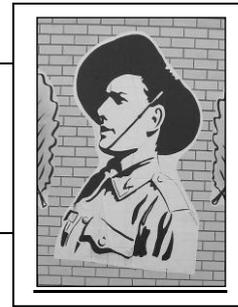


Oaks Estate News

Oaks Estate Progress Association

-Vol.3, No.4, June 2014



Capt. BEDE TONGS MM, ORDER OF AUSTRALIA MEDAL (OAM) RECIPIENT, 2014

Congratulations to Bede Tongs, well-known to everyone in Oaks Estate, who was awarded the OAM in the June Queen's birthday honours. His award is for service to veterans, particularly through military history organisations.

The citation recognises Bede's activities in promoting the work of the Kokoda Track Foundation. In 2013 he was made an Ambassador of the Foundation. He visits Papua New Guinea to speak to young people who are about to walk the Kokoda Track and to assist families living in the vicinity of the Track.

Bede is a Past President, AMF3rd Battalion Association. He was involved in the erection of a memorial to the 3rd Battalion on the Kokoda Track commemorating the capture of Templeton's Crossing in October 1942.

*Templeton's Crossing a trial of strength
The Japanese with banzi yells
Could not dislodge this gallant force
As history writers tell.*

He also helped set up another memorial to the 3rd Battalion at East Jindabyne. In 2011 his *Poems of an infanteer in the firing line* was published.



Bede Tongs at the 3rd Battalion Memorial, Templeton's Crossing on the Kokoda Track.

Bede was also President of the Oaks Estate Progress Association from 1952 to 1959. In September last year the OEPA dedicated a memorial plaque to him at the Community Hall. It commemorates Bede's community spirit as a leader of the village of Oaks Estate, and his grant of land for the Hall in 1952, "when change was made by action, not by stealth".

The Oaks Estate community is proud of Bede and thankful to him for everything he has done and continues to aspire to do. He is an inspiration to us all.

OEPA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Sunday, 29 June 2014, at 12.30pm, at the Community Hall.

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Apologies
- Minutes of previous AGM 18 May 2013
- Matters arising
- President's report
- Secretary's report
- Treasurer's report & audit statement
- Election of office bearers, committee members and public officer
- Release of Oaks Estate Master Plan
- Other business

OEPA will be discussing the draft Master Plan proposals. Join us for a sausage sizzle, talk about the planning proposals, and help us elect our next committee.

New members welcome.

RELEASE OF DRAFT OAKS ESTATE MASTER PLAN

You'll have received leaflets in your letterbox telling you that the Oaks Estate draft Master Plan has been released for comment.

Draft plans will be displayed at 'meet the planners' sessions scheduled for 6-8pm on Thursday 3rd July and 10am-12 noon on Saturday 5th July at the Oaks Estate Community Hall.

Posters summarizing the draft Master Plan are also on display in the bus shed on Hazel Street.

The planners have proposed a **“path for growth and change in Oaks Estate while recognising that its future is very much connected with its past”**. They say that the draft Master Plan **“recognises Oaks Estate as a village with a unique history and character”**.

A Master plan is about dealing with the 'big picture' issues – identifying what should be protected as change occurs within and about Oaks Estate.

Change will affect us as the airport and Beard expand, and as Queanbeyan continues to infill with high density development and light industry directly across the border from us.

Change will certainly occur when the unleased land along Railway and Hazel Streets is released for sale.

Whether you want a lot of change to occur, just a little bit, or none at all, when you comment on what you would like to see happen in Oaks Estate, think about what contributes most to Oaks Estate's uniqueness, its look and feel, for instance. Think about creating opportunities to improve what doesn't work well for Oaks Estate, while protecting what does.

It will be important that you help ensure that all of the major issues are recognised, and say how you would like to see them handled.

Remember, ensuring even just a one-sentence mention of an issue in the final Master Plan will make all the difference. Something being mentioned in the final Master Plan provides a rationale for a capital works plan to be developed in the future by the various Government departments.

Here are some aspects of the draft master plan that the OEPA thinks deserve very careful consideration – *be careful what you wish for*. Think about them as you look over the draft plan, join in the discussion at our AGM, and talk

about the issues at the 'meet the planners' drop-in sessions.

