



summer edition 2005

news

NORTH SYDNEY

TIME TO FIGHT

for safe crossing

A serious accident is not a matter of if but when, unless safe pedestrian and cyclist facilities are put in place on Falcon Street, around the on and off ramps to the new Lane Cove Tunnel, says North Sydney Mayor Genia McCaffery.

“The Road and Traffic Authority’s (RTA) existing plans are a nightmare for pedestrians who will have to cross six sets of traffic lights to walk a mere 150 metres to parks, shops and bus stops.”

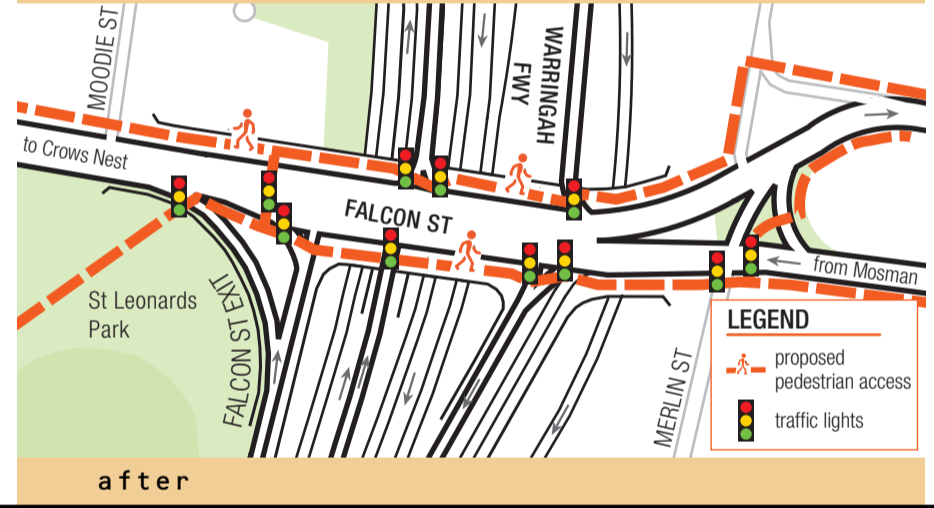
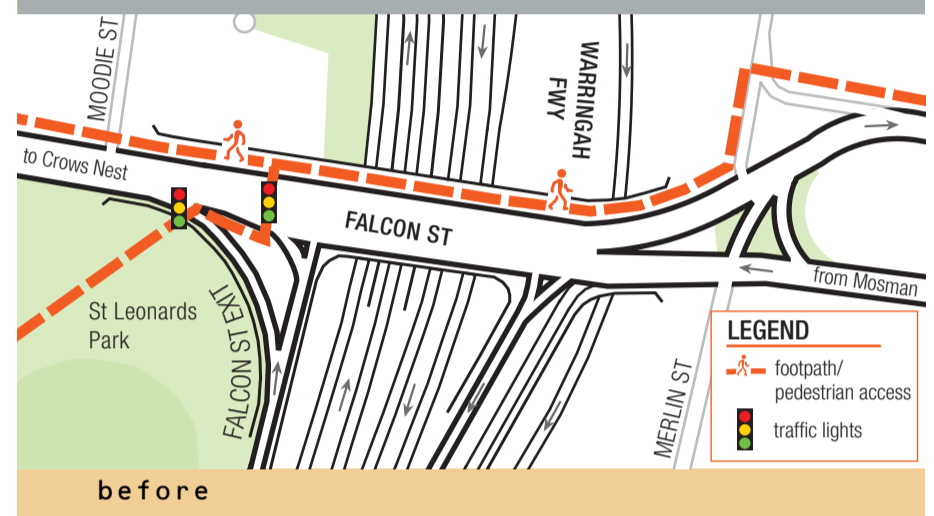
Mayor McCaffery said the walk from Neutral Bay to St Leonards Park would increase from approximately one minute to five on the northern side of Falcon Street and to seven minutes on the southern side. “Our concern is that the perceived travel time will be more like 10 to 14 minutes. Experience tells us that if people perceive a long wait they will either take their car or run across the road on the red light.

“Hundreds of residents, including parents with young children, school groups and elderly people, use this section of road every day to access St Leonards Park, local kindergartens and playgrounds, shops in North Sydney, or public transport.

