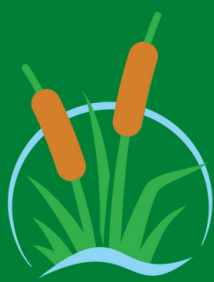




NOVEMBER 2022 ISSUE

THE PROGRESS



Official newsletter of the **volunteer** group,
Kogarah Bay Progress Association Inc
Volunteering in support of our community since 1921

Welcome to the Kogarah Bay Progress Association from our President

Do you ever wonder how things take place in our local community? Like why traffic congestion is getting worse, why unwanted medium and high rise is emerging in quiet residential areas, why Council has sold off community parking areas for development, why our parks are being slowly taken over by hard surfaces, why facilities like community pools are under threat?

Or do you wonder how some obviously bad development applications can be either modified or rejected?

So do we! Our members are locals just like you, who volunteer our time and meet in the belief that we can improve our local area for the benefit of all residents.

Our purpose is to be a collective voice for the ratepayers and residents of the Georges River Council Local Government Area. We believe progress is necessary to support our future generations, but we remain focused on ensuring development is aligned with existing or planned infrastructure, preventing rampant over-development and preserving our open spaces and family-friendly facilities.

So, what do we actually do?

- We meet each month to discuss and respond to local issues. Periodically we have guest speakers on topics of interest;
- We support community initiatives, and provide a strong voice on the important local issues that affect you;
- We have an effective working relationship with local councils - Georges River and Bayside - and government agencies;
- We work actively with other local Progress Associations and groups;
- We keep members informed via our website, Facebook and email.

We do it all on a voluntary basis. Volunteering is the essence of a strong community - it is how we help and support each other. It's how we make a difference in small ways and even in hugely significant ways.

We are not-for-profit (we are given no government assistance), non-political, and non-sectarian - everyone is very welcome to attend. All we ask is that you care about your community, are concerned to make it a better place to live and to contribute positively.

And we have been doing it for over 100 years! We can look back and see that we have made a difference in many ways, and we intend to keep making a difference in the future.

Councillors usually attend our meetings - this benefits us by giving us background on issues and also giving us a voice at Council meetings.

So, are you concerned about development in your area?

- Do you care about our green spaces?
- Do you have suggestions to make Council better and would like a sounding board?
- Do you wish to raise local issues that are important to you?
- Do you want to be part of a larger voice to lobby Council?
- Do you simply want to meet with other residents and make long-lasting friendships?

Come and join with us. We would love to meet you!

Jeff Powys

What's in this issue:

President's Welcome

Tree Canopy in GRC

The History of the Association - Part 1

St Mary's Convent, Sans Souci

Carol O'Connor - a clean-up volunteer extraordinaire

kogarahbayprogress.org.au





Trees and Canopy in the Georges River LGA

By Peter Mahoney

We all know that trees are important for beauty and shade and that they are home to birds and animals. Not only do they improve air quality, reduce the amount of stormwater runoff into creeks and rivers and reduce flooding, but they assist our mental and physical wellbeing, reduce temperatures in our suburbs and even add value to our homes!

The number of trees in council areas is known as **canopy cover**. Unfortunately, the canopy cover in most Sydney councils has reduced since 2013. In the Georges River Council area, the canopy cover was assessed at 28% in 2020, or 16th lowest out of 30 metropolitan councils. Note Hornsby (78.6%), Sutherland (76.6%) and The Hills (63.5%) levels by comparison.

Georges River Council is working towards a canopy cover of 40% by 2038, and hopes to achieve this in several ways, chiefly through the NSW Government's "Greening our City" program. This includes various projects such as the **Carlton Canopy Corridor** which will enhance the canopy by planting 1,200 trees from Kogarah in the north through to Riverwood in the southwest. There is also the "Forest Roads Canopy Corridor Project" (505 trees) and the "Cool Places, Urban Oasis Project" (35 trees, mainly in Hurstville).

