



Community newsletter

VOLUME 5
February 2006

We will work with the community to provide high quality services and facilities through excellence in leadership and with consideration for the needs of the environment and of future generations

GROUND RADAR FINDS UNMARKED GRAVES

In an effort to identify and protect a number of unmarked graves at East Kempsey Cemetery, Council engaged specialist consultants, GeoRadar, to survey the area using ground radar technology. The search was instigated at the request of members of the local Aboriginal community, who were keen to locate the graves of relatives and friends buried at East Kempsey.



Left: GeoRadar specialist Richard Yelf surveys the East Kempsey Cemetery to identify the location of unmarked graves.

Photo courtesy
Macleay Argus

So far, sixteen graves have been discovered with more expected to be found.

This process will make sure that any future work carried out at the cemetery takes into account the location of these graves and will enable forgotten ancestors to receive the dignity and respect they deserve.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

During January 2006, the Customer First Centre handled 6,070 enquiries and of those it resolved 87% for the customer at the first point of contact.

Remember, Customer First is open Monday to Friday to take your phone enquiries from 8am until 5pm with counter service available from 8.30am until 4.30pm.

SWR: WATER QUALITY SET TO IMPROVE

The new water treatment plant, currently under construction at South West Rocks, is nearing completion. Located in South West Rocks industrial estate, the site was specifically chosen because of its proximity to the reservoirs. The project is being undertaken by John Thompson Engineering from Newcastle with the help of local contractors. It has involved the installation of new water mains from the site up to Gregory Street; the construction of an amenities building, a lime silo, various tanks, a membrane filtering system and chemical dosing equipment, plus various pipe work, fittings and electrical works.

Water from the local bore field will be pumped to the new plant, where it will move through a series of tanks and Zanon membrane filters to remove impurities. The water will then be pumped to the existing reservoirs near Gregory Street and distributed through the existing reticulation pipe work to the residents. When the new plant comes on line, the residents of South West Rocks will receive a better quality water supply.



Above: Work continues on the new South West Rocks Water Treatment Plant.

ENGINEERING CADET PROGRAM IN FULL SWING

Council's Engineering Cadet program is in its third year. It was initiated to encourage local youth to pursue engineering as a career and to help address a serious shortage of skilled engineers in local government.

The program, run in partnership with the University of Newcastle Industry Scholarship Scheme, now employs three local student cadets - Richard Officer (2004), Karen Mackenzie (2005) and James Farquharson (2006).

The cadets receive financial assistance with their studies and also gain valuable industry experience by working with Council for extended periods while studying towards their degree. Applications for this scheme are invited each year, around September.

Left to right: Richard Officer, Karen McKenzie and Council's newest cadet, James Farquharson.



Planning renovations or additions?

If you are planning a simple home addition, such as a sunroom or a patio, or if you are thinking about building a carport, shed or pool, Council can speed up the approval process of your Development Application.



Development applications that meet pre-set standards can be turned around in 7 days, saving you both time and processing costs.

Council's Complying Development Officer welcomes your enquiries on 6566 3253.

SALEYARDS FORGING AHEAD

Upgrades to the Kempsey Regional Saleyards are progressing well, with completion of bull selling pens, drafting ring, sale ring and adjoining lanes, and several split pens behind the sale ring.

These improvements will enhance safety at the yards and permit more efficient cattle movement. For example, the split pens allow drafting in the pens, making the division of lots to be sold quicker and easier.

Other developments include the implementation of a new effluent management plan which will result in the re-use of all saleyard effluent.

Sales for 2006 began promisingly with around 3000 head sold in January at good strong market prices. Sales are scheduled every 2nd Thursday during 2006 with the next one scheduled for 2 March. There is, also, at least one Saturday sale every month and a special bull sale is scheduled for 5 August, 2006.



Advertising space is also available at the yards. Agricentre Kempsey and Michael's Metal Mart have already bought spaces and installed signs.

If you'd like to know more about the signage opportunities that exist or about Kempsey Regional Saleyards in general, please contact Nigel Elliott on 6566 3200.

DEVELOPING YOUNG LEADERS

Kempsey Shire Council is in the process of setting up a Youth Advisory Council to be made up of 12 young members of the community, aged between 12 and 25 years.

The purpose of the Macleay Valley Youth Advisory Council (MVYAC) is to be an advisory committee that will provide a local 'youth voice' in government policy and decision-making.