“Without a pedestrian overpass or underpass, a serious accident is inevitable. To put this in perspective, we need to remember that tens of thousands of vehicles will be moving on and off Falcon Street each day.”

North Sydney residents are urged to put pen to paper, and fingers to the keyboard, to lobby State MPs and the RTA for safe pedestrian and cyclist facilities on Falcon Street.

You should write to: Hon. Joe Tripodi, Minister for Roads, Level 31, Governor Macquarie Tower, 1 Farrer Place, Sydney 2000 or e-mail: joe@tripodi.minister.nsw.gov.au



WE'RE THE BOUNDARY stretching best!

“Boundary-stretching initiatives” have won North Sydney Council the Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW) Overall 2005 Sustainable Cities Award.

The judges were impressed by Council’s “fearless approach” to tackling sustainability issues, particularly in the light of the challenges created by the influx of commuters, students and visitors who more than double the population each day.

“It was not just one aspect, but the diversity of actions and solutions – big and small – that gave North Sydney’s submission the edge,” said the Chair of Keep Australia Beautiful, the Hon. Pam Allan, MP.

“For example, their controversial initiative to encourage the use of smaller, low fuel consumption vehicles was a benchmark subsequently adopted by other metropolitan councils.”

North Sydney Mayor Genia McCaffery said the award recognised Council’s hard work in building sustainability into all activities. “If we build a new park we use energy efficient materials with low long-term maintenance costs and grow plants from local seeds so that we maintain the unique local flora of the area.

“If we build a new community centre, we design the building to be energy efficient and recycle water. Sustainability is now a key consideration in everything Council does.

“I am thrilled to have our policies acknowledged positively. I am especially proud to be part of the North Sydney community, which is committed to making changes for the sake of future generations. We are lucky to have so many intelligent and talented people who can help find creative solutions to the issues we face.”



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FROM THE MAYOR



You probably found it hard to miss the headline on the front page of this issue – “we’re the boundary stretching best!”. Not modest, perhaps, but a pretty fair indication of our pride in winning the NSW 2005 Sustainable Cities Award.

This award belongs to us all. It belongs to the elected councillors, not just the current council, but every councillor for the past decade and more who has voted for our sustainable policies.

It belongs to the staff, who have cheerfully supported changes in their workplace and who have been the inspiration behind many of our boundary-stretching initiatives. And it belongs to the precincts and all who live and work in North Sydney, for setting sustainability as a community goal and encouraging Council to achieve it.

Of course, that’s not all I’m proud of this year. I’m proud of the additional floor we’ve built on Stanton Library and the new heritage centre. I’m proud of the gorgeous BP Parklands in Waverton, our two new playgrounds and our four upgraded commercial shopping strips.

I’m also proud of our less visible achievements, such as improvements to the DA process, the visitor parking permit scheme and the way our plans for the CBD are coming together.

Most of all, I’m proud that the majority of residents and businesses think Council is doing a good job and the majority of staff think Council is a good place to work. Our community will face some tough issues in the coming years, but a positive attitude and a willingness to work together are the best foundations we can have for a sustainable future.

I hope 2006 is a happy, healthy and prosperous year for you all.



Genia McCaffery
 Genia McCaffery
Mayor

NEWS in brief

Village committee forms

A village committee has formed to help develop a plan for the area around Wollstonecraft Station. The committee will bring together road and paving work, open space designs and other initiatives into a coordinated, coherent plan to create a lively community feel within the area.



Station upgrade on track

The State government has given the green light for funding the upgrade of North Sydney Station. The \$58 million upgrade, which begins next year, will feature new lifts and escalators down to the station platform, a larger station concourse, 16 new ticket barriers and better safety and security systems.

A union of minds

A meeting of local people will be held in early 2006 to plan streetscape improvements outside the shops on Union Street, at the corner of Thomas Street, North Sydney. The meeting will explore ways of beautifying the area, possibly involving repaving, widening footpaths and planting.

Changes planned for resident parking

Changes to Council’s residents’ parking permit scheme are planned for early next year. The new scheme will create three distinct zones in North Sydney, where the number of entitlements will be based on demand for parking in a particular zone. At present entitlements are uniform across the whole local government area. At the time of writing, the changes, which include entitlements to parking for carers, were expected to be finalised in late November.