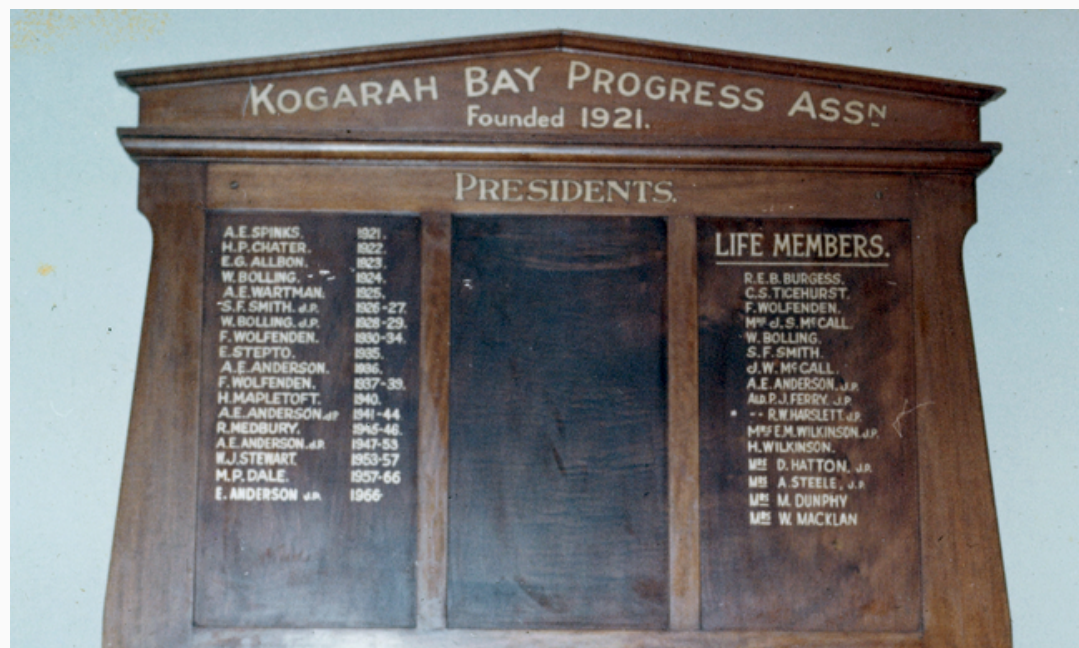
Council also offers free trees to residents through "Tree Giveaways", and requires homeowners who have removed trees to replace each one with two or more. If they fail to do that within six weeks they need to pay an "offset fee" ranging between \$1,000 to \$10,000.

Council will be implementing a **Significant Tree Register** this financial year, meaning that a development application will be needed to remove any tree which has been considered as significant. Reasons for inclusion on the register include visual, historical or scientific grounds.

Volunteer groups also actively help with improving our tree canopy. The Kogarah Bay Progress Association recently secured grants to plant trees in Vanessa Street Reserve, Beverly Hills, Terry St Reserve, Blakehurst, and in Carss Park to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, which will be undertaken in 2023. Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society members also regularly participate in planting sessions and have helped revegetate many areas including Gannons, Renown and Oatley Parks and Boorea, Moore and Claydon Reserves, and Lugarno Public School.

Georges River Council is also considering changes to its tree management policy to include instructions to homeowners who may have poisoned or vandalised their trees to leave them on their property as a penalty and as a deterrent to others.

All of us can do our little bit to improve the tree canopy by planting more trees in our gardens. And talk to council staff if you think your street or local park could do with more greenery!



The Kogarah Bay Progress Association Honour Board.
This was formerly on the wall in the Progress Hall before the hall was demolished



Car decorated to mark St George Hospital's 70th Anniversary





History of the Kogarah Bay Progress Association - Part 1

By Esther Lee

December 1916 marks the first reference to the association as reported by the Hurstville Propeller: **"A progress association was recently formed at Kogarah Bay, the object being to look after the interests of that portion of Kogarah municipality."** Although only thirty families are recorded living in the Kogarah Bay area in 1916, the cash book, which detailed the income and expenditure of the Association, shows the names of twenty-five people who attended the first meeting. Miss Carroll who was a major landowner in the area and lived near the intersection of the Highway and Park Road, graced the assembly by being present and consenting to become a patron.

