



PRESERVING AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST GARDEN SUBURB

P.O. BOX 85, HUNTERS HILL, N.S.W. 2110

The Hunters Hill Trust Incorporated - President's Report, June 22, 2011

On your behalf I'd like to thank the outgoing committee -

- Secretary, David Gaunt
- Treasurer, Chris Hartley
- Vice President, Robyn Christie

Committee members

- Maureen Flowers
- Brigid Dowsett
- Sally Gaunt
- Kate Russell
- Alister Sharp

After 12 years service Sally Gaunt has decided not to stand for re-election this year. Over the years Sal has contributed enormously to the work of The Trust. She has been the editor of the Journal, represented The Trust on Council committees, organized the annual river cruises and has been a lively and enthusiastic member of the committee. She came to The Trust through her involvement with Bush Regeneration and she will continue with this work. So her contribution to Hunters Hill will not stop. On behalf of The Trust - Thank you Sal!

Sal's concern for Hunters Hill's natural environment was sparked by the example of the Battlers for Kelly's Bush, who this year celebrate the 40th anniversary of that famous campaign. One of the original battlers and long time Trust member, Trude Kallir got an OAM in the Queens Birthday honours this year. Trude is not very well, which is why she is not here tonight. We send her our best wishes.

Speaking of honours, Sally's husband and Trust Secretary, David Gaunt was included in this year's Australia Day Honours as was Alice Open. Both are former presidents of The Trust. Congratulations Alice and Dave.

Over the last year the Trust Committee has worked hard, as usual, to try to preserve the character of Hunters Hill. As well as meeting on a monthly basis, we have continued to maintain our presence in the Municipality through the publication of our journal, the organisation of annual river cruises, the maintenance of our website and having representatives on

committees at Hunters Hill Council and a number of organisations involved in conservation, heritage and sustainability.

The Trust's concern about maintaining the heritage and character of Hunters Hill naturally leads to a concern about the amount of stuff we consume, the size of our houses and the need for sustainable development.

Unfortunately there is no evidence to show that Hunters Hill has embraced sustainability. Perfectly useful houses are being demolished and their replacements are getting bigger and bigger. The holes dug into our sandstone bedrock for the required 5 car garages are getting deeper and deeper. As well, the time taken to build these mega-structures is getting longer and longer – years in some instances. The disruption of our streets caused by cranes, earth moving equipment, trucks and tradie's utes seems never ending.

The Trust continues to be a port of call for people having problems with this and other forms of development. Unfortunately Hunters Hill Council has absolved itself from the responsibility to oversee work where a private certifier is involved. We are currently challenging Council about this and we hope they will reconsider their hands-off attitude.

Some of our main concerns recently have included developments around the Hunters Hill shops – the so-called Hunters Hill Village. These include:

- The continuing saga of the redevelopment of the Hotel site, which ended up in the Land and Environment Court. The Trust gave evidence about how the development, among other things, failed to maintain the two-storey scale of the area – to no avail unfortunately.
- In the wash-up some minor amendments were made. These included an increased setback from Pam Tomkins' house at 62 Ryde Road. Incidentally, long time member Pam Tompkins has refused to bow to pressure put from the Pub to sell or to allow them to tunnel under her property.
- The pub is also involved with the redevelopment of 58 and 60 Gladesville Road, where the two banks used to be. This is currently before the court because Council rejected a proposal that was a massive overdevelopment of the site.

As well as these proposals there is the development now under construction next to Burt's pharmacy and at least two more works are in the pipeline. One involves the possible demolition of two heritage listed houses and the other the complete redevelopment of Mapledoram's Corner back beyond the butchers.

Judging from the quality of these proposals it's become clear that it will be impossible to preserve the existing character of The Village centre and also the character of the heritage subdivision of Ryde Road.

All this represents an enormous challenge for The Trust and all those interested in preserving the character of Hunters Hill.

Some of our other concerns include:

- The extension of the soccer fields at Tarban Creek Reserve. This eats into space reserved originally for passive recreation and causes parking, traffic and other problems.
- The construction of the security fence at Hunters Hill High – this project is currently stopped and Council is awaiting a response from the Department about the fact that the fence does not comply with Council's fence policy and is an ugly addition to the foreshores of the Lane Cove River
- The Hunters Hill Rugby Club's proposals for a so-called community facility at Boronia Park. Right now we are having trouble finding out the current status of this project.

As well as The Trust's efforts in responding to developments as they come to hand, we have begun work on a more pro-active educational project.

Following a submission prepared by Kate Russell we received a small grant from Council to prepare a pamphlet on *Appropriate Design in Hunters Hill*. The idea is to raise awareness of the particular and varied character Hunters Hill and what principles might govern an appropriate response to these. In the first instance we will be presenting a series of "case studies", which will be published on the web. Later these will then be made into a booklet, which should be available through Council and estate agents.

So that's a brief snapshot of the year's activities.

This year I haven't nominated for the presidency. After 7 terms, which is only 3 short of Bob Menzies' ten terms, it's definitely time for someone else to have a go.

Thank you
Tony Coote