



ROBERTSON NEWSLETTER

From the Editor *Brent Miller*

I am pleased to introduce myself as the new editor of the Robertson Newsletter. As a recent arrival to our village, I appreciate already the strong community feeling that exists in Robertson. I hope that this newsletter can continue to be a voice for our local community.

To that end I would like to thank the various organisations that assist its publication. Thanks must go to Jill Wall, for her previous efforts in producing the newsletter; to the many businesses that advertise, allowing us to provide you with this voice; and the many community groups who provide details of coming events and community concerns.

An issue of major concern to the residents of our village has been the recent notification of inspection of our septic systems. I hope you find the articles provided within to be informative.

Robertson Pumped Up Over Pump Outs. *By Nicki Boehme.*

Nearly 100 residents of Robertson attended a meeting at the School of Arts to protest the State Government's new regulations regarding the management and inspection of septic systems.

Council's Health Manager, Paul Curley, explained that all NSW Shires were required to carry out inspections of septic tanks in their areas. Property owners must apply to operate a sewage system at the cost of \$20.

There were strong objections to a clause in the application allowing Council offices to enter properties without notice. Whilst acknowledging that the State Government imposed the new system, it was felt that Council had created unnecessary hardship by requiring new or replacement due to "failure" installations be "pump out" systems with on-going costs of \$56 per fortnight.

The reported aim of the exercise was to prevent pollution of Caalong Creek, which drains into Wingecarribee Dam. Mr. Curley agreed that, up to now, there was no evidence of any such pollution. Mick Wren, President of the Robertson Village Association, made the point that the village was established over 100 years before the dam. Sydney Water, and the State Government, should be held responsible for any dam pollution caused by their placing of the dam beneath the village. Calls have been made for them to fund the immediate sewerage of Robertson to eliminate such risks, and not have them expect residents, or Council, to pay for someone else's mistakes.



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Septic Tax Stinks: Seaton.

From Peta Seaton, M.P. 29 April 1998

The member for Southern Highlands, Peat Seaton, said the Carr Government's decision to make country councils responsible for the inspection of septic tanks will have a massive financial impact on the residents of the Southern Highlands.

"In shifting the cost to Local Government, Mr. Carr is taxing the people of regional NSW for the fact they aren't connected to sewerage systems which should have been provided by the Carr Government."

"The Carr Government has already short changed the bush by cutting back on the country water and sewerage fund by 33% in the last budget."

"Not only is the government refusing to put in sewerage systems, the cost of their band aid remedy is being shifted onto Local Government so it doesn't cost the State Government a cent.....Mr. Carr has passed the buck to the bush once again."

Robertson Village Association.

By Mick Wren, President.

The association was started with the view of being able to represent Robertson residents on a wide range of issues. Robertson by

virtue of its unique position has unique problems. At the moment the main items on our agenda are footpaths and sewerage.

The provision of footpaths from Ranelagh to the village and, most importantly, Caalang Street is important as they provide a means of getting around town and these sections of road are plain dangerous to an extreme.

The issue of sewerage was backed up by a public meeting we held a last month. It was felt that many issues hadn't been thought through on either a state or local level. The reaction of the residents present should have made it clear to Council that there is a lot of public anger at the way sewerage had been handled and that people can be hit hard in the pocket. There must be proper public consultation and it has to be done right.

There would be few who would disagree for the need for our sewerage systems to work properly, after all they are on our land and affect our families directly. The meeting went a long way to addressing important issues.

We would like to thank Councilors Tuddenham and Gair, Mr P. Curley and Ms Mitchie for their attendance. It is not easy for council members to

continued over

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R.V.A. Continued.

attend a public meeting and they showed themselves to be truly concerned in dealing with this in a fair manner.

Septic systems currently in place have been installed with prior council approval. We are concerned with the Council's broad use of the term "failing" in assessing systems. Verbal assurances were given that every attempt would be made to allow fixing of existing systems before replacement of a failing system, with pump outs, would be enforced.

With the sewerage of Robertson promised for 2002, we will be monitoring the situation closely. To spend money installing a new system for a 3 year lifespan cannot be justified, particularly with the high operation costs associated with pump outs.

The Association has not been idle. We have tried to gather public opinion to make sure we are responsive to your needs. Now comes the crunch, we need to be supported. We need people to attend our meetings, every second month.

The council has deferred a decision on pump outs until some future date. We believe this was, in part, due to the public support provided us in last month's meeting. Such

impacts cannot be achieved if there are but a handful of members.

Robertson is unique. It is isolated and a great place to live. We need to maintain those things that make it so, and fix those things that need fixing. It needs an approach that matches the village's uniqueness, it needs an insiders viewpoint, yours.

DISCLAIMER This Newsletter is an independent publication incorporated via the Robertson Village Association. The ideas presented are not necessarily those of the Editor. The statements and opinions expressed in this publication are made in good faith and the Editor, volunteers and contributors do not take any responsibility for those statements and opinions, any inferences that may be drawn from them, or actions or charges which may result from them. The Editor reserves the right not to print any item that is defamatory to any person or organisation, or that is anonymously sent, and to edit any contributions as required.

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Contribution guidelines

Community service announcements, articles and diary submissions are free of charge and appreciated. All items must be submitted by deadline dates and may be modified at the editors discretion (see disclaimer). To avoid extensive editing of your items please limit announcements and diary submissions to a maximum 35 words, and articles to a maximum 350 words. Thank you.

Advertising

A single advertising insertion is \$25. Insertions can be pre-booked a minimum 3 issues in advance for \$20 per insertion. Each insertion is restricted to a maximum 90mm X 55mm. Advertisers are responsible for meeting submission deadlines. All advertising is payable in advance.

Deadlines

The Robertson newsletter is published bi-monthly, in the first week of each printing month. All advertising or article submissions must be provided by:

JANUARY issue: 10 December
MARCH issue: 15 February

Forward to:
Robertson newsletter
5 Vaughan Ave
Robertson NSW 2577
Ph / Fax 02 4885 1466

Diary Nov / Dec '98

**ROBERTSON VILLAGE
ASSOCIATION General Meeting -
7:30pm - Wednesday 18
November - Caalong Street
Community Centre. All are
welcome.**

*THE OLD TIME DANCE at the
school of arts is on its regular
third Friday of the month, 20
November and 18 December.
Note these in your diary!*

*The ROBERTSON MARKET is
again on, as it each second
Sunday of the month. Come and
buy on 8 November and 13
December - just in time for
Christmas.*



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