The original title of the Association was the Middle Ward Vigilance Committee, but for only for a short time. The Kogarah Bay Progress Association was formally established with its own constitution in 1921, and covered the area bounded by the Princes Highway, Kogarah Bay creek (which drains into the Bay downstream of Carlton Crescent at Carss Park), the Bay shoreline and Lacey Street.

At the time Kogarah Bay extended up to Spooner Park near where the Beverley Park Golf Club premises now exist, few roads were sealed and the playing fields at Carss Park were yet to be reclaimed from the Bay. Indeed, showing just how undeveloped the area was, an early letter to Council asked for Kogarah Bay to be included in the "scavenging area and special notice be given straying stock nuisance."



Mr A E Spinks
First President of the
Kogarah Bay
Progress Association
St George Call - 1922



The photo above was taken in the early 1930's, and it can be seen that even then the suburbs of Beverley Park and Carss Park were only beginning to appear.

The first recorded item of expenditure was of a donation of 10s 6d in October 1921 to the dredging commission. The head of Kogarah Bay was then a mangrove wetland and became a continual point of debate. The State Minister for Health became embroiled when the Kogarah Mayor asserted the wetland had a continual issue with mosquitos, and following persistent letters from the Association the area was reclaimed in the Depression years of the 1930's to form the Beverley Park Golf Course. The causeway at the head of the Bay (now part of Ramsgate Road) was also made into a formal roadway.

The first President of the Association was **Mr A E Spinks**, who only held the office for a short tenure before resigning because of business commitments. 1921 proved to be a busy year as the Association petitioned the Department of Education for an additional school for the local children, raised the overcrowding on the Illawarra trains and the need for better postal services. They pressed the Minister for Works to visit the head of Kogarah Bay seeking dredging and reclamation.

As well as advocating for better community facilities, members also felt the need to introduce some sort of social element to the organisation for fundraising, and later in the year they formed a committee to discuss the most appropriate form of entertainment. The community hall at Claydon Reserve hosted Saturday night dances and get togethers, birthday parties, anniversaries, christenings and wedding receptions. It was the venue for many local groups such as dance clubs, ballet schools, painting clubs, bridge clubs and so on. In the early years it was a centre for the communities around the Bay.

Initially, meetings were held fortnightly and conducted at various members' households. The current President remembers being told by his mother that as a very young child around 1920 she recalled meetings being held "with much load shouting" in her family's small timber boatshed at 30 Carlton Crescent. Later in the 1930's, the Association built a small community hall around where 19 Ramsgate Road now stands. This served until the community raised funds to build a new, larger community hall at the western end of Claydon Reserve, on land leased from Council.

Acknowledgement: Thanks must go to Mrs D J Hatton, who collated much of the history of the Kogarah Bay Progress Association (KBPA), and without the research much of the history would have been lost. Because of Mrs Hatton's work, we can trace the early beginnings, struggles, and the determined efforts of the KBPA members to improve and maintain the Kogarah Bay area and, later, the surrounding suburbs; efforts and dedication that continue today as we face change, with over or under development, improvements or demolitions of once loved buildings and parklands. meeting residents' needs and wants, Local and State Government agendas on redevelopment and growth are a complex and perpetual challenge.





St Mary's Convent - 114 -120 the Promenade, Sans Souci

By Suzanne O'Connor

On 2 July 1939 the foundation stone of Saint Mary's Convent was laid by His Grace, Archbishop Gilroy. This was in order to provide accommodation for six Sisters of Mercy who had moved to the area from Broken Hill two years prior to teach at the nearby St Finbar's School.

The Sisters of St Joseph had previously travelled from Kogarah on the steam tram to teach at the school. The building was made possible through the generosity of a Wilcannia-Forbes priest, whose bequest provided a base for the Sisters from the outback who required accommodation for holidays or when studying or convalescing. Over the ensuing years a number of additions, including a nursing home and a hostel for the aged, were made to the convent.