North Sydney Mayor	Cremorne Ward	Tunks Ward	Victoria Ward	Wollstonecraft Ward
Genia McCaffery Home: 9955 1560 Council: 9936 8100	Richard Pearson Work: 9929 3068 rrp@walkerdouglas.com	Paul Oglesby Home: 9954 3968 Mobile: 0411 213 043 oglpau@northsydney.nsw.gov.au	Jilly Gibson Home: 9964 9262 jillygibson@hotmail.com	Trent Zimmerman Home: 9460 1175 Mobile: 0419 690 617 trentzimmerman@hotmail.com
	Sarah Burke Mobile: 0403 551 153 bursar@northsydney.nsw.gov.au	Veronique Marchandau Home: 9955 3348 marver2060@yahoo.com.au	Michel Reymond Home: 9955 4330	Evan Predavec Home: 9922 3260 preeva@northsydney.nsw.gov.au
	Craig Carland Deputy Mayor Home: (02) 9953 4834 ccarland@bigpond.net.au	Patrick Conaghan Work: 9976 0215 patrickconaghan@bigpond.com	Virginia Bevan Home: 9956 8201	Nicholas Ritten Home: 9955 2576 nickritten@gmail.com

HANDS ON eco experience

Worm farms, frog sanctuaries, birdbaths and native gardens are being created at schools around North Sydney, thanks to Council's Eco Schools Grant program.

Ten primary and secondary schools have won \$1500 grants to develop and implement sustainability projects. The projects are part of the schools' educational programs, helping students to learn about how their decisions, actions and attitudes affect the environment.

Ben Blyth, a teacher at North Sydney Demonstration School, said the grant would be used for various activities including creating a native habitat garden and tree planting. "Our aim is to provide students with hands on experience that will raise their awareness of how they can make a difference to both their school and the wider environment. We want to give them opportunities to participate in real life environmental action."

Along with Council funding, Council staff, community groups and local service providers are giving hands-on assistance with the schools' projects.

Right: Students from Cammeray Public School look for tadpoles at frog hollow; the school will use its eco-grant to build a boardwalk through the area.



your local bushland reserve NEEDS YOU!

If you're happy to get your hands dirty, would like to meet some new people, and can spare a couple of hours a month, then Council's Bushcare team would love to hear from you.

Fourteen Bushcare groups across North Sydney, comprising around 150 volunteers, are actively involved in regenerating bushland, recording wildlife, propagating plants and protecting Aboriginal sites. As well as 'hands on' work, Bushcare volunteers take part in free training sessions, environment workshops, the occasional field trip and social events.

More hands always lighten the load so why don't you make a difference in 2006 and become a Bushcare volunteer? For more information contact Council's Bushcare Officer on 9936 8100, email council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au or go to Council's website www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au



LIVE GROW build learn

Residents will have the opportunity to learn about sustainable living next year with the launch of North Sydney Council's Educating for Sustainability Strategy: Live Grow Build Learn.

The strategy was developed using information from community focus groups and online surveys. Council's Corporate Planner Zoe Cox says the strategy is about making it easy – and fun – for people to make some lifestyle changes for a sustainable, brighter, cleaner, healthier future.

"Sustainability encompasses the ideals of environmental protection, social responsibility and responsible economic growth. It's important for us to understand sustainability so we can be aware of our impact on our environment. Our education strategy will look at simple changes we can make to our behaviours, attitudes and lifestyle."

BRADFIELD plaza

Residents, workers and visitors in Milsons Point and Kirribilli will soon be able to soak up spectacular sights of Sydney harbour from a new plaza in Bradfield Park. Excavation of the site - underneath the harbour bridge immediately south of Fitzroy Street - began in October. The plaza and landscaping will be completed early next year.

As well as attracting lunchtime workers and visitors, the plaza will be an ideal venue for markets and for people to gather on New Years Eve and Australia Day.

The plaza will be slightly below street level, with access by stairs from the north-eastern and north-western side. A pathway from Broughton Street will enable people with disabilities to access the plaza.

The works include new public toilets, much needed in this popular park, which attracts thousands of visitors each year.

Shade-tolerant plants will line three sides of the plaza and seating will be provided via low walls around the edges. Diagonal pavers are being used to reflect structural elements of the Harbour Bridge. The plaza will be lit with pole-mounted lighting and up-lighting at the northern wall, making the area attractive and safe at night.