The committee will keep Council informed on issues that are significantly important to young people living in the Kempsey Shire. It will also provide the chance to plan and hold youth events, improve personal development, and liaise with local, state and federal government bodies.

The inaugural MVYAC meeting is expected to be held during "Youth Week", 1-9 April 2006.

If you would like more information about the Macleay Valley Youth Advisory Council contact Greg Hehir, Council's Youth Development Worker on 6566 3200.

AUSTRALIA DAY 2006

This year's Australia Day ceremony was a resounding success!



Our Australia Day Ambassador, entertainer Peter Cousens spoke of his love for Australia and sang several songs including a wonderful rendition of the national anthem. Together with Mayor Councillor Janet Hayes, he also presented the Australia Day awards to the local recipients, pictured here.

Above Left: Tammy Wicks, Young Citizen of the Year (left). Don Wade, Citizen of the Year (right).



Below Left: Representatives of the South West Rocks Arts Council accept the Community Entertainment, Music and Arts Award.

Above Right: Vincent Cook (left) and Trevor Hannan (right) with their Citizen of the Year Achievement Awards.



Below Right: Representatives of the Kempsey West Rotary Club accept the Community Service Award.



Did you know...

waste minimisation & beneficial reuse of materials



....that Council recently resolved to introduce a kerbside recycling program in the 2006/2007 financial year. This program is in response to recent community surveys that identified that you wanted an improved recycling system and identified recycling as an important service in the Shire.

Working in collaboration with Hastings Council, we will see the construction of a state of the art Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) at the Hastings recycling facility located at Cairncross. This facility will be capable of processing all the recyclate material from both Hastings and Kempsey, estimated to be over 10,000 tonnes per year.

Council is always striving to provide quality waste services that meet the requirements and expectations of the community with consideration for the principles of social, economic and environmental sustainability.

ROADS INFORMATION: UNDERSTANDING BITUMEN SURFACE RESEALING

This article on bitumen resealing is the second in the series explaining the different methods used by Council to maintain the Shire's roads. It will address one of the questions most commonly asked of Council in regard to roads... "Why is Council re-tarring a perfectly good piece of road when others are in more need?"

The answer, in short, is to save money in the long term.

Although a road may appear to be in good order, ageing of the bitumen will occur causing it to become brittle and result in fine cracking of the surface.

The resealing of bitumen surfaced pavements with a sprayed seal is done to prevent further deterioration of the road surface, such as potholing or stripping of aggregate from the surface. Bitumen resealing provides waterproof sealing, closes fine cracks and restores the road's skid resistance. It stops water from penetrating and eroding the road base, acting like a raincoat that prevents the rapid deterioration of the road pavement.

If done at the appropriate time (before damage occurs) it is one of the most cost effective ways to maintain good road condition. It is, in fact, 10 times more expensive to undertake a complete road rehabilitation (which involves virtually re-building the road) than it is to do a preventative bitumen re-seal.

Council's 2005-2010 Transportation Infrastructure Strategic Plan recommends resealing on 12-15 year cycle. The current funding shortfall in the area of Specific Road Maintenance means that Council has been unable to implement a more extensive program of bitumen resealing, which is needed to prevent further deterioration in the roads network.

If you would like to know more about how the bitumen resealing program is carried out, please contact Council on 6566 3200.

KEEPING WEEDS IN CHECK

Kempsey Shire Council has introduced an Environmental Weeds Program and is continuing its Noxious Weeds Program. Through these programs Council is attempting to slow down or eradicate the spread of an increasing number of weeds before they become a major problem in our Shire.

Some of the environmental weeds being controlled include Cocks Comb Coral Tree (pictured), Camphor Laurel, Small and Large Leaf Privet.



are being treated in selected areas around Kempsey streets, South West Rocks Road, Armidale Road and Gowings Hill Road. The control program is proving quite successful.

Left: Cocks Comb Coral Tree is just one example of the type of environmental weed being controlled.

ESD COMMITTEE

Council's Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Committee was formed to help develop an action plan that takes into account environmental, economic and social factors for ecologically sustainable development in the Kempsey Shire.

The committee is made up of 10 community representatives (Roger Gammon, Riitta Kytola, Robert Barnett, Alison Brown, John Jeayes, Jenny Sproule, Barry Ramke, Douglas Head, Kevin Hill and Gerald Hoskins) and two Councillors (Betty Green and John Bowell).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Tuesday, April 25:

Anzac Day holiday

Wednesday, April 26:

Kempsey Show half day holiday

Wednesday, May 3:

Kempsey Cup half day holiday

Sunday, May 7:

Riverside Tastes & Sounds Festival

BIG TURNOUT FOR HORSESHOE BAY MEETING

A large crowd of interested people attended the public meeting to discuss the Horseshoe Bay Reserve Draft Plan of Management.

