

# ENVIRONMENTALLY SPEAKING 12

Winter 2007 Randwick South Ward Enviro News from Botany Bay and Catchment Alliance [www.botanybay.info](http://www.botanybay.info)

**Protecting environment = Protecting people**



## **SOCIAL CHANGE NOT CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **KOOLOORA VACATION CARE CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE DAY**

When Premier Iemma made an announcement recently (31/5/07) to put a higher percentage of freight on rail he stated that:

*"Most of this freight is going from the Port to Western Sydney – **everything from computer games to paint to gourmet foods** - so if we don't act now to increase rail freight movements, we will see more heavy trucks on our roads and more congestion"*

Computer games, paint and gourmet food...how ironic! Most of the profits on **paint** sold in Australia goes to Orica shareholders. Our fresh food producing areas in Western Sydney are being converted to warehouses stocking goods such as **gourmet foods**. Our children

are losing open spaces – in Botany Bay the only jetty on the north along with Botany Beach – and they are intended to consume **computer games** as a substitute. What a depressing outlook! What depressing values! Well in this context all I can say is **THREE CHEERS FOR THE KOOLOORA KIDS**.

July 4 was a long day of walking around the windswept La Perouse peninsular but the 23 boys and girls from vacation care took it all in their stride. They walked and they played and they talked. There was no need for computer games because they had each other, they had the open spaces and they had their imaginations. Little Congwong Beach, so often appropriated as an Adults Only area, came alive with the sound of children. They used the materials that had been washed up onto the beach from recent storms. They worked cooperatively to make a shelter from large, heavy planks of wood. Sandcastles were constructed using other flotsam as molds. A dam was made on the little stream that runs down the northern slopes of the beach.

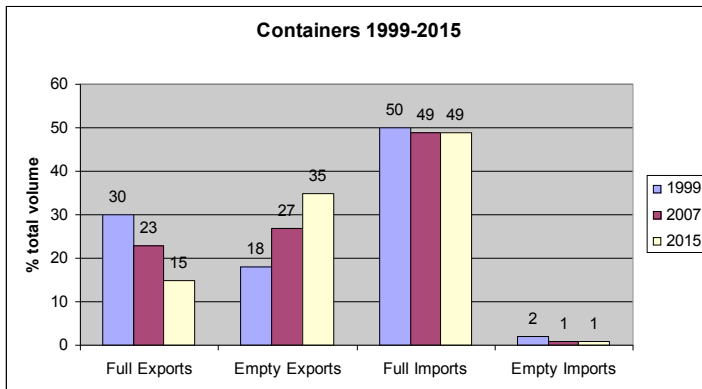
This Independence Day walk began with a talk about the Happy Valley Depression Camp and ended at Bicentennial Park in Yarra Bay. Along the way there were plants and animals to see and our history and cultures to discuss. A simple packed lunch was eaten on the verandah at Laperouse Museum – no paint, no gourmet foods, and no computer games. More days like these would see healthier children and a healthier planet.

A round of applause for the Kooloora Vacation Care supervisors and to Little Bay Scouting leader, Ethel and president, Michelle, for making magic happen.

## AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

MONTY PYTHON? YES MINISTER? .....this one belongs with the comedy hour.....

Sydney is the EMPTIES Capital of Australia. In 1999 empty containers comprised 18% of our total exports. In 2007 that figure had risen to 27% and by 2015 it will be around 35%. In the latest report from the Sea Freight Council released last month (<http://www.seafreightnsw.com.au/files/PTXL7J6WIE/SC%20SIS%20Report%20Final%20Part%201.pdf>) the authors suggest that by 2015 Sydney will see container trade hit 3 million. This is around double the current figures. At this point over 1 million of those containers will be EMPTY EXPORTS. At 35% of the total trade that means that the Sydney Ports expansion is about building a third terminal DEDICATED TO EXPORTING EMPTY CONTAINERS. That's right, the NSW Government will spend \$BILLIONS in constructing a container terminal and allied road and rail infrastructure to support the movement of empty containers. Not only are taxpayers throughout NSW being asked to support this madness but in its submission to the IPART [Review of the Interface between the Land Transport Industries and the Stevedores at Port Botany](#),



RailCorp suggests that the taxpayers of Australia be asked to put up the necessary \$ for rail infrastructure: ***“that if an infrastructure bottleneck is to be avoided the required capital investment in the rail infrastructure to Port Botany can not be left to normal commercial drivers and is a prime***

***candidate for AusLink funding.”*** Local people who are losing amenity from Botany Bay and coping the pollution and congestion have asked for the expansion to go elsewhere. Community representatives from the Hunter have asked for an expansion in Newcastle. Auslink money should go to visionary projects which support regional development in areas of need.