2005 – YEAR IN

We've written about some of our achievements in detail throughout the year. Here's a summary of some of the highlights for 2005, within each of our 10 key strategic areas. For more details on any of these, please phone 9936 8100 or visit our website www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

SUSTAINABILITY



Whether we are building a park or community centre, developing a parking policy or planning a CBD, sustainability is integrated into all our activities. This approach earned us the Keep Australia Beautiful (NSW) 2005 Sustainable Cities Award (see page 1 for details).

A community group is working with Council to develop a sustainability centre in the old caretakers cottage on the Coal Loader site on Waverton Peninsula. Ideas for the centre include native plant propagation, tours and courses and developing relationships with universities in other countries to keep the centre connected to current research and thinking about sustainability. Hassells Architects are currently developing plans for the building.

There was standing room only at the Water and Energy forum in September to hear NSW Sustainability Commissioner Peter Newman and other guest speakers talk about options for Sydney's water and energy supply in the future.

TRANSPORT and parking

Changes to our parking schemes have been well received by the majority of North Sydney residents, copied by other Councils and sparked heated discussion across the nation.

Residents can now buy up to 20 visitor parking permits each year to allow tradespeople and visitors to park without restriction. Parking has been set aside for car share vehicles in Kirribilli and McMahons Point and Council has introduced a sliding fee scale for resident parking permits, which is set according to the fuel efficiency of the vehicle. Extensive public consultation about on-street parking is currently underway.



McMahons Point car share vehicle Rachel Echo.

NEIGHBOURHOODS and streetscapes

Several of our shopping villages have been upgraded during the year. Waters Road in Neutral Bay, Green Park and Abbott Street in Cammeray, and Fitzroy and Broughton Streets in Kirribilli all have a contemporary new look with paving, planting, lighting and outdoor dining areas.

Streets Alive volunteers working on gardens and reserves across the North Sydney area have brought local neighbourhoods to life. After five years of hard work, the Graythwaite gardening group has the overgrown lawns and worst of the weeds under control. The new fauna friendly habitat has attracted some King Parrots to take up residence in the gardens of this historic home.

At other sites, the Reserve Street garden in Neutral Bay is showing some tropical flair, while the garden at McKye Street in Waverton is looking good with native plants. Green Street, Cremorne had the most dramatic makeover of the year, with smart sandstone garden beds replacing the previous heaps of stones. Thanks to all our creative and hardworking Streets Alive volunteers.



Green Street, Cremorne before and after its makeover.

REVIEW

NORTH SYDNEY CBD



This year has brought together planning in several areas for the CBD, which is now poised on the brink of major change. A traffic plan has been prepared that will reroute traffic and create safer, more pleasant streets for pedestrians and a more cohesive CBD centre. A public domain strategy has also been developed and work will begin soon to upgrade the Victoria Cross area and establish it as the heart of the centre.

Several developments are underway in the CBD and there is potential for further development. A marketing campaign has been prepared to advise potential property owners and tenants of the benefits of North Sydney.

OPEN SPACE and recreation

The BP parklands on the Waverton Peninsula, which opened early this year, won the 2005 NSW Australian Property Institute Excellence in Property Award. The award recognises the outstanding treatment of environmental issues, through the blending of the natural topography with the remnant industrial heritage and environment-friendly technologies and materials.

Two new playgrounds were completed in St Thomas Rest Park and Kesterton Park. Both cater to a wide age range and include leading edge custom-built climbing structures.

Work is currently underway to create a new paved pedestrian plaza in the northern section of Bradfield Park under the Harbour Bridge (see page 3).



Above: Kesterton Park.

Left: St Thomas Rest Park.

A SENSE of community

The North Sydney community gathered for a myriad of events throughout the year ranging from football games through to art exhibitions, festivals and meditating with visiting Tibetan monks.

Some new events joined the annual favourites. Residents from Greenway housing in Kirribilli have participated in a creative well-being arts program. Well being is also a key aim of the new Men's Shed which has opened in Smoothery Park, Wollstonecraft. A joint project of Council, residents, Scouts Australia and Uniting Care Ageing, the Men's Shed is a chance for men to socialise around the carpentry workbench.

Three successful exhibitions have been held in the new art gallery at the Primrose Park Arts and Craft Centre and more are planned. Starlight Cinema, in its second season at North Sydney Oval, is also going from strength to strength, establishing itself with the noodle market as a must do activity on a warm summer evening.

