

Naremburn Matters



March 2016 Vol. 13. No 1

Circ. 3,000

NAG win on St Leonards Central

The Naremburn Action Group (NAG) scored a huge win in January when the community group learned that the Unsolicited Proposal for three supertowers above St. Leonards train station will not be progressed by the State Government.

NAG was formed just over a year ago to fight this proposal and its voice has been heard. Many of its members, who live in or near the Naremburn Conservation Area, signed petitions, attended community meetings, and sent letters and emails or made phone calls to politicians and public servants involved in making the decision. The result demonstrates that people power really does work.

The three reasons given by the Dept of Premier & Cabinet for not proceeding with the St Leonards Central proposal were:

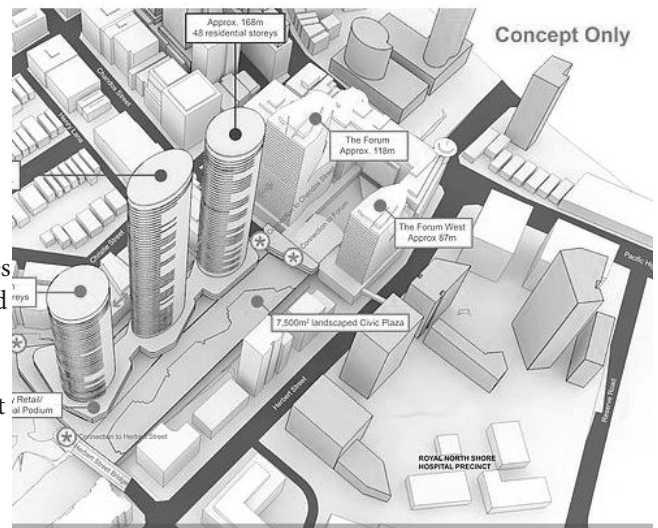
1. The strategic review of the St. Leonards centre will start soon and the framework for the future of St. Leonards will determine future development.
2. The Department of Transport does not know at this stage how the route and depth of the new metro tunnel at Crows Nest/St Leonards will affect its property at St. Leonards.
3. Council amalgamation in the area may change how Willoughby Council proposes to use its property in Chandos Street.

These are all points NAG made in its numerous submissions to local, state and even federal representatives. While residents are pleased to have won this particular battle, the war is not yet won. The developer will no doubt return with another proposal - hopefully next time around it will be a concept that the community can accept. And NAG is now turning its attention to getting its voice heard by the State Government officials responsible for the strategic review of the St Leonards precinct.

At a meeting NAG representatives had recently with our local State member Gladys Berejiklian she was adamant that the Planning Minister would not allow any further ad-hoc development approvals until the St Leonards Review was completed. She said councils had been informed. She is also aware of Lane Cove Council's aggressive approval of high rises in St. Leonards. Lane Cove's approach is why NAG has argued to have St Leonards included in the boundary of the merged North Sydney and Willoughby council.

NAG's three criteria for supporting responsible development are:

- Graduated elevation of building heights in between low-level residential areas and mixed-use towers.
- Open, green spaces for new and existing residents.
- Funding for infrastructure required by an influx of new residents, ie schools, parking, traffic management.



An artist's impression of the proposed St Leonards development / Photo www.stleonardscentral.com.au

If you are interested in joining NAG's mailing list, email naremburnactiongroup@gmail.com

Rose-Anne Manns
on behalf of NAG

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
NAREMBURN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION (NPA)

NAREMBURN
VILLAGE
SHOPS
Photographic
artwork by:
David Waters
7 June 2005





NAREMBURN MATTERS

Naremburn Progress Association.

Founded 1901
Incorporated 2004.
ABN 93 907 169 376

PO Box 393
St Leonards 1590.

www.naremburnprogress.org.au

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Roger Promnitz: 0419 227 986

Treasurer

Carmen Loecherer: 0409 766 470

Committee Members

Helene Kemp Joann Morand

General Meetings

Second Thursday of February, April,
June, August, October and December
Naremburn Community Centre
7 Central Street.
Commencing at 7:30 pm with an Open
Forum.

