briefly resumed office. In late 1847 the settlement was abandoned, and subsequently Dr. Jeanneret returned to England.

One member of his family, however, returned to Australia: the eldest son of the family of seven, Charles Edward, returned to Sydney in 1856 as an employee of the Bank of New South Wales. In 1857 he married Julia Anne Belling and began his long career of investment in land and building. He bought a house, "Somerville", in Ferry Street, Hunter's Hill (we would be grateful to anyone who can identify this house for us). In 1858 he built his first houses - "Fernbank" (now called "Cambridge") and "Lyndcote" in Stanley Street. He lived in "Lyndcote" and in "Henley Cottage", Tarban Creek. In the latter house were born his first two children, in 1858 and 1860. In 1862 he was living in "Fernbank" where a third child was born, and between 1863 and 1874 six children were born at "Somerville".

In 1859 Charles Edward Jeanneret began a long career in local politics when he was elected as an alderman, serving on a Committee for the "Construction of Bridges" - the Iron Cove Bridge and Gladesville Bridge. In 1869, 1877 and 1890 he was elected Mayor of Hunter's Hill and in the last year took over the management of the Parramatta River Ferries. In 1874 he acquired 11 acres of land originally granted to W.B. Singleton and acquired from Ambrose Foss - he had already constructed "Wybalena", and in the following year moved into this house where two more children were born.

In 1876 he purchased the Parramatta River service of five vessels which he later increased to 20. Four years later he bought the Mosman Ferry. At this time he started subdividing his property fronting Parramatta River and extending from Wybalena Road to Clark Street and Woolwich Road.

Jeanneret now extended his interest to tramways - an Act was passed in 1881 for the construction of a steam tram service in Parramatta and in 1884 this commenced operation.

His political career was also extended; in 1886 he was elected alderman for Burke Ward, Sydney City Council, and in 1887 was elected to the Legislative Assembly.

Housing Commission Time-Bomb under Hunters Hill?

After Mr. Commissioner Dale closed his public hearings of objections to the Certified Town Plan for the Municipality in August a year ago, the N.S.W. Housing Commission entered a late objection. At the Trust's request, Council has made this very interesting document available for inspection. It may prove to have far-reaching effects on the Municipality if its objections are acted upon by the State Government.

The Housing Commission says in its preamble to its objections that because of the shortage and price of building land in suburbs in reasonably close proximity to central Sydney, it has been examining the feasibility of redeveloping its older estates to accommodate more people.

The Commission says, "It is therefore more important that the future development rights on Housing Commission properties are not in any way reduced. It therefore follows that any proposal to allocate to the Commission's properties a land-use zoning which would restrict the range of uses possible under present zonings must be objected to. A more satisfactory method of zoning would be to create a (special) zone entitled "Special Uses -- Public Housing"..."

The Commission is asking, in effect, for any general restrictions the Town Plan may set on height of buildings, site coverage, etc., to be set aside to allow for higher density development. It complains that the "density control standards (in the Plan) are considered excessive in walk-up flats, and far more spacious than the Commission's present practice".

There are at least 40 Commission-owned sites in the Municipality which are at present occupied by single dwellings, and these could be replaced by towers and "courts".

? What Ever Happened to the Town Plan?

There followed two busy years of house building. As his sons married he erected houses for them; in Glenview Crescent "Glenrock", "Glencairn" and "Glenview" were all built in 1888. In 1889 "Meryla" and "Lugano" were built in Futuna Street. In this year he severed his connection with the Ferry Company and appointed his two eldest sons as joint managers. All family connection with ferries and tramways was sold in 1893, but the house-building still went on - in 1894 "Yandra" in Woolwich Road, "Herne" in Futuna Street, "Gomea" at Garrick's Wharf. The "Wybalena" Estate was further subdivided into 35 blocks. In 1895 he built his last house, "Wybalena Cottage", 22 Woolwich Road, erected after his four sons settled on a farm, "Myralla" on the Richmond River. Here Charles Edward Jeanneret died on August 23, but was buried in the Field of Mars Cemetery. His widow lived on in "Wybalena Cottage" till 1919.

Trust Activities

Auxiliary News

The Auxiliary has elected its officers for 1975-76:
Mrs Margaret Cousins, Acting President,
Mrs Valmai King, Secretary,
Miss Norma McKelvie, Treasurer,
Mrs Nan Barbour, Mrs Pam Thurlow, representatives to the Committee.

A House Inspection is being planned for the end of the year, and several small events - a mini inspection and morning tea for conference wives, and dinner at Doonbah, home of Dr. and Mrs F.Hinde, for Trust members will be held.