This year volunteers worked together on bushland sites and gardens, in our library and museums, and in our community centres, sharing common interests and friendship while making a difference for others in the community.



COMMUNITY SERVICES and facilities



A new floor was added to Stanton Library, creating space for a new heritage centre, conference room, children's and young adults area and improved offices. As well as being a purpose-built home for Stanton's extensive historical collections, the heritage centre has an attractive exhibition space, which is attracting hundreds of people each week.

A new \$2.5 million community centre and \$200,000 playground are being built in Civic Park to replace the old North Sydney Community Centre (NSCC). The new building will allow the centre to bring its diverse activities under one roof and will bring the after

school care and vacation care facilities into line with new government guidelines.

The centre will also be a model of sustainability; a 40,000 litre underground tank will harvest rainwater, from the centre's roof and the Ridge Street tennis courts, to be used to flush the centre's toilets. The centre will run courses on how to install and use rainwater tanks at home. The building's energy efficient design means that it will not need mechanical heating or air-conditioning.

The nearby Early Education Centre (EEC), which provides services to children with special needs and their families, is also being renovated internally. Both the NSCC and EEC are operating from Stanton Library while the work is completed.

LOCAL infrastructure

The bread and butter of Council's business - roads, footpaths and drains - were, as usual, a major item on the work program.

More than \$1.6 million worth of construction work was carried out on a number of local and regional roads. Footpaths were rebuilt and repaved in 24 different locations around North Sydney, costing \$400,000 in total.

Work also began on stormwater drains in Neutral Bay. The \$850,000 works will put an end to flooding of many residents' back yards.

This year, plans were made to undertake extensive repairs to the collapsed seawall at McMahons Point, next to Henry Lawson Reserve. The work, which will cost \$2.5 million, will begin early next year.



GOVERNANCE



A development application tracking system was introduced in August and after just two months accounted for 8% of all page views on Council's website. Customers have phoned to say how convenient and accessible they find the new system and Council now gets fewer phone calls about DAs.

The DA tracking system was one of the changes introduced in response to customer feedback from a survey of DA applicants and submitters. As a result of the survey, Council has also employed a planning and development advisor and is holding regular information sessions to help people understand the development application process.

The budget for road and footpath cleaning and maintenance was significantly increased for the 2005/06 financial year as a result of feedback from the customer satisfaction survey. The majority of residents and businesses were satisfied with all the services evaluated, in particular with parks, waste and the maintenance of public spaces, but were less satisfied with parking enforcement and roads.

FINANCE

Council ended the 2004/05 financial year with an operating surplus of \$9.725 million and Auditors Steer and Spencer once again declared our financial position to be sound.

There were significant decreases in expenditure on legal fees and insurance for the 04/05 financial year. This is the sixth successive year that legal fees have been reduced. The reduction in costs can be attributed to better management of legal proceedings, combined with a reduction in the number of appeals being defended in the Land and Environment Court.



DON'T CUT THE GROUNDS

from under graythwaite

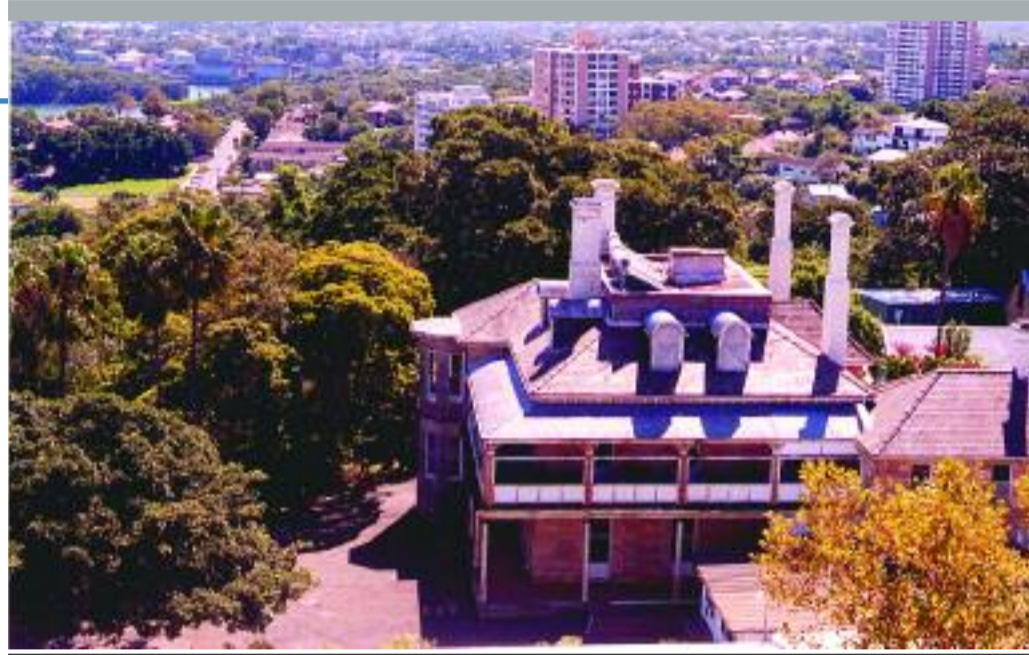
North Sydney residents have formed Friends of Graythwaite in a bid to ensure that the magnificent estate not only remains in public hands, but is restored to its full glory.