## BLAST FROM THE PAST

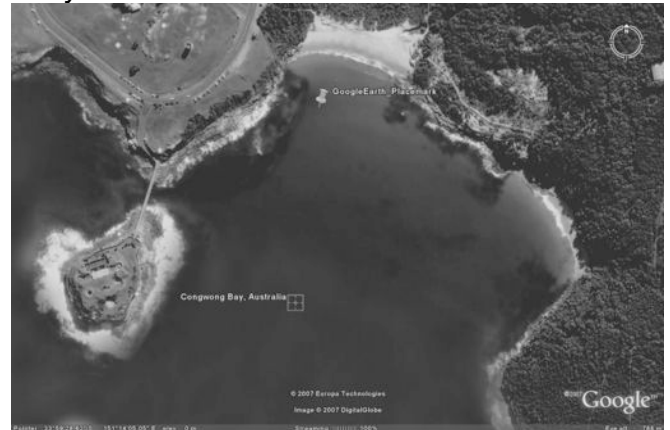


6000 years ago, Botany Bay extended right up almost to the gates of Centennial Park. **Dugong** bones have been found in the alternating layers of marine and terrestrial sediments.

## CLEAN BEACH CHALLENGE

Kooloora is one of the many sponsors of the Congwong Bay Clean Beach Challenge Entry. In the run-up to the judging in September we will be holding a series of clean-ups. If you are interested in getting involved please contact [chairperson@botanybay.info](mailto:chairperson@botanybay.info). Congwong Bay is significant for many reasons, not least of which relates to the Cook diary entry of 6/5/1770:

*“.....I found very little fresh water we anchored near the south shore about a Mile within the entrance for the conveniency of sailing with a Southerly wind and the getting of fresh water but I afterwards found a very fine stream of fresh water on the north shore in the first sandy cove within the Island before which a Ship might lay almost land lock'd and wood for fuel may be got every where.....”*



Bare Island and Congwong Bay

## WEALTHY SUBURBS THE WORST POLLUTERS

**High density and big incomes produce the biggest ecological footprints and the majority of pollution is created by the production and transportation of the products we buy.**

A new report has found Australia's wealthiest inner-city suburbs are producing double the greenhouse pollution of less affluent areas. Extensive studies show that households around Sydney Harbour and on the Brisbane River are the biggest greenhouse polluters in the country. The lowest-polluting homes are in Tasmania.

The report also found electricity use in the home accounts for just 15 per cent of the greenhouse pollution, the majority of pollution is created by the production and transportation of the products we buy. (Full details are available from the Centre for Integrated Sustainability Analysis [www.isa.org.usyd.edu.au](http://www.isa.org.usyd.edu.au))

## IT'S THE ECONOMY, STUPID!\*



Dr Michael Keating, ex Head of the Australian Public Service and unabashed economic rationalist is the Chairman of the IPART Inquiry into the Port Botany rail/road interface. As we all know, the supply chain is not a closed market. When trucks avail themselves of 'free' parking in our streets and stevedores keep us awake at night with their activities they are optimizing profits for themselves, and perhaps other members along the supply chain, at the expense of the health and wellbeing of the local community – residents and small businesses alike. If rail gets more \$ in 'free' impacts than trucks, for example, then the market is distorted in favour of rail. Unfortunately, Dr Keating takes a very restricted interpretation of free market economics. At the IPART forum on Wednesday there was no community representation at the 'Round' Table. Mr Peter Fitzgerald, the General Manager of Botany Council, commented on this before proceedings got underway:

*MR FITZGERALD: Mr Chairman, before you do, my name is Peter Fitzgerald, the general manager of*

*Botany Bay City Council. You have no participants from the community at all. We have a vested and vital interest in relation to this. The operation of the port has been a nightmare. The expansion of the port is a nightmare and it will not get any better. I am staggered to think that you can sit around here and have a roundtable to the exclusion of the community.*

*THE CHAIRMAN: I note your remarks. Let me say that if the community has something to say about the land/sea interface in terms of the efficiency of the operation that is consistent with our terms of reference, then we would take notice of that through their submissions. You will also have an opportunity to speak later on after we have dealt with the topics through our proceedings as I outlined, thank you.*

At the end of the formal proceedings there was time for only 2 questions. The first of these came from Mr Chambers of the Victorian Transport Association and he presented a statement which finished with:

