



Reports to the 2007 AGM

President's Report - Bob Armstrong September to December 2006

My two-year stint as President of the Glebe Society ended on 31 December 2006, so I have been asked to report on the activity in the four months following the last AGM. I will do this in summary and allow the current President, Jan Macindoe, to paint the fuller picture of the year.

I wish again to pay tribute to colleagues on the Management Committee and members of its Sub-Committees, most especially their convenors, whose excellent work has spread into broader areas that increasingly challenge the Society. There are some ten Sub-Committees and detailed reports for these have been provided for publication in Glebe Society Bulletins 7/2007 and 8/2007.

Our close affiliates, FLAG, CoGG and BCC have continued to forge ahead in their strong representation of community aspirations. Their lines of communication and wide consultation have contributed importantly to progress in a broad range of local concerns. Their reports also appear in Bulletins 7/2007 and 8/2007. And what would we do without Edwina Doe, Editor of the Bulletin, and her band of helpers?

September's events in 2006 kicked off with the preview of Al Gore's film "An Inconvenient Truth" on Tuesday 5 September - a coup for Bill McCarthy and his committee, Glebe against Global Warming, both in its timing and its impact. Most of Australia seems to have been playing catch-up since then!

About this time, the City of Sydney Council moved to allocate funds (\$12m) and to formulate plans and timetables for the upgrade of Glebe Point Road. More of this in Jan's report.

Phoenix Rising ... from the ashes was the appropriate label for the revisiting of the refurbished Walter Burley Griffin Incinerator - held on 24 September, in a heatwave. David Mander Jones' Heritage Sub-Committee saved the day.

But matters really hotted up with the issue on 20 September of the DA for a Dry Boat Storage Facility on Rozelle Bay. This was to focus the energies of the Glebe Society and many other concerned groups for the rest of the year and further on (see Bays & Foreshores Report, 7/2007). Tony

Larkum, on returning from overseas only recently, made some additions to this report that did not get through to Edwina in time - he will expand on these I trust. A meeting arranged by the Glebe Society for 20 October attracted some 200 protesters to the Glebe Town Hall and was followed by detailed submissions, high level meetings and protest letters to the relevant State and Local Government Authorities (on behalf of members of Annandale North Precinct Committee, Blackwattle Cove Coalition, Dragon Boats NSW, Glebe Point Residents Group, Glebe Rowing Club, Glebe Chamber of Commerce, NSW Rowing Association, Save Rozelle Bay Association, Sydney University Women's Rowing Club and The Glebe Society Incorporated). I congratulate members of the Bays & Foreshores Sub-Committee and all those who gave so much effort in the fight against this inappropriate development. I make particular mention of Tony Larkum, Susie Cleary John Buckingham and Mark Dent who led the good fight. As we now know, the DA was approved in May 2007, but with some 80 conditions.

Art and About came to brighten our days during the display period of Facing Glebe (7-23 October), a great success that brought so many aspects of Glebe together. An exciting program put together by Sue Ingram and her team and Council officers, it generated so much interest for locals and visitors alike, and had all the ingredients to argue for an annual art event to include other major Glebe/Forest Lodge thoroughfares and parks.

November was a busy month. Starting with great joy in the community with the realisation of plans and effort of 30-ish years when the Lord Mayor, Clover Moore, officially opened the Foreshore Walk on 11/11/2006. Clover also 'hurled' the first boule on the officially declared pétanque/boule "pitch". The whole event was a great party for young and old, assorted dogs included. To reach this stage of the Foreshore upgrade involved numerous inspections and some 15 Community Representative Workshops allowing for extensive exchange of information and views. I reiterate my appreciation for the charring of these workshops by Councillor Robyn Kemmis



Bob Armstrong. Photo: Bruce Davis

and for the contributions of Gynt Drynan and Adam Fowler, and those representatives of the Glebe and Annandale residents who gave generously of their time and expertise.

The State Cabinet Meetings in Glebe/Leichhardt held on 20 November gave opportunities for community groups to put their views directly to the Government. The Glebe Society, CoGG and BCC were all well represented at meetings with the Premier and Cabinet Ministers. Our strong opposition to the Dry Boats Storage Development was put separately

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to Minister Frank Sartor and to Minister Joe Tripodi, each having their advisers in tow. Questions on the Government's approach to BASIX were raised with Frank Sartor by members of the Glebe against Global Warming Sub-Committee. BCC representatives presented their concerns separately to Minister Grant McBride (Gaming & Racing); Sam Haddad (Director General of Planning); Minister Tripodi (Ports & Waterways). CoGG representatives met with Mike Allen, Director General of NSW Department of Housing to delve generally into the policy plans of DOH in the Glebe/Forest Lodge Community. It is fair to say that few promises were elicited, but better lines of communication have been established with the various Ministries, and these are being pursued. (See Bulletin 10/2006 report.)