Naremburn Matters

Editorial Staff

Parry Aliferis

naremburn.matters@naremburnprogress.org.au

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letters and contributions published in
Naremburn Matters do not necessarily
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Typesetters or Printers

President – out and about

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Naremburn Matters. Whilst we have been enjoying the Summer break, much has been happening in and around our Community. I suppose the most influential issue impacting on the Naremburn area has been the success of the Naremburn Action Group on rallying the support of the Community to the Unsolicited Proposal process of development of St Leonards Central. Although this is only round one, this success shows the importance of Community engagement and involvement. We must also thank our local member Gladys Berejiklian for her support for our area.

Another important issue is that of the proposed amalgamation of Willoughby and North Sydney Councils. I am aware that some of our Community did speak at the Information Sessions. I do trust that you have taken the opportunity to “have your say” through the website www.councilboundaryreview.nsw.gov.au. the closing date being the 28th February 2016.

There has been a proposal by Willoughby Council to replace the lights on the netball courts at Bicentennial Reserve. The proposed height is to be 22 metres. This will impact on the residents in Garland Rd and surrounding streets. The residents of this affected area are banding together to try and negotiate with Council to have the towers at a more reasonable height, with minimal impact on residents.

I urge all members of the Naremburn Progress Association to attend the upcoming **Annual General Meeting** on Thursday 14th April. As all positions become vacant at that time we will be electing a new Committee. This provides an opportunity for any of you passionate about your community, wishing to help in the future direction of the Progress Association and have an input in decisions regarding our community to join us. There are three positions for general committee members as well as the designated positions. You would be most welcome to nominate for any of the positions.

Please feel free to contact any of the Executive for further information. If you are not a member of the NPA, then perhaps you may consider joining and having a voice. We will be faced with many challenges, as well as issues that will impact Naremburn. As can be seen by the success of the Naremburn Action Group, community involvement is a very powerful voice!

Regards
Fran

Frances O'Brien
President

Join the NPA and have your say.

Who can join?

- Naremburn residents – 18 years and over;
- Non-resident Naremburn property owners;
- People who run businesses in Naremburn.

\$15 per person per annum/ \$10 Concession per person per annum

New members, please fill out the membership form at:

www.naremburnprogress.org.au

Membership renewals can pay online using your name as reference:

Acc Name: Naremburn Progress Association BSB: 032 297 Acc no: 20 1474

Next Issue: June 2016

Naremburn Matters is a quarterly
publication issued in March, June,
September and December.

June issue deadlines

Ad Booking: Tuesday 3rd May
Ad Artwork: Tuesday 3rd May
Articles: Wednesday 11th May

naremburn.matters@naremburnprogress.org.au

NPA Meeting Dates

Second Thursday every second
month 7:30 pm

14th April (AGM)

9th June

Naremburn Community Centre

7 Central Street

Letters to the Editor & Articles

Articles, comments or suggestions should be
addressed to:

The Editor,

naremburn.matters@naremburnprogress.org.au

or mail to:

PO Box 393

St Leonards NSW 1590

We do not publish anonymous letters.

Please include your email address or phone number as we
may need to edit items to fit the space available.

Naremburn Library News

Have you heard of “Learn@the Library”?

At Chatswood Library, you can register for Learn @ the Library tutorials on Email Basics, Starting Facebook, Introduction to Family History, Tracing the History of your House, as well as eBooks and Databases. These tutorials are popular, so please book in promptly at <http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/library> or phone Chatswood Library on 9777 7900.

Small group sessions (maximum 7 people) on a variety of topics are offered at Chatswood through Learn @ the Library workshops. Each session lasts for about 90 minutes. A good way to stay informed is to subscribe to the Library eNewsletter which will let you know about events of the month.

Also at Chatswood Library are drop-in sessions to help you learn about ebooks and emagazines. Visit Chatswood Library on Mondays between 11am and 12 noon or Wednesdays between 12 noon and 1pm, you will find the Library eSkills Bar. Please take along your smartphone, tablet or eReading device to get help accessing the Library's eBooks and Emagazines. There are over 3,500 eBooks and audiobooks available as well as over 200 eMagazine titles, all for free!

Speaking of future events, the Willoughby Seniors Festival will run throughout April. The Library will be running free workshops and behind the scenes tours of Chatswood Library. The Heritage Festival is also on in April and the history of the Lane Cove River will feature. This river played a vital part in our area's farming and industry. Look out for a display of wonderful historical photos and information in the foyer of the Council building in Victor St Chatswood.

I look forward to seeing you at Naremburn Library where we have a great selection of adult and junior books and DVDs, fantastic magazines and free WIFI – remember we are open on Monday and Thursday afternoons, and Saturday mornings.

