



## ANNUAL REPORT 2012

In presenting the 42nd Annual Report, I would like to thank the Executive Committee and some members for their good work and support during the year. In particular, the following deserve special mention:

Alan Swales as Treasurer & Valma Swales as Assistant Treasurer for maintaining the membership list and organising distribution of the Newsletter; Chris Dunkerley and Graham Medhurst as Vice Presidents; Chris Dunkerley as Secretary; Ron Dunstan as Minutes Secretary and for his community spirit; Committee Members, Brian Berry, Helen Strasser, Anne Dean, Ruth Evans, John Goddard and Graeme Wyber.

*My special thanks to:* John Hall for auditing the financial records; Alan & Valma Swales and Ross Dartnell who prepared the Newsletter for distribution; Chris Dunkerley for maintaining the Website; Jan Dunstan for typing the Minutes; Graham Medhurst for representing the Trust on the Epping Town Centre Stakeholder Committee and the Better Planning Network; Ruth Evans for representing the Trust on Parramatta Council's Heritage Advisory Committee; and Brian Berry for serving the supper.

*Also my special thanks to:* Those members who delivered the newsletters and leaflets [*Names may be found in Trust members copies of this report*] - saving the Trust over \$1,000 in postal charges.

*I also wish to acknowledge with many thanks* the outstanding work of your Local Government representatives – Cllr Lorraine Wearne of Parramatta City Council and Cllrs Nick Berman, Michael Hutchence and Robert Browne of Hornsby Shire Council. Their reports at our General Meetings and in the Newsletter were very much appreciated.

The Trust also gratefully appreciates the publicity given by the Editor and his staff at the Northern District Times on important issues during the year.

Membership at 1 January, 2012 – 453 individual members.

Membership at 31 December, 2012 – 430 individual members.

- General Meetings were held on 21 February, 17 April, 19 June, 21 August, 16 October and 4 December.
- Meet the Candidates for Hornsby's C Ward and Parramatta's Lachlan Macquarie Ward forum was held on 21 August.
- Committee Meetings were held on 10 January; 13 March, 8 May, 10 July, 11 September and 13 November.

My sincere thanks to every member who continued to support the work of the Trust and maintain their membership.

### Matters dealt with and items of interest during the year

#### January / February

New Northern Sydney Freight Corridor: Construction of a dedicated freight track between Epping and Thornleigh was announced in mid-December 2011, as part of a major joint Commonwealth / NSW Government project worth \$1.1billion. The Northern Sydney Freight Corridor Program starting this month and finished by June 2016 will improve the capacity and reliability for freight trains on the Main North Line between North Strathfield and Broadmeadow, Newcastle.

North West Rail Link progresses: The project now proposed by the State Government would deliver six new stations and regular rail services over a 23 kilometre addition to the CityRail network from Epping to just past Rouse Hill in North West Sydney.

The proposed (up to 15 kms) of tunnelling on the 'year 2008 approved' route between Epping and North West Business Park -(going under Epping Heights PS) - will be the longest and deepest rail tunnel ever constructed in Sydney.

Extensive design work has already been done, the preferred rail corridor identified and test drilling carried out (including at Epping). The Trust remains concerned about the proposed route, construction noise and vibration.

Hornsby Mayor Nick Berman thanked everyone who provided feedback about the draft Epping Town Centre Study during the public exhibition. During the two month exhibition period, approximately 369 submissions were received and registered, including 105 form letters and two petitions. A further 15 submissions have been received by Council since completion of the exhibition.

### **March / April**

Two Development Applications were lodged with Hornsby Shire Council for the construction of 31 units to be built on two blocks in Keeler Street Carlingford (No.62 and 64, DA/127/2012) and 35 units on 48-52 Keeler Street (DA-236/2012) all of which is part of HSC's Carlingford Housing Strategy known as the "Keeler Street Precinct".

Epping Civic Trust strongly opposed this area being developed into medium density housing, as Keeler Street is a narrow road bordered by one of Sydney's worst traffic bottlenecks; Pennant Hills Road, Carlingford Road and Marsden Road intersections, as well as the precinct seriously lacking basic infrastructure; public transport, parks, recreation areas, sewer and drainage works, local schools capacity, traffic management controls, local health and emergency services and off street parking.

Councillor Michael Hutchence strongly encouraged all residents to put in submissions regarding these developments. In particular highlighting issues in regards to infrastructure and traffic. When Council went through the housing strategy process I moved an amendment to seek guarantees from the then Labor state government in relation to infrastructure provision. Unfortunately we received no response.

Councillor Lorraine Wearne said, "If you have walked down High Street in Epping lately you would have seen the vandalism that has occurred to the majestic trees lining the road. In many cases, over nine metres have been lopped off from the tops of the trees. Council has formally raised its concerns with Integral Energy who had employed contractors to carry out the tree pruning on High Street".