Later in the day, at the Glebe Balmain Community Reception for the NSW Premier and Cabinet Ministers the Premier's Community Awards (for community service) were announced. No fewer than three of the four recipients are members of the Glebe Society; Bruce Davis, Jane Spring and Joe Mannix. Congratulations to all.

Other November/December events included:

* The Glebe Gardens Forum on 15 November. Thanks to Dorothy Davis and her crew, and to the three speakers; James Broadbent, Ross Ingram and Matt Cantwell. (See Bulletin 10/2006.)

* The Glebe Street Fair, held on 19 November. Our stall hosted the Forest Lodge Trees Group and the Centipede raffle, the latter raising \$500. The Glebe Chamber of Commerce is thanked for its continuing support for the not-for-profit community groups that participate in the Fair. A larger stall, a bit further down the hill has been mooted for 2007. Thanks go to all those who contributed to the success of the day.

* The Glebe Music Festival, running from 10 November to 3 December, another triumph for David Macintosh. David has agreed to shift the Festival (or its like) to a date to coincide with Glebe Society's 40th Anniversary Celebrations in June 2009 which are in the hands of Mavis McCarthy and her committee.

* The Mitchell Street Fair on Saturday 9 December. Congratulations to Jan Wilson and her many helpers in taking the

initiative in staging this event. It was lots of work, but with great future outcomes for the community.

* The Glebe Society's Christmas Party on 15 December was a wow thanks to Anne and Simon Fraser, Cheryl and Bryan Herden and their team. Any encores?? Please!

* Foley Park - there were high hopes that 2007 would see a start to the work on Foley Park. However the project was bundled into the Glebe Point Road upgrade and commencement is more likely to occur in 2008, with some changes to aspects of the plans to be finalised. High praise to Bobbie Burke and her group who have worked so well with the community, Council officers and consultants.

A phone call from the ABC alerted me to the media release from Minister Frank Sartor's office announcing his approval of the Sydney Slipways Facility. It was December 22 and I had hoped for better end-of-year, end-of-Presidency news, but as outlined in my Bays & Foreshores report, it could have been worse. Nonetheless, this and other developments are placing undue pressures on Rozelle and Blackwattle Bays and their surrounds. We should remain fearful and alert!

My best wishes for the coming year to the Glebe Society and its new President, Jan Macindoe, and to the broad Glebe/Forest Lodge community.

- **Bob Armstrong**

Glebe against Global Warming

The Glebe against Global Warming subcommittee of the Glebe Society was formed in 2006. Our first, and highly successful, activity was a special screening of the Al Gore documentary "An Inconvenient Truth" at the Palace Theatre, Leichhardt, attended by 150 people. A general discussion, facilitated by presentations by Julia Richards, CEO of CANA and Robert Parker, followed. A small committee was then convened to plan activities for the group.

The next activity was a "flyer", distributed to 2000 homes in Glebe, setting out activities individuals and families can undertake to lower CO₂ emissions.

Over the next few months, general media publicity on the issue of global warming increased dramatically and both political parties began to evince interest in CO₂ emission reduction. Unfortunately, to date, policies likely to achieve significant reduction in the time frame necessary are

yet to appear. However, with a federal election approaching, we are likely to see at least some serious policies presented. The commitment to coal fired electricity generation remains policy for both parties with both relying on unproven and unlikely carbon sequestration to justify the emissions from these power stations. Both parties have embraced carbon trading but are not as yet willing to place targets on the emission reductions to be achieved.

GAGW has as its main aim for the next three months to encourage all members of the Society to demand a clear policy for emission reduction targets of 25% by 2025 and 75% by 2050 from both political parties and to support the party which provides the most effective policy to achieve these reductions.

- **Bill McCarthy**

Traffic and Transport

The main issue that has arisen with traffic and transport matters over the year has been the Glebe Local Area Traffic Management Study. Council commissioned consultants to undertake this study. The public were invited to a workshop at Glebe Town Hall, to talk about their concerns. This workshop sought feedback on a wide range of perceived issues, opportunities and constraints. The presentations by each discussion group provide the first stage of feedback to the consultants. The next output was a Draft Plan, on which the public were asked to comment. Some concern has been expressed about the lack of a middle phase of consultation, with a second public workshop to discuss and refine the options. Nevertheless, the Society prepared a submission to Council on the Draft Plan. This submission supported the overall thrust of the Plan but made detailed suggestions on individual items.

A final Plan has not as yet been presented, so it is hard to know if the Society's concerns and recommendations have been accepted. When a final Plan is made available, details will be provided in the Bulletin.