Diana Revington
Naremburn Branch Librarian



Peter Chauncy and his team at McGrath Crows Nest

Welcome to the first Naremburn Matters newsletter for 2016. Over the past six months we have achieved some amazing results including new suburb records for Naremburn, Crows Nest and Artarmon. 5 Dargan Street set the Naremburn record at \$3,104,000, 104 Hayberry Street Crows Nest at \$3,050,000 and 21 Cameron Avenue Artarmon at \$3,300,000.

We also set, and then broke, 16 street records in Naremburn in 2015 which helped see our median house price grow from \$1,587,500 to \$1,807,500.

We have also achieved some great results this year already, which include the sale of 15/3 Talus Street for \$950,000 and 69B Park Road, which sold for \$1.8 million and became the second highest price ever for a semi-attached in the suburb.

Looking ahead, I'm excited about the opportunities that 2016 will bring to home sellers and we'll see some great results for our vendors. I believe the market will level out a bit as prices become more consistent. There had to be a correction after the unsustainable growth over the past 12 months. It's not likely that local houses prices will drop, there will just be a slower rate of growth. Some of the more volatile western suburbs may see lower prices, but the lower north shore consistently outperforms the Sydney average as demand is always strong and housing stock is very limited.

In February the Reserve Bank of Australia left interest rates on hold and kept the official cash rate at two per cent for the ninth consecutive month. The softer housing market could push the RBA to cut rates in the future but, at least for the next few months, we are expecting this to remain fairly constant as we see a settling and correction in the marketplace.

I hope this has been informative and helpful with your decision making. Obviously if you are thinking of selling, you should get in touch with us so we can give you accurate picture of what your property is worth and advise you on the best strategy to maximise the result. In the 2016 market, an experienced sales agent with a solid understanding of the local market can make the difference between a good result and a great one. Call us to access the knowledge, skill and experience that has brought record results to home sellers in the area.

Peter Chauncy 0402 036 489
McGrath
1A/29 Holtermann Street
CROWS NEST
02 8115 0401

Naremburn Progress Association AGM Notice

As tabled at the December meeting of the NPA, our AGM (Annual General Meeting) will now be held on Thursday 14th April 2016 from 7.30pm. All residents and members are welcome to join.

Willoughby Council's Heritage Photo Competition

Willoughby Council's Annual Heritage Photo Competition will run through to 25th March: Submission of entries: Monday, 22 February to Friday, 25 March 2016. Exhibition of shortlisted entries: Monday, 11 April – Wednesday, 27 April 2016.

Go to : <http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/whats-on/events/heritage-photo-competition-%E2%80%93-discoverwilloughby/> for details on how to enter.

Local Contributors wanted

Naremburn Matters is permanently seeking regular written contributions from interested community members. If you have a flair for writing or even just an interest in a local issue, we welcome all members of the community from students to grandparents to submit your story. What do you have to lose? Get in touch at: naremburn.matters@naremburnprogress.org.au

Promote your business in Naremburn Matters

As a free community based publication, Naremburn Matters needs support from local businesses to cover its' production. If you are a local business looking for affordable local advertising, please get in touch with us for rates.

Annual wrap up from our local preschool

2016 at Willoughby Community Preschool has commenced with enthusiasm welcoming returning children and 51 new children into our Preschool community. Our Welcome Drinks evening was well attended and provided a great opportunity to catch up, meet new parents and hear about what's happening at Preschool this year.

We are looking forward to several celebrations this term including class morning teas for parents, our annual Easter BBQ with entertainment and many fun activities for our children.

We will celebrate national Harmony Day on 21st March and welcome grandparents to visit the Preschool and enjoy time with their grandchildren. Our parents will provide a delicious morning tea for them to enjoy with their peers.

We recently held our Class of 2015 Reunion at Bales Park. It was a great afternoon for children, parents and staff to reconnect and hear about their transitions into various schools.

We are continuing on from the work undertaken last year to improve our outdoor play space.

Peter Chauncy, McGrath Crows Nest, generously donated an outdoor bench seat, sandstone wombat sculpture and the refurbishment of the storage shed. The new shelving was installed by our parents at a working bee.

Late last year, in order to learn more about the native blue banded bees we see on the salvia in our Preschool garden, educators attended a presentation by Liz Powell, WCC Habitat Officer and Simon Brown, WCC Wildlife Officer on the world of native bees and good bugs that are suitable for Early Childhood Centres.