State member Greg Smith launched a new, toll free hotline to dob in vandals spraying graffiti. All reports will be forwarded on to the relevant Government agency or local Council.

### **May / June**

Guest Speaker for the 19 June meeting was Greg Smith Attorney-General and Epping MP: We asked Greg Smith to speak on his Government's plans to provide the needed infrastructure to support the proposed huge increase in population at Carlingford and Epping with medium / high density housing

North West Rail Link: Major construction proposed for Epping will be carried out at two sites, a Services Facility in Beecroft and Ray Roads and the Epping Decline beside Beecroft Road. Proposed work includes excavation of shafts to the two tunnels below and removal of about 5,600 m<sup>3</sup> of spoil (crushed rock) from the shaft.

### **July / August**

New Planning System for NSW Green Paper: The Government proposes transformative changes to the planning system in NSW with a significant shift to a more strategic and streamlined system that facilitates economic growth and upfront community participation. The Government's blueprint for change to the planning system is based around four fundamental reforms: • Community Participation; • Strategic Focus; • Streamlined Approval and • Provision of Infrastructure.

We welcomed candidates standing for the Local Government Elections on 8 September and set out the guidelines for the Meet the Candidates Public Meeting held on 19 August for Hornsby Shire Council's Mayor and C Ward; and Parramatta City Council's Lachlan Macquarie Ward with 70 attending including the candidates.

North West Rail Link's major changes: Single deck non-timetabled 'metro' trains will run from Sydney's north-west to Chatswood with 12 services an hour, or one every 5mins, but the North West Rail Link will now be privately operated. Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian also announced commuters would be forced to change at Chatswood, walking across a platform to an inner-city train.

Councillor Lorraine Wearne reported that the NSW Government has been stealthily going about developing a plan for the Epping Town Centre as part of the North West Rail Link. With no community consultation, the yet to be publicly released plan proposes building heights of up to 22 storeys and capacity for over 4,300 new homes along the rail corridor. If the plan does go ahead, it could kill the character of Epping.

### **September / October**

The results of the local Council elections held on Saturday 8 September for the Trust's catchment area, resulted in some new faces which may give our Councils a new complexion when matters affecting Carlingford, Eastwood and Epping are being considered.

In Parramatta City Council's Lachlan Macquarie Ward new Liberal Party candidate Jean Pierre Abood of Parramatta was first elected, followed by the return of outgoing Lord Mayor, Independent Lorraine Wearne of Epping. After preferences were distributed out-going Councillor Pierre Esber of the Labor Party from Oatlands retained his seat.

Hornsby Shire Council's C Ward former Independent Councillor Michael Hutchence from Epping was returned easily, but now on behalf of the Liberal Party and one of his 'group-mates' Jerome Cox of Pennant Hills has joined him. After distribution of preferences Bernadette Azizi of Beecroft, standing for an Independent group aligned to former Mayor Nick Berman clearly gained the final position.

After preferences were distributed for Hornsby's Mayor, Steve Russell beat outgoing Mayor Nick Berman by just 1,331 votes. In Parramatta Cr John Chedid was elected Lord Mayor for the next 12 months.

**North West Rail Link Shock:** By late 2014 Epping residents, particularly those living in Ray Road and those using the intersection of Carlingford Road, Ray Road and Rawson Street, could be impacted by 24/7 construction noise and around 140 large spoil trucks per day on our busy roads!

Following her re-election to Parramatta City Council, Lorraine Wearne said, "I have been representing the residents of Lachlan Macquarie Ward for over 17 years now and it is still a joy for me to work for my community. It is very humbling that people have shown faith and trust in me by again electing me to be their representative".

## **November / December**

Councillor Michael Hutchence reported that Hornsby Council had sent off a planning proposal to the State Department of Planning to move forward with the Epping Town Centre Study. The department has put this on hold for the time being as both Hornsby and Parramatta Councils nominated Epping under its Urban Activation Precinct Scheme. The State Government has allocated \$16 million for intersection and traffic works as part of the Epping Town Centre Study.

**Better Planning Network:** The Better Planning Network was formed by a number of other community groups concerned about the NSW Government's Planning Review and some of the planning reforms proposed in the Government's Green Paper. Epping Civic Trust became affiliated along with over 90 other groups from around NSW.

**Epping Croquet Club House:** An on-site Council meeting was held on 3 November to discuss the demolition of the dilapidated clubhouse and the proposed redesign of the new building. At this meeting, Council presented an alternate design, changing the roof line to a single hip construction.

Finally, my sincere thanks to everyone for the support and encouragement I have received this year.

## **GRAHAM F. LOVELL – President**

Adopted by the AGM 19 February, 2013

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