The work will not be over for Oaks Estate once the Master Plan is finalised:

“A variation to the Territory Plan to introduce a new precinct code for the village is the next step of a master plan. **The Precinct Code can address details such as building heights, setbacks and land uses specific for Oaks Estate.**”

“Sale of Territory owned land – Some Territory owned land may be identified as appropriate to sell **for uses that meet the needs of the market and community.**”

“Industry opportunities – **It is up to the business community to take advantage of opportunities identified in the master plan.** When proposed changes are on existing developed sites, market forces will dictate when/if it is redeveloped. Changes may therefore take a number of years to occur.”

“Increasing traffic on Railway Street, particularly heavy vehicles, is a concern.”

“There is uncertainty over the heritage nominations in the area.” **The master plan will not resolve this issue.**

“The higher density built form (bulk, scale, building style, setbacks) in a mostly low density area is a concern.” **Yet opportunity will be provided “for moderate increases to three storeys (10 metres) where it can be demonstrated there will be no significant impacts to neighbours or to the surrounding village character.”**

The rural outlooks and vistas in the area should be retained. **The master plan boundary does not support their assessment or protect the subject of the view.**

Principle 2: Provide Oaks Estate with new opportunities for growth and change into the future. **This principle is stated without any prescribed strategy other than, “It is up to the business community to take advantage of opportunities identified in the master plan.” Does this mean that developers will drive the agenda?**

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NO FOOTPATH OR TRAFFIC CALMING ON RAILWAY STREET

Although Railway Street is classed as a suburban road, it is a main route between Canberra and Queanbeyan, as we all know. Roads ACT estimate that the average volume of traffic is 3,632 vehicles each day of the week.

It is impossible for any pedestrian to walk safely along the road, and dangerous for bicycles and motor bikes, especially on the blind bend in the road at the boundary of The Oaks and Capital Flowers.

In December the OEPA wrote to Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS) asking for construction of a footpath along Railway Street, from Hill Street to Oaks Estate Road.

TAMS replied that "construction of this path would require significant works, including alterations to adjacent road and stormwater systems". TAMS have "no current plans to construct this link".

Re traffic calming, TAMS reported that, taking into account the revised traffic volumes, Roads ACT checked the potential ranking of Railway Street, using a Traffic Warrants System (TWS) to identify the need for and to prioritise traffic management measures in residential areas. The TWS assessment moved Railway Street up the ranking, but it will "still be ranked outside the top streets in terms of priority for traffic management measures".

The OEPA is pursuing the matter, aiming to persuade the authorities to at least provide some space along Railway Street for pedestrians and bicycles.

It will not be easy. For example, while the draft Master Plan acknowledges that, "there are community concerns about traffic and safety issues regarding Railway Street" (p.16), it comes to the paltry conclusion that:

should development and vehicle movements increase substantially, there may be merit in investigating options to provide better pedestrian connections and calm traffic.

The current consultation opportunity provides a chance to have your say about what you think should happen to Railway Street, in particular, and Oaks Estate traffic issues in general.

CHRISTMAS BELLS PLANTED IN AUTUMN

On Sunday 18 May about 30 people, local residents and the 1st Oaks Estate scout troop, planted a hundred Christmas Bells (Correas) which had been given to the community as part of the centenary of Canberra celebrations.

The shrubs were mainly planted in the grounds of the Community Hall. We look forward to seeing them flourish in years to come. A few seedlings were also planted in Gillespie Park. The soil in parts of the park is poor – basically road-base – so we'll wait to see whether the seedlings survive there.

Thanks also to Oaks Estate scouts for cooking a fine barbecue following the planting work.

MEETING WITH SENATOR KATE LUNDY

About a dozen Oaks Estate residents joined Senator Lundy on Thursday evening, 8 May, at the Community Hall, to better acquaint her with issues that affect Oaks Estate and discuss how she could further lend her support to our community.

The meeting talked about the proposed community resilience project submission to ACT Government Community Services – a result of collaboration between OEPA and Southside Community Services (submission update below).

ACT Community Recovery Support Services is interested in learning what Oaks Estate needs to help prepare community response and resources in the event of a natural disaster.