The Auxiliary assisted in preparing and "manning" the Trust's display at the Women's Year Happening at the Town Hall on August 2nd.

KELLY'S BUSH CLEANUP

The Hunter's Hill Trust again organised a cleanup in an area of bushland, this time in the Council-owned portions of Kelly's Bush. Card bodies and lantana were the chief offenders dragged out and heaped for Council collection.

Magnificent rock faces were exposed by the removal of the lantana, and the Trust feels that there should be future maintenance by citizens to keep noxious weeds from encroaching on the bush.

The Year in Review

The Hunter's Hill Trust would like to thank retiring members of the Committee, especially past presidents Professor R.T. Martin and Dr. C.E. Coulman, past secretary Mr S. Sheffer, and past Auxiliary representatives Mrs J. Wood and Mrs K. Lehany.

In his Annual Report, Dr. Coulman wrote: We have maintained close co-operation with other bodies such as the National Trust, The Australian Conservation Foundation (to which we now have a delegate), the Total Environment Centre, and the Coalition of Resident Action Groups. Among joint interests have been the classification of historic buildings and areas, the problems associated with petroleum industry storage, transport and pipeline construction, and the future of N.S.W. urban planning. I would like to thank members of the Committee, the Auxiliary, and all those Trust members who have helped to keep this Trust in the forefront of residents' groups during the past year".

This year's Hunters Hill Trust Committee:

President - Mrs. A. Oppen
Vice Presidents - Judge R. Barbour and
Mr. T. Farrell
Secretary - Dr. A. Dircks
Treasurer - Dr. R. Temple
Representative to Auxiliary - Dr. D. King
Committee Members - Mrs. A. McNally,
Dr. C. Coulman,
Mrs. P. Mulligan,
Mr. K. Bennett,
Mrs. E. Reynolds.

The Annual General Meeting

The Hon. T. Uren, Minister for Urban and Regional Development, spoke, his office having released the text of his speech earlier in the day.

The Speech writer wrote (in part):

There could be no better place to talk about Australia's National Estate than Hunter's Hill. Here are many splendid survivals of our colonial past and fine river foreshores. Few parts of Australia are so rich in our national heritage, and in very few urban areas has so much of the historic townscape survived. All Governments owe a debt to voluntary organisations like the Hunter's Hill Trust which work with dedication to guard and cherish this heritage. It is a pity to record that important parts of this heritage are under constant threat - fine old buildings from home unit speculation, tracts of foreshore bushland from sub-division, delicate areas along the creeks and river valleys from free-ways and drainage works. Watchdog bodies like your organisation are the most powerful defence to the bulldozer mentality that has disfigured so much. Only ceaseless vigilance can keep the forces of mindless development at bay. I am an admirer of your fight to retain Kelly's Bush as a unique part of the environment of the river foreshores. If there is anything the Australian Government can do to ensure the preservation of Kelly's Bush, then this will be done. . .

Mr. Uren actually said, (in part):

In fighting for the environment, you are going to have defeats, but we must educate, convince people that if you destroy the environment, you destroy yourself. The struggle is continually going on. (You will lose) unless you are prepared to protect your environment. Kelly's Bush was right and a great moral thing. Kelly's Bush is controlled by State Planning. To help, we would need the co-operation of the State Government, who have zoning powers, compensation power. Hunter's Hill is fairly affluent; other areas must come first. Hunter's Hill should join with other areas. It would be a disaster for any flat development to be allowed here. How could small, weak councils meet the problem of big companies' expertise? Therefore, we set up regions. As Federal Minister for Local Government, I believe in regionalism, in giving powers back to the grass roots.

Editorial query: How big is a grass root?

AMALGAMATION

The Mayor's column in the Weekly Times alerted residents that the Deputy Premier and Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Sir Charles Cutler, stated in a press release that it had been erroneously reported that the Government shelved the Barnett Committee Report, which recommended amalgamation of Councils. "The fact is that I have instructed the Boundaries Commission to investigate all local government boundaries to determine if amalgamations would provide more economically efficient local government. The charter I have given the Boundaries Commission will be extended to the Sydney Metropolitan Area as soon as possible.

THE FERRIES

A public meeting has been called by the Harbor-side Councils Transport Committee (Hunter's Hill is a member) to make the State Government aware of the need for ferry transport around Sydney

Sydney Town Hall, lower section
Wednesday, September 10th
at 1 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name.....Telephone.....

Address.....Postcode.....

Type of Membership: Single - \$2.00
Family - \$4.00
Pensioner - \$1.00
Youth - \$1.00

Membership of Auxiliary an additional 50c.