Shortly with the help of our parents, the Willoughby Mens Shed and continued support from Liz we will undertake a project to make habitats for our diversity of solitary native bees. We are looking forward to perhaps extending this project to include keeping stingless bee hives for pollination and sugarbag honey.



Dianne Minnett
Director Willoughby Community Preschool

neighbour day

Host a Neighbour Day Event during the month of April

Register now and be in the chance to win a Harris Farm gift voucher valued at \$100!

The community you want starts at your front door™

neighbourday.org

@NeighbourDay
/neighbourday
/neighbourday

To register your event, please phone 9777 1000 or visit www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Sydney Metro Update - NPA meeting guest speakers



Due to the long term nature of this project and direct impact on local resident commuters, we will summarise, local updates from this project in each edition.

The Sydney Metro City and Southwest team have been busy with a number of aspects of the latest phase of this immense project, but still found time to provide a couple of Guest Speakers to the last Naremburn Progress Association General Meeting held on Thursday 11th February, 2016. The main speaker was Sue Haertsch from the Planning team, with able assistance from Robin Baird of the Stakeholder and Community Liaison group of Sydney Metro and with a group of over 40 people attending the presentation. With both interest and questions at a high level, the discussion continued for over an hour in a relaxed atmosphere.



An artist's impression of the Crows Nest station.
Photo courtesy of Transport for NSW website

Because the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is still being prepared and will not be available until mid-2016, some questions were not able to be answered, but these questions were noted so they could be addressed within the EIS.

One of the news items for the night was that the new Waterloo station had been confirmed as being part of the construction plan – a surprise for many given the apparent groundswell level of support for the alternative location, Sydney University. The Waterloo station will be located south of Raglan Street, between Botany Road and Cope Street., and with a platform depth approx. 24 metres below ground level. Another question requiring more clarification was the earlier decision not to proceed with the establishment of a new underground station within the Artarmon Industrial Area (AIA). It was alleged that local businesses did not support the AIA alternative, something which the attendees found rather difficult to understand. More information is being sought on this matter.

The speakers went on to describe in general terms the features of the seven new stations, being located at Crows Nest, Victoria Cross (North Sydney), Barangaroo, Martin Place, Pitt Street, Central Station (new underground platforms) and now Waterloo. Of great interest amongst the attendees was the concept of deleting any published train timetables, with trains just arriving every two minutes in peak periods – and all this with driverless trains! There is no doubting that technology levels will be of the highest order under the new arrangements.

Whilst the community is generally supportive of the overall Sydney Metro project, it still needs close liaison and two-way communication on any potentially contentious decisions by the Sydney Metro planning teams, in order that satisfactory and mutually-agreed final arrangements can be provided as early as possible. One such current issue is the proposal by Sydney Metro to lay new underground power cables for the trains under Hampden Rd, adjacent to the Artarmon shops. The potential disruption to commercial activities in that area would be substantial, so many people in the area are supporting another option which would see the cables being laid on current railway property.

Additional general information on the Sydney Metro project can be found at <http://www.sydneymetro.info> , whilst information specifically about the Waterloo site can be found at www.centraltoeveleigh.com.au .

Roger Promnitz
Secretary



Cherishing Childhood.
Educating for Excellence.



Glenaeon
Rudolf Steiner School

Glenaeon is an independent, co-educational school catering for children from Preschool through to Year 12.

Scholarships Glenaeon Rudolf Steiner School now offers scholarships for new and existing students at our Middle and Senior Schools. Visit our website for more information at: www.glenaeon.nsw.edu.au/enrolments/scholarships

School Tours We are also holding school tours:

Middle Cove	Castlecrag
Tue 16 February	Thurs 18 February
Tue 8 March	Thurs 10 March
Fri 1 April (Open Day)	Preschool (at Willoughby)
	Friday 4 March

To book a tour or for more enrolment information, visit our website at www.glenaeon.nsw.edu.au/enrolments/school-tours or contact our Enrolments Registrar on 02 9932 2325.

HELP

We need a new editor!

This is a voluntary position assisting with the production of 4 editions per year. The role involves editorial tasks and liaison with current and future advertisers. If you're interested please contact the Vice President Viviane Leveaux.

✉ viviane.leveaux@bigpond.com
☎ 02 9437 6416.