The historic mansion, set in almost three-hectares of gardens, was given to the State in 1915 as a convalescent home for wounded soldiers. In recent years it has been used as a nursing home, however, the building no longer meets federal government regulations and it will not operate beyond 2008.

Tim Hughes, chair of Friends of Graythwaite, said the formation of the group was a clear statement of the residents' intention to fight for continued public ownership and proper care of the property.

"Graythwaite has national, state and local heritage value. Despite this, there is a real risk of it being sold to developers or others and being alienated from public ownership. We do not want this option to even be considered."

Tim said Graythwaite is not just a North Sydney concern. "We see Graythwaite becoming the Hyde Park of North Sydney, bringing enjoyment and refreshment to the thousands of people who come here each day to work. We will be campaigning hard to let those workers know what lies at their doorstep and to gain their support."



"Rarely are we given the opportunity to make a real difference in our world. Saving Graythwaite in perpetuity for all of the people is such an opportunity. Graythwaite not only represents the very beginnings of North Sydney, it also represents the emotions, turmoil and pride of the ANZAC legend and the development of our identity as Australians. Now is the time for a concerted campaign to secure its future once and for all."

For more information about the Friends of Graythwaite or to support the campaign visit www.graythwaite.org.au

PLAYGROUP PLAYS ON

during renovations

North Sydney's little people can feel the sand between their toes – but without the waves or the car journey – at the North Sydney Community Centre's (NSCC) temporary home.

The Centre is operating out of the lower ground floor of 1 James Place until its new accommodation is completed next April.

Centre director Susan Kennett says that while everyone misses the fabulous playground at the old centre "playgroup sessions are still great fun and we have one of the biggest sandpits in the southern hemisphere".

She says playgroup is not only great for children aged up to five years, it's an important social support for parents and caregivers. Experienced play leaders cater for the various age groups and activities include puzzles, play dough, painting, collage and sing-along time.

The NSCC playgroup runs Monday to Thursday from 10am – 12.30pm during school terms.

Susan would also like to hear from people who can contribute time, skills or ideas for the Centre's activities and programs when the new building opens. For more information contact Susan on 9922 2299 or visit www.northsydneycentre.com.au



ANDERSON PRECINCT reactivated

Less than a year ago North Sydney resident Courtney Price had no idea what a precinct was, but she has been the driving force behind the recent reactivation of Anderson Precinct in Neutral Bay.

It all started with a question from Mayor Genia McCaffery. "I had a meeting with the mayor to discuss some issues and she asked me if I knew about precincts. I've lived in Australia 30 years, but had never heard of precincts."

However, just as the precinct gets up and running, Courtney is moving to Fiji where her husband has been sent on an assignment. She says she'll keep in touch with issues electronically.

In her view the main benefit of an active precinct is communication. "It opens up communication between residents and Council on local issues – people just don't know what's going on."

There are a number of issues that she hopes the precinct will tackle. "I'd like to see landscape and architecture in the area improved. For example, there's a little playground at Warringa Park, but there's no shelter or shade for parents to have a snack with their kids. It's great to have the playground but we really need shade and picnic tables."

PRECINCT workshop

A training workshop for all precinct office holders will be held on Saturday 3 December at Council Chambers from 9.30am - 12pm.