A watching brief has been followed on traffic issues with development matters, and parking plans for Glebe Point Road, but the involvement of this convenor has unfortunately been restricted by time in hospital or otherwise immobile. It might be a good thing to do your own home maintenance but beware of tall ladders. It is safer climbing in the Himalayas.

- **Chris Hallam**

President's Report – Jan Macindoe, from 1 January 2007

I took on the role of President of the Glebe Society on the first of January with some trepidation, as you can imagine. The Society is involved in a very wide range of activities and it was daunting to think that I needed to be informed about all of them. However, I quickly found that all the “heavy lifting” was being done by the remarkable team of sub-committee convenors and their teams, the Management Committee itself, and the wider membership, who always seem to be ready to roll up their sleeves and help with whatever is needed. This remarkable team can always be relied on to provide advice and background for the issue of the moment. My worst dread – being phoned by a reporter to comment on something I know nothing about – turned out to be no problem at all. I can always provide another name and phone number and “pass the buck” to someone more competent.

The range of activities in which the Glebe Society is involved is impressive, and it also means that there are plenty of positive, educational, and celebratory occasions to balance against the hard work and commitment. So, while the first few months of the year were dominated by the long campaign of opposition to the dry boat storage, with an outcome a long way from what we had hoped for, we also had in March the long-anticipated and very satisfying opening of Bellevue to lift our spirits.

The campaign against the dry boat storage in Rozelle Bay, led with admirable persistence and professionalism by Tony Larkum and the Foreshore Committee members - John Buckingham, Bob Armstrong, Suzie Cleary and Mark Dent - is a somewhat sobering reminder that resident action often demands sustained involvement and brings only limited satisfaction in the outcome. Nonetheless, all the members who gave their time on successive weekends to promote community awareness of the issue at our stall in the Bicentennial Park and Glebe Point Road, as well as the main players, are able to reflect that the extensive conditions and limitations on the activity associated with dry boat storage would certainly not have been achieved without their efforts.

In the end, the outcome is a matter of politics and government, and from that point of view the effort to inform and influence our state member Verity Firth,

and through her Frank Sartor, was probably the most important part of the campaign, along with keeping the issue in the public eye. I think the highlight of the political campaign was Mark Dent's role in accompanying Frank Sartor on a boat trip, and managing to counter Frank's instinctive view that Glebe Society members must all be selfish NIMBYs, through Mark's impassioned concerns about boating safety.

Other major areas of activity are bearing fruit, and several of them show the importance of a core group of Glebe Society members working with other sections of the community, including neighbouring suburbs. The Blackwattle Cove Coalition is a good example. Led by the gently persistent Anne Fraser, and supported by other Glebe Society members, BCC brings together people from Glebe and Ultimo, and is forging links with the dog racing fraternity. Already, the results are impressive, with the City of Sydney Council having been persuaded to take on a more pragmatic approach to Wentworth Park – the dogs are here until 2027, so we can't just ignore the park in the meantime – so that the combined effect of the Council's upgrade to the park, and the Trust's revitalisation of the entrance area, have already opened up this long-neglected area for greater community use and enjoyment. And wait until 'Back to Wentworth Park' makes its impact!

Similarly, the effectiveness of the Arts and Media subcommittee, and its major Art and About project, depends on the success of Sue Ingram and the team forging close connections with a wider range of Glebe residents and groups, especially from the southern end of the suburb. The flexibility of this group, and commitment of its members, is reflected in their ability to keep the Art and About program going, even if in a reduced fashion, despite the disappointment of not receiving Council funding for this year's activity.

Our newest sub-committee also brings connections to a wider group. The Blue Wrens group has been set up to enable a specific project, funded by the City Council, to go ahead with the assurances provided by an incorporated association. The Management Committee had the pleasure of hearing from local resident



Jan Macindoe. Photo: Bruce Davis

Norma Hawkins about how the project first began, with a group of neighbours delighting in the presence of a breeding pair of Superb Blue Wrens, and wondering about how to create the conditions for the Blue Wren population to survive and increase. This grass roots project, to increase neighbourhood awareness of the Blue Wren population, and to identify and promote habitat for them, is now under way.

Meanwhile, the contribution of the Society to the Council's planning activities continues to maintain the high standards for which the Society is recognised. A small group met to respond in detail to the Local Area Traffic Management Plan and their ideas were presented with outstanding professionalism by the Traffic Convenor, Chris Hallam. Another small group met to formulate the Society's response to the Urban Design Study, and that response has just been forwarded. There is still a long way to go before the various aspects of the Council's planning strategy are combined into a new Town Plan, and the Society is keen to ensure that Council maintains a consultative approach throughout the process. We acknowledge that Council draws on highly professional planning staff, but we know that local knowledge, and the long memories of residents, can make an invaluable contribution.