Road Safety Events from Willoughby Council

Supervising Learner Drivers

22 March 6.30-8.30pm

If you are, or will soon be, supervising a learner driver then this workshop will help make the process as smooth as possible.

Dougherty Centre

7 Victor St, Chatswood

Child Car Seat Checks

22 March 8am-1pm

Get children's car seats checked for correct installation. A free service but not available to Family Daycarers
Chatswood Youth Centre Carpark

Drive Safer – Drive Longer

7 and 14 April 9.30-11.30am

A two-session workshop for anyone over 60. Update on road rules and new vehicle technologies, find out how to avoid the most common crashes and when to consider not driving any more.

Council Chambers, Level 6, 31

Victor St, Chatswood.

You're the Driver

Day sessions:

Wed 20 & 27 April 9.30-11.30am

Evening sessions:

19 & 26 April 6.30-8.30pm

This is a two session workshop for all drivers from L & P platets to anyone who has had a licence for more than 10 years or got their first license overseas. Workshop covers a road rules update, crash avoidance and minimising risk of parking and other fines. Choose from day or evening sessions.

Day sessions:

Council Chambers,
Level 6, 31 Victor St, Chatswood.

Evening sessions:

Dougherty Centre
7 Victor St, Chatswood

Street Savvy Seniors

21 April 9.30-11.30am

In conjunction with the NSW Police find out about keeping yourself safe on the road, crossing the street, on public transport and as a passenger. Essential information and surprisingly informative.

Council Chambers,
Level 6, 31 Victor St, Chatswood.



Update from Cr Coppock

Parking at Naremburn Shops

Further consultation is taking place concerning parking times at Naremburn shops. A report was done in response to a Council motion but a further Council motion to make some spots 15 minute parking spots has had the Council Officers seek additional information from the shop operators.

It seems to me that a varied time regime for parking spots in Rohan St might assist all shopkeepers with customers with different needs. In the early AM period a shorter period like 15 minutes and then a longer periods for those seeing more time over coffee and lunch. Feedback from Naremburn residents would be good

Possible merger of North Sydney Council and Willoughby City Council

Readers are no doubt aware of the current NSW Government agenda. A report from various nominated Delegates on boundary changes is underway across the State. On 4 February local hearings were held during the day and evening.

One view was very apparent, North Sydney Councillors and North Sydney residents presenting to the Delegate want nothing to do with Willoughby City Council. Our rates are too high, we had too much debt which they would have to pay off, we do not have enough garbage collections, Council does not mow our verges, we do not value heritage, we have twice as much area within the Municipality as they have, and 'so forth and so on'.

Residents from Naremburn who attended the session I was at commented on how negative North Sydney residents and Councillors were and that maybe a merger was not a good idea after all. It will be interesting to see how the Delegate in his report balances out what was in the verbal addresses and what will be submitted in written form to him on or before 28 February.

In my address to the Delegate I made three points. If the State Government wants to merge Councils, it will occur. Issues such as rate differences, garbage collections and every other difference can be settled. Willoughby City Council had values, which included heritage, conservation areas, sporting facilities and all the things that it appeared North Sydney focused speakers seemed to suggest did not exist. In other words both Councils had a great lot in common. So the challenge was to ensure all our communities whether Naremburn or Kirribilli or wherever had their interests looked to in the event of a merger. As local government was smaller than local, it was about maintaining and supporting communities. That was the challenge for the Delegate in his report and for all of engaged in the current process.

St Leonards Central Project.

The State Government has announced that the development proposal or concept known as St Leonard Central will not be given State significant status. The current planning inquiry for the St Leonards area had to be completed was one of the reasons provided. This suggests that once this study is finalised and release another proposal for the site will eventuate.

Cr Stuart Coppock

Stuart.Coppock@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Community garden - Autumn 2016

Naremburn Community Gardens have expanded into Station St. The beds have just been built and by the time this article comes out we will have filled them and started planting. Everyone is welcome to come and plant, tend, harvest.

The official opening will be in mid-March. The date and time will be posted at the garden, in some of the shops, on the Community notice Boards, the Council webpage and on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/BongalongStCommunityGarden>

We would really like the surrounding community to get active and join in. This garden has been started by two locals to Station St with the help of the existing gardeners from the garden at the bottom of Bongalong St, so we could really use a few extra pairs of hands.

If you would like more information on the garden or would like to be involved, please contact us via the Facebook page or drop by the garden when you see people working there.