One of the greatest Kogarah Bay Progress

Association successes in our long history was the saving of this beautiful convent in the early 2000s. This delightful heritage building was threatened by a developer who sought to change almost all the strictures placed on this development by the Land and Environment Court. His plans would have destroyed the much loved, and historically significant convent.

Led by Association volunteers, the local community rose up as one to defend it as a treasured feature of our local area. Volunteers knocked on doors, delivered pamphlets and even put their hands in their pockets to save the building, even employing a site consultant to advise in the early stages of the fight. The Kogarah North Ward Councillors were also on-side.

The result was that the developer was refused all his modifications and the heritage building was retained.

It is this kind of concern for our community that



has led Association members and local residents to participate in volunteer activities to ensure our neighbourhoods are protected and saved.

Some other examples where the Association has stepped up to support the community include:

- Beverley Park Golf Course fence
- Kogarah War Memorial Pool at Carss Park
- Proposal for Ramsgate Central (Woolworths) on Rocky Point Road

Read more: kogarahbayprogress.org.au

Carol O'Connor's Years of Dedication to Cleaning Up Kogarah Bay

By Glynn Pulling

The annual **Clean Up Australia Day** is one of our community's most important volunteer events for helping to keep our parks, waterways, etc. free of litter and detritus.

The Kogarah Bay Progress Association has participated in Clean Up Australia Day since 1992. Long-standing member Carol O'Connor not only helped at the first Clean Up at Kogarah Bay in 1989, but she has organised every clean-up since. Following nominations from the association in 2019 Carol received a **Cook Community Award** from prime minister and Cook MP Scott Morrison, and she was recognised a second time with a **NSW Volunteer of the Year Award** in 2020.

Carol's concern for the bay is legendary, as she starts the annual clean-up on the Friday, and continues on the Saturday before the official event on the Sunday. She has shared some thoughts with us on her 33-year involvement in keeping Kogarah Bay and its surrounds clean.

"When I was in my early teens our family moved to Torwood St, Sans Souci, and Claydon Reserve was our playground and I still live nearby.

The first Clean Up in 1989 was the best turnout ever and that was due to its novelty. A stolen car had been driven into the bay from the boat ramp a few days before the event and it was removed as part of the clean-up, which attracted a crowd. The second year a few people turned up. However, as I was the only person who attended the third one, I realised that we would need support from an organisation like Kogarah Bay Progress Association for future events to be viable. From then on, I crowned myself as **co-ordinator**.

Early on it became apparent that getting down into certain areas at low tide was important, as that is where the rubbish can be collected easily. The most common items we find are plastic wrappers, with the most unusual objects being a safe and three dumped outboard motors. Although the **Return & Earn** scheme has had some impact, it was disappointing that last year we filled several bags with bottles and cans. It seems that most of the litter comes from the storm water system, and unfortunately some of the outlet pipes have primitive covers which disappear regularly.

Clean-Up Australia publicises the event and supplies the bags, gloves and other equipment. Georges River Council assists by collecting the rubbish. Volunteer numbers have fluctuated over the years but have generally declined. The event doesn't get much publicity due to a lack of funding. We don't have enough volunteers, and obviously the more people we have, the more rubbish we can collect. I think the public is better educated about littering, but that doesn't mean they will always do the right thing. And although passers-by often congratulate us it would be nice if they helped as well!

Back in the nineties I only intended to be the co-ordinator for a few years and ever since I've hoped that someone would tap me on the shoulder and take over my role. I'm still waiting for that tap on the shoulder! And although I appreciate the awards, I'm very conscious of the fact there are many members of KBPA who are more deserving than I am."

About Us

We are a group of volunteers from the local area who meet monthly.

Come along to our meetings to be heard on how to make our community a better place to live, work and visit.

When: First Wednesday of the month (except January)

Time: 7.30pm

Where: Kogarah Hub
49 English Street Kogarah

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