Three hundred and twenty six people signed the attendance sheets on the day, with twenty six people (including three Councillors) speaking on the issue.

Council gained valuable feedback about the public's views on the proposal to replace caravan and camping sites with cabins.

This information is currently being collated and will be submitted in a detailed report to Council for their consideration.

Once a preferred plan is adopted by Council it must be referred to the Department of Lands, which has the final say on contents of the Plan of Management.



WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT OF MY WATER SUPPLY?

Within an area served by townwater, your water supply should:

- Be reliable and continuous
- Be free from objectionable taste and odour
- Meet Australian Drinking Water guidelines



WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT OF MY SEWERAGE SERVICE?



Within an area served by town sewerage, your sewerage service should:

- Be reliable and continuous
- Be operated so as to minimise odours and be environmentally responsible.

WHAT CAN I DO IF MY WATER OR SEWERAGE SERVICE IS INTERRUPTED?



If you have no water or there is a sewerage spill, please call us, night or day, on the numbers below: **business hours on 6566 3271 or after-hours on 1300 663 211.**

We give a commitment to responding to the problem as quickly as possible.



Joining together for a better community

Councillors



Janet Hayes
MAYOR
Tel: 6562 3531



Brian Sowter
DEPUTY MAYOR
Tel: 6567 4281



John Bowell
Tel: 6562 5122



Betty Green
Tel: 6562 8938



Jim Gribbin
Tel: 6566 6907



Terry Hunt
Tel: 6561 7157



Robert McWilliam
Tel: 6566 5465



Dean Saul
Tel: 6567 4682



Ellis Walker
Tel: 6562 2119

LIBRARY ACTION

January was a very busy month for Council's Shire Libraries, with Kempsey Library hosting a book launch for members of the Kempsey Writers' Group.

The children's school holiday activities also proved very popular. This year's activities included drama workshops, a National Parks & Wildlife butterfly display and craft sessions.



The annual Summer reading club also ran from December 14 until January 24. It was a huge success, with 118 children reading 648 books in just six weeks.

Left: The Summer Reading Club wrapped up with some of its members dressing up as wizards and witches for the prize presentation and party. Prime Possum paid a surprise visit to present the prizes.

FLOODPLAIN GRANT FUNDING

Kempsey Shire Council has been successful in gaining a grant of \$120,000 for Coastal Floodplain and Acid Sulfate Soil Management Projects following a joint application with Port Macquarie Hastings Council to the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority (NRCMA). The funding will assist landholders in managing the impact of overdrainage on the local floodplain.

The NRCMA Coastal Floodplain and Acid Sulfate Soil Project has already funded the supply of dropboards for the Darkwater Branch drain to allow management of drain water levels, encouraging wet pasture production and reducing acid soil discharge. The dropboards are a new design developed by local landholder, Ivan Sillitoe (pictured right).



Landholders who are interested in participating in the project should contact Tim Morris, Council's Acid Sulfate Soils Project Officer on 6563315.

GALLERY AVAILABLE FOR BOOKINGS

The Macleay Valley Community Art Gallery is available for hire by artists and groups of artists. Situated at Gladstone within the Gladstone Hall, the gallery has state of the art hanging and lighting systems with hanging space for up to 70 paintings of varying sizes. A polished wood floor enhances the display area and provides space for sculpture, large ceramic pieces or furniture.

A calendar of exhibitions to be held at the gallery in 2006 will be available in March.



The first exhibition for 2006 will be an International Women's Day Exhibition starting on Wednesday, 8 March.

This exhibition is supported by a grant from the Office for Women NSW Premiers Department and will be open to all women artists from the Macleay.

All enquiries concerning the gallery or International Women's Day Exhibition please contact Barbara Huntington on 6566 3221.



Allan Burgess
GENERAL MANAGER



Bruce Snape
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CORPORATE SERVICES



Keith Finnie
DIRECTOR
SHIRE SERVICES



Robert Pitt
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West Kempsey

Phone 6566 3200

Counter hours
Monday to Friday
8.30am - 4.30 pm

Call Centre hours
Monday to Friday
8.00am - 5.00 pm

Library
6566 3210

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