Dianne Gray's plans to involve the Society's Heritage Committee in contribut-

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ing the Council's heritage listing for the suburb, is another example of the way in which the Society can contribute in a very active way to planning for the preservation and enhancement of our suburb.

Social and educational events remain an important part of the Society's activity. The presentation by the architect and builder on the renovation of Bellevue, and the screening of *Rocking the Foundations*, were perfect examples of how an enjoyable social occasion can be combined with learning more about aspects of Glebe and inner-city life. Our first opportunity to use the Valhalla building since its purchase for re-development showed that this has added a useful new venue for community events in Glebe. And the "new members welcome" at the Gig gallery, expertly organised by Cheryl and Bryan Herden, has become an established event in the calendar.

"Meet the Candidates" meetings – such as the one held in March for the State government election – also perform an important function in providing a venue for members and the community to hear from the candidates on issues of local concern.

It's hard to overestimate the importance for the Society's functioning of the work of Edwina, Cynthia and Bruce. For most members, the Glebe Society Bulletin is the most tangible aspect of their membership, and increasingly the Society's website is serving a similar information purpose for both Society members and the broader public. It is only since becoming President that I've fully realised how many enquiries are received through the website. And the consistent high standard of the Bulletin is appreciated by everyone, including local reporters.

In looking forward, we are already able to anticipate some good outcomes for Glebe, with the Glebe Point Road upgrade at last under way. With the related improvements to Foley Park (still a year away from commencement) and the Glebe Point Road art works, there will be at least two years of outcomes to look forward to.

However, the probable sale and re-development of Harold Park has the potential to have a major effect on Glebe, and not necessarily wholly positive. The pressure to meet the housing needs of an ever-expanding Sydney population means that we can be sure that this large site will attract a lot of attention from developers,

and probably from the State Government. Although it will be some months before the first steps are taken, it is important that the Society has a clear position on what we would like to see happen. At the conclusion of the AGM I would like members to comment on a draft position statement about Harold Park that can guide our discussion over the coming year.

And finally, I must attempt to express my gratitude to the "old hands" whose support has enabled me to slip into the position of President without too much stress. Bob Armstrong has provided invaluable advice, and continues to represent the Society in various venues – as well as his now well-publicised role as our "mole" with Sydney University. The role Dorothy Davis has taken on as events coordinator has enabled us to deal with the Society's calendar of activities in a much more organised and clear way.

But above all, the contribution of Liz Simpson-Booker and Bruce Davis can't be overestimated. I find it difficult to imagine that a group such as ours could possibly have better support in the role of Secretary and Treasurer than Liz and Bruce provide.

- Jan Macindoe

Heritage

I took over as Convenor of this committee at its April meeting. David Mander Jones had led heritage very capably for several years and I have expressed my appreciation for his work and that of others involved in heritage in previous reports. This report sets out what has been done since April and the plans we have made for the medium term.

In a village such as Glebe, we are constantly reminded of our heritage. The task of bringing order and purpose to what needs to be done sometimes seems enormous. To become manageable and achievable the goals of the committee needed simplifying. Our overall goal is to preserve and promote heritage items in our community. Our first task therefore, must be to collect and record local heritage items to ensure they are listed in the local environment plan.

The committee resolved to work closely with the City of Sydney Council and its officers so that our work would be complementary. This involved a meeting with John Poulton of the Council to provide an update of Council's work so far. Whilst a number of heritage studies

had been undertaken, we identified that the local heritage database was lacking and needed to be brought up to date.

Much work had been done previously by the Heritage Sub-committee in photographing and documenting heritage items within our community. However, this work requires collation and expansion to become more meaningful, accessible, and long-lasting. What we need is a bridge between the work of individuals and groups who are interested in our heritage and the City of Sydney Council, which has the technology and expertise to aggregate data and share it.

At village level, we can contribute our research. I am sure there exists in the community work done by individuals when researching either their home or family connections. The committee's plan is to also capture this work in a meaningful way for uploading into the heritage database. Thus we can share more effectively what we know, and learn more effectively what others know.

A major interest in the New Year is the widening of involvement of members of the Glebe Society in the activities of the heritage committee. Most members identify heritage as an area of interest yet few get the opportunity to contribute. The committee will provide information on planned activities to recruit members to the committee as well as enlist the help of other members in ad hoc tasks.

- Dianne Gray

Convenor, Heritage Sub-committee

CoGG

The Coalition of Glebe Groups (CoGG) continues to function as an important link between the Glebe community, the City Council and State Government bodies. In accordance with CoGG's rules I handed over as chair to Chris Newton of the Chamber of Commerce at the beginning of 2007.

The major issue this year has been the implementation of the Glebe Point Road upgrade, and I am pleased to note that the Department of Housing is now participating regularly in our discussions and is much more responsive to requests from CoGG than previously.

- Bruce Davis

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