Precincts Administrator Mandy Barbour says the training covers the roles of the chairperson and secretary, Council's structure and how to contact staff. "It's basic but useful training and an excellent networking opportunity." If office bearers cannot come they are encouraged to send another precinct member in their place.

WHAT'S ON

In North Sydney in Summer

Arts/Music

7 - 23 December Christmas Entertainment, Mount Street Plaza (lunchtime)

Environment

- 1 - 7 December Coastcare Week - www.landcareaustralia.com.au
- 4 December Bushcare Christmas Party
- 9 January *Mudflats and Mangroves* for children aged 9 years and over, 10.30am to 12.30pm. Meet at Wollstonecraft Station near the bridge. Bookings essential.
- 10 January *Sea Treasures of Berry Island* for children aged 6 to 8 years, 10.30am to 12pm. Meet at Berry Island Reserve at the end of Shirley Road, Wollstonecraft. Bookings essential.
- 11 January *Sea Treasures of Berry Island* for children aged 3 to 5 years, 10.30am to 12pm. Meet at Berry Island Reserve at the end of Shirley Road, Wollstonecraft. Bookings essential.
- 13 January *Summer Dusk Stroll and Spotlight* for children aged 6 years and over, 8pm to 9.30pm. Meet at northern end of Kareela Rd, Cremorne. Bookings essential.
- 18 January *Beat the Heat - Birdwatchers Breakfast*, 7.30am to 10am. Meet at Berry Island Reserve at the end of Shirley Road, Wollstonecraft. Bookings essential.

Community Events

- 9 December Community Carols, Civic Park
- 31 December New Year's Eve Celebration, Harbour Foreshore
- 26 January Australia Day Celebrations
Includes: Surfboard Challenge - Blues Point Reserve, Citizenship and Community Awards, Celtic Festival - Bradfield Park, Family Fun Day - North Sydney Olympic Pool.

Enquiries for all events: 9936 8100

Markets

Noodle Market - every Friday evening, weather permitting from 5pm to 10pm during daylight saving. The market is held in Civic Park between Council Chambers and Stanton Library on Miller Street, North Sydney.

North Sydney Market - second Saturday of every month in Civic Park, Miller Street, North Sydney. Enquiries: 9922 2286

Crows Nest Market - third Saturday of every month at Crows Nest Centre, 2 Ernest Place, Crows Nest. Enquiries: 0412 210 084

Kirribilli Market - fourth Saturday of every month, **Kirribilli Art and Design Market** - second Sunday of every month (except January), corner of Fitzroy and Albert Streets (western side of the Harbour Bridge). Enquiries: 9922 4428

NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL

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facsimile 9936 8177
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website www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

STAR CLASS comes to starlight

Starlight Cinema returns to North Sydney Oval on Wednesday 11 January. If you haven't been to Starlight Cinema before, don't miss it this summer. It's one of the North Shore's most relaxing and delightful experiences.

This season film nights will be themed – Cult Classic Wednesdays, Beers and Blockbuster Thursdays, Family Flick Fridays, Summer Lovin' Saturdays and Chill Out Sundays.

Also new in 2006 is Star Class. You'll be able to enjoy a movie, reclining in a comfortable deck chair with a hamper full of gourmet delights and a beverage waiter at your beck and call.

Starlight Cinema will run until Saturday 11 March. To find out more about the program, visit www.starlightcinema.com.au



MANAGED ACCESS returns for NYE

Bradfield Park and Blues Point Reserve will once again be managed access areas on New Years Eve. This means that in these areas:

- > No glass or BYO alcohol is permitted and there is no vehicle or access parking
- > Bags are checked as you enter the area
- > Food outlets, bars, toilets and first aid are available

For more information about managed access and details of road closures near the foreshore, visit our website at www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

A CHRISTMAS CAROL - or two

Fun Christmas songs for kids and uniquely Australian carols will be the order of the evening at North Sydney Community Carols at Civic Park on Friday 9 December.

The carols will be held in conjunction with the noodle market. Local band Splash of Colour will start the festivities with a selection of popular music from the '60s to the present day, and will include a segment of fun Christmas songs to encourage the children to sing along.

This will be followed by North Sydney Girls' High School Band and choir who will entertain with a program of well-known carols from 7.45pm to 8.30pm. The band will include a segment of distinctly Australian Carols for something different. All participants will receive a free glow stick and program.