Sue Howes
Naremburn Resident

HEALTH MATTERS – Influenza

Influenza (flu) is a highly infectious viral infection which can cause severe illness and life-threatening complications. An annual flu vaccine remains the best protection against influenza.

The composition of the vaccine changes every year. The viruses that are most likely to cause flu are identified in advance and vaccines are made to match them as closely as possible. In 2016 the vaccines which will be available under the National Immunisation Program will cover four flu strains (quadrivalent) instead of the usual three (trivalent), including two influenza B strains. This is because during the 2015 winter flu season most cases were thought to have been caused by circulating B strains which were not fully covered by the vaccine. Hence the 2016 flu vaccine will cover the California and Hong Kong A strains and the Brisbane and Phuket B strains.

The 2016 flu vaccine will be available for free to pregnant women, people over 65, indigenous Australians in certain age brackets and those with specific medical conditions (diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease etc.).

The flu vaccine is strongly recommended for pregnant women as they are at increased risk of complications. There is growing evidence that influenza vaccination of pregnant women protects infants against influenza for the first six months after birth. Vaccination is safe at any stage of pregnancy.

As for children, those aged six months to less than ten years who receive the flu vaccine for the first time are recommended to receive two doses of vaccine at least four weeks apart in the first year and a single dose in subsequent years. Flu vaccines cause antibodies to develop in the body about 2 weeks after vaccination.

Common side effects of the flu vaccine include redness and swelling at the injection site, fever and muscle aches. These can be managed with simple analgesics and rest. The viruses in the flu vaccine are killed (inactivated) so a person cannot get the flu from the flu shot. The flu vaccine provides protection against the common strains of flu but there is still a possibility that a person could get the flu even if vaccinated....this will generally be caused by a different strain. The vaccine also provides cross-protection ie, it can provide some protection against different but related influenza strains.

The 2016 flu vaccine should be available from late February or early March 2016.



Dr Raffi Sahagian
Willoughby Medical Practice

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I wish to pay my respects and honour the career of one who has played a vital role in our community.

Unreliable to some, a death-trap on wheels to others but overall an unheralded legend providing comfort (figuratively) and support (literally) to 43 seated and 15 standing persons. Yes my friends I am writing about the recently departed 273.

I'm not quite certain when the 273 first graced our roads. My guess is that it predates the Australian Brush Turkey. A lengthy google search unsurprisingly failed to support this. I did learn however that there is a 273 bus service in Nunawading and Nunawading is a hilarious sounding name so there's that.

Born and bred in Naremburn I caught the 273 service to primary school, to secondary school, later university, and then to work on those days when I needed the packed 272's and full M40's to get me to the office before next week. So it is with a tear in my eye and a lump in my throat that I suggest we take 12 seconds to reflect on our time shared on the ol' 273.

I know some of you are thinking, "Who cares about a bus Patrick. I own two cars. And a boat." And "the 343 replaced the 273 so why is this guy harping on and taking up valuable ad space". To these negative nellys I answer, the 273 will never simply be replaced. The 343 and 273 share many differences including two different numbers. Plus one goes to Kingsford (yay?). And why do you own a boat just to leave it in a suburban street? That is space that could otherwise be used by random people to park before they travel to work from the front of our homes. Also, look up a charity. I digress...

Even on those rainy days when Sydney turned to chaos you could rely on the 273 to get you to whatever was never happening in North Sydney. Water dripping from the roof, the deafening sound of an unserviced engine, graffiti colourfully informing me that **** has a **** and **** ****, delightful fellow passengers enjoying two seats, and the aroma of 2-day old vomit. Happy times.

Life in Naremburn will not be the same without the 273 gliding by. I am left standing on top of the Naremburn Bridge reminiscing about those simpler days, Adele in my ears, me pondering a Nunawading vacation (I hear the weather's unremarkable) while reciting the 273's favourite poem. One which I'll kindly share:

"Metro buses are red, superior buses are blue. Stand up for your elders, don't push in the queue." – L90
You're my boy Blue!