Conversation about the project proposal highlighted other matters that should be addressed in Oaks Estate, possibly by the proposed resilience project. These include:

- emergency access to the river track,
- sustainable water supplies (harvesting and storage of stormwater) - on site collection and stores of stormwater for use by emergency services, and
- bio-hazards - sewage contamination from the Oaks Estate pump (at end of Hill Street) during flooding.

Senator Lundy also undertook to encourage a meeting between Rail Corp property managers John Holland and OEPA Oaks Estate Progress Association about the use of the land that has been recently rezoned on Railway Street.

OAKS ESTATE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT PROPOSAL UPDATE

The Oaks Estate community resilience project proposal has passed the first round cut. On behalf of the Oaks Estate community, Southside Community Services was asked to submit a tender with an upgraded proposal to the second round. Senator Lundy will follow progress of the tender.

The new tender proposal is for a Community Development worker to be employed for 12

months full time. Nine months would be spent with the community developing plans and strategies to deal with river corridor and cross-border issues, flooding and grass fire. A further 3 months would be spent co-ordinating a desk top test of the strategy, followed by a real test involving emergency services. This would lead to further submissions for funding equipment etc, identified in the planning and testing process.

OEPA in association with COGS and St Vincent de Paul submitted a Community Support and Infrastructure Grant Application in August 2013. Unfortunately that application was unsuccessful.

COMMUNITY GARDEN

There are still a number of vacant allotments which are available to people who wish to join the Canberra Organic Growers Society.

Please contact the Canberra Organic Growers Society – website: www.cogs.asn.au; email: info@cogs.asn.au, or the OEPA at oeпа@hotmail.com.au.

PLATYPUS WATCH

Oaks Estate is part of the Australian Platypus Conservancy's official Platypus and Water Rat count.

The most likely time to see a platypus in the river is between July and December, an hour or two either side of sunrise and sunset.

There have been no new sightings of platypus this year. However, there was a possible sighting of a water rat at the junction a few weeks ago. Please let us know if you see either a platypus or a water rat during one of your ramblings along the river. Contact OEPA on the Oaks Estate website www.oaksestateact.org or on oeпа@hotmail.com.au.

The draft Master Plan refers to key actions proposed by the Molonglo River Rescue Action Plan:

- “management of stormwater from urban development to protect waterways and biodiversity, e.g. wetlands to slow and filter stormwater and also to provide habitat for birds and frogs. These measures could become part of green space along the river corridor
- staged removal of woody weeds and revegetation with appropriate native species
- establish monitoring sites on the river on this reach of the river, and
- provision of recreation activities along river corridor“.

INNER SOUTH CANBERRA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Two delegates from the OEPA committee represent Oaks Estate on the Inner South Canberra Community Council (ISCCC). It is through those seats on the Council that Oaks Estate has established closer links with other resident groups of inner south Canberra.

OEPA once again thanks the ISCCC for their support of the Oaks Estate community in communicating concerns – over planning, community development, heritage and the environment – to the broader ACT community.

The ISCCC is a voluntary, not-for-profit, community-based association. Member suburbs to date include Barton, Deakin, Griffith, Kingston, Narrabundah, Oaks Estate, Red Hill, The Causeway and Yarralumla.

Established in 2011, the ISCCC was formed to complement and assist, rather than duplicate or supplant, the role of those associations.

The objects of the ISCCC are to:

- # protect & enhance the amenity and environmental community well-being of Inner South Canberra residents and the broader community;
- # promote and represent Inner South Canberra residents in respect of the above;
- # promote communication and coordination among residents and local community groups;
- # contribute to the planning of Inner South Canberra, consistent with the above objectives; and
- # assist in ensuring all groups, especially the more vulnerable, are adequately represented.

OEPA COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2013-2014

President: Karen Williams

Treasurer: Alex Saeck

Secretary: Ewan Maidment

General Committee Members:

Dan Heldon

Judith Saeck

Michael Starling

Public Officer: Ewan Maidment

OAKS ESTATE WEBSITE

OEPA website: www.oaksestateact.org
Web Master: Terry Williams.

ACT Government, Environment and Sustainable Development Directorate (ESDD), website for Oaks Estate master planning: http://www.actpla.act.gov.au/topics/significant_projects/planning_studies/oaks_estate_master_plan/