*We're highly frustrated by the actions of our colleagues in New South Wales. We like you very much, Chairman, but we don't necessarily want to be here for a whole day in Sydney. We think all these things could be discussed in an open fashion between the stevedores and the carriers and as Phil said, it is a national issue; it is not just a New South Wales issue. Thank you.*

The second question came from Mr Blaschke of No Port Enfield and he, like Mr Fitzgerald, asked whether community would be considered. The chairman's reply:

*Thank you. Unless there is anyone else with a burning desire to say something, I might try and bring the proceedings to a close. Just in response to the last **intervention**, I need to reiterate that we are confined to our terms of reference in what we will be reporting on. I would observe that as to issues engaging the broader community, there are planning processes where they are considered. Indeed, I recall the observation that **they** take considerable time in the planning processes, in the engagement, so I don't think we can say that they're forgotten, but they're addressed in a different forum.*

(Submissions, terms of reference, issues paper and transcript of forum are available at [www.ipart.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au))

## GREENCARS

see [www.greencarcongress.com](http://www.greencarcongress.com) and for the local Electric Car association (established in the 1970s) see [www.sydneyaeva.googlepages.com](http://www.sydneyaeva.googlepages.com)

---

\* A statement made famous during the 1992 Clinton presidential campaign during a time when there was less understanding of how the environment underpins the economy.

## BOTANY BAY TRAIL

Randwick Council recently received \$112,500 from the Department of Planning to construct/interpret a section of the Botany Bay Trail around Yarra Bay. The Trail has been called the Kaimia Way. Further details at <http://kaimiaway.org.au>. In future editions we will be featuring progress on the Botany Bay Trail and the Eastern Beaches Walkway which includes the Kooloora – Prince Henry section.



## BOTANY BAY CABLE PROJECT

This project has impacts for the biodiversity of Botany and residents living near the route of the 2X132KV cables in La Perouse, Chifley, Little Bay, Phillip Bay and for La Perouse Primary School. Submissions to the Department of Planning have called for a full study of the cumulative impacts of Electro-magnetic fields from installations already around Botany Bay (eg Port, Airport) in addition to the impacts this project will have. These submissions are at [www.botanybay.info](http://www.botanybay.info)

## HOW EFFECTIVE IS OUR DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE AT PROTECTING NATIVE SPECIES

Anyone who has visited Cape Banks will see a very large Helicopter Base. A smaller version of this base operated at Prince Henry – when Prince Henry was a hospital. The new base was intended to replace the Prince Henry service. That service was run under contract to the Department of Health. But the helicopter service now under contract to the Department of Health operates out of Bankstown and is located with an emergency fixed wing service also at Bankstown. The Cape Banks base no longer has a contract with the Department of Health. A Review of Emergency Rotary Wing Services conducted before the Cape Banks base was built recommended that fixed and rotary wing services should be placed together and questioned the proposal to build a base at Cape Banks.

Despite this, the base at Cape Banks went ahead on land that was excised, under an Act of Parliament, from the National Park in 2004 specifically to undertake the services that the Bankstown operators are now conducting.

**Questions have been raised at various times on behalf of concerned community members about the environmental impacts that the construction and operation of the base would have on the very significant environment of Cape Banks. The following from Hansard is an example of the responses:** Question asked on 22 September 2005 (session 531) and published in Questions & Answers Paper No. 118. Answer received on 18 October 2005 and published in Questions & Answers Paper No. 122.

**Mr Cohen to the Special Minister of State, Minister for Commerce, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services, Assistant Treasurer, and Vice-President of the Executive Council representing the Attorney General, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for the Arts—**

1. *Were the environmental impacts, especially with regard to animals (including raptors, whales, rare and threatened species of bats in the military tunnels) considered by the Department of Environment and Conservation prior to the granting of the go-ahead for the helicopter base in Botany Bay National Park?*
2. *If not, why not?*
3. *If so, how?*

**Answer—**

*I have been advised by the Attorney General, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for the Arts the answer to the question is:*

*The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) is not the consent authority for the helibase proposal at Cape Banks, La Perouse. The development is the responsibility of Landcom.*

*In March 2005, Landcom prepared a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) in accordance with Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. The DEC and other key stakeholders were consulted during the preparation of the REF.*

*Key issues discussed with DEC included potential flora and fauna-related impacts, visual and noise concerns, safety and traffic issues and Aboriginal and European heritage considerations. Avifauna, marine mammals and the bent-wing bat colony at Henry Head were among the fauna issues raised.*

*Following a peer review of the REF, Landcom advised DEC that it intended to proceed with the project.*

---

For further information on any of these items contact: Lynda Newnam, [chairperson@botanybay.info](mailto:chairperson@botanybay.info) July, 2007.