Patrick Sarkis
Naremburn Resident

Naremburn Community Centre Activities

There are two spaces available for hire in the community centre. There is a meeting room with its own kitchenette and toilet facilities and a larger area with its own projector. These spaces can be hired through the Willoughby Park Centre (Ph. 9967 2917 or email willpark@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

Naremburn Progress Association

2nd Thursday – February, April, June, August, October and December
7:30 pm
0416 161 536 (Frances O'Brien)

Playgroup

Wednesday – for children 5 and under
9:30 am to 11.30 am
naremburnplaygroup@gmail.com

Northern Suburbs Philatelic Society

3rd Thursday, 7:45 pm
Visitors always welcome
9419 7354 (Paul Storm)

Breast Feeding Association

1st Tuesday
10:00 am to 12 noon
abamns.contact@gmail.com

Willoughby Community Pre-School

Monday to Friday
8:00 am to 4:00 pm
9437 4260

Naremburn Library

Mondays – 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm
Thursdays – 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm
Saturdays – 9:30 am to 12 noon
9439 5584

Tiny Tots Ballet (\$130)

Fridays - 9.15am - 10.00am 3-5 yrs
Fridays - 10.00am - 10.45am 3-5 yrs;
Feb 5 - Apr 1
NB No class Good Friday March 25

A barrel o' fun

What's going on downstairs at Flat Rock Brew Café? Why are there a number of old barrels gathering dust in the cellar room on the lower floor? It may not be commonly known, but beer is aging in whisky barrels.

Aging beer in oak barrels is fairly unique in Australia. Whilst historically it was the only way to store and transport beer, there has been a fairly recent trend in the US to create complex and interesting beer by aging brews in wooden barrels of various origin. Even Budweiser have done it!

You have a few questions to ask yourself before jumping into this process. Particularly – why? It's a good question as it takes up space, runs the risk of ruining an already good beer and can be expensive. But the results can be amazing!

As the beer ages in the barrel, it picks up and absorbs many chemical compounds that exist in the wood. Lactones, phenolic aldehydes are two common types and they can produce floral aromas, and vanilla flavours respectively that are found in barrel aged beer. They will also pick up traces of the spirit or wine that previously resided in the barrel. All these add a layer of complexity to what many consider a pretty straight forward drink.

You can't just age any old beer. You have to consider the style – generally a higher alcohol, strong flavoured beer stands up to the process. It has to be robust, and a beer that will hold the flavours that come from barrel aging – it's no point putting a fresh lower alcohol hoppy beer in a barrel to age, as that goes against what you want to achieve from that particular beer style. However, there are two styles that we have had particular success with at Flat Rock – our Russian Imperial Stout and Sour Saison, where we achieved silver and gold medals at the Sydney Royal Show respectively.

A Russian Imperial Stout was always a style that would stand up to the barrel aging process. Once brewed in England for export to Catherine the Great, the style came about in the 18th century having to withstand the voyage to Russia – so originally, it would have travelled in wooden barrels. We have named our version Devil's Pond, once the body of water the Naremburn waterfall fell into. It seemed a fitting name for this massive beer weighing in at 9.5% and aged for six months on fresh whiskey casks. Only a limited quantity is made available for purchase each year both on tap and in bottle, but is a very smooth drink to end the night on. Like a fine whisky, it is designed to be sipped and enjoyed. It is particularly good with a strong flavoured cheese, or good quality chocolate.

Our Sour Saison is completely different. Starting its life as a perfectly tasty Strong Belgian Golden Ale, it has huge oak flavours, and a touch of chardonnay picked up from the barrel it was aged in. It also has a little sourness that we were wanting to achieve from *Brettanomyces* – a non-spore forming genus of yeast in the family *Saccharomycetaceae*. If you compared this beer to say a pale ale, it would be like comparing a Smart Car to a Land Rover. Both have their place, but are vastly different! This is a complex beer and another to be savoured.

The aging process of beer takes time though and requires patience. We have beer in the barrels from anywhere from three months to two years, but the waiting is hard! Although, we do taste along its aging journey, just to make sure! But that is an interesting process in itself as noting the changes in the beer throughout the aging can be both worrying and rewarding!

Each time we bottle a batch of barrel aged beer, it is a little different to last time, and that is what could be considered a drawback to barrel aged beer. You can visit our barrels anytime, they are located below the main bar at the cafe in our cellar.

If you are wanting to try these beers, look out for the upcoming Beer and Chocolate, Beer and Whisky and Beer and Cheese matching events at Flat Rock Brew Cafe.

- Karl Riseborough is proprietor and head beer quality tester at Flat Rock Brew Cafe.



Aging beer in whisky barrels is part of what makes Flat Rock different