

NAREMBURN: AT THE HEART OF EDUCATION

BY PATRICIA GEMMELL

On the corner of Merrenburn Avenue and Willoughby Road stands the site of the former Catholic primary school of St Leonards. Currently, it's empty – the subject of a controversial development application (DA) – and under an interim heritage order by Willoughby City Council. This will suspend all further action on the site while the government evaluates its heritage significance.

The foundation stone on the side of the imposing two-storey building that fronts Willoughby Road touts the date 10 April 1932, but the school itself – the first school in Naremburn, opened by the Sisters of St Joseph – began on Market Street in 1894.

Indeed, women appear to have been the driving force behind early education in the area, with the first-ever Willoughby school started by another pioneering woman just a few years earlier. Mother Mary of the Cross MacKillop, the founder of the Sisters of St



Picnic at Donnelly's Paddock, also known as Dodds Picnic Grounds, 1905; image courtesy of Picture Willoughby, Willoughby City Council.

Joseph order and canonised as Australia's first saint in 2010, visited the school in 1898 and 1902. In 1904, the original school was rebuilt, and it's on record that Mary MacKillop was present at the blessing of the new school that year.

In 1912, the sisters purchased Merrenburn Estate, adjacent to the land where St Leonard's church and presbytery were built in 1913 and 1919, respectively. It was common practice for parishes – not nuns – to purchase school sites. Most religious orders in Australia at the time were under the direction and supervision of their local bishop, but Mary MacKillop had established her order as an independent institute, to be governed by a superior. It is generally believed that she not only chose the site of Merrenburn Estate for a convent, juniorate, and boarding house, but also raised the funds necessary to buy it. "The purchase of the school site by the Sisters of St Joseph was atypical of the gender-based power imbalance within the Catholic church at the time," says Terry Fogarty, corporate secretary of the Willoughby District Historical Society.

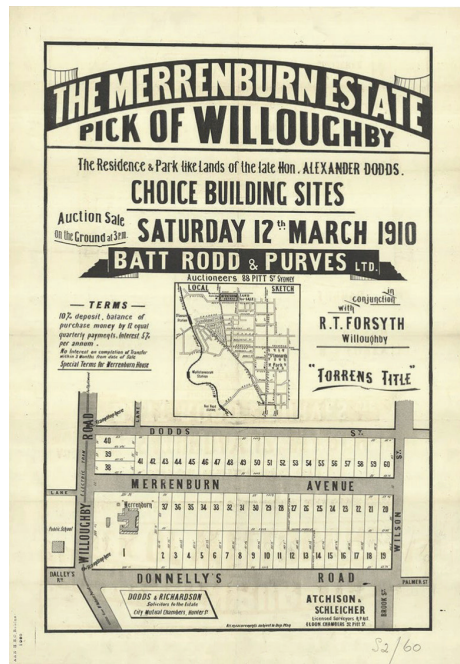
The Merrenburn Estate was home to a large house. Recognised as one of the oldest on

the North Shore, it was built by The Hon Alexander Dodds, a prominent landholder and member of the NSW Legislative Council. The house hosted local dances, and the grounds – fondly known as Dodds Picnic Grounds – were thrown open for the community's use.

According to postal records and other sources, the "Merrenburn House" did indeed become the desired convent, juniorate, and boarding school until the present convent was built in 1935.

Kathleen Moloney, nee Brooks, recalls that in 1927, when the school was still in Market Street, "the teaching nuns and boarders

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In 1910, Merrenburn Estate sold off the picnic grounds, with the house remaining. Here's the Merrenburn Estate land subdivision, 1910. Image courtesy of Picture Willoughby, Willoughby City Council.

TRUE OR FALSE?
The Central Street hall where the NPA held its first meeting in 1901 was built in 1900.
ANSWER ON PAGE 15

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There's an old saying: "Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it". This often rings true when we research Naremburn's rich history. We hope to empower you through this history-focused issue to join us in advocating for Naremburn's future.

Former NPA president Kevin Fitzpatrick and I recently dug through the treasure trove of our archive room. From the closure of the tip to the development of Bicentennial Reserve and the building of the Harbour Bridge, the NPA has been right on the frontline. This advocacy for Naremburn continues today.

The issues we are currently facing are all too familiar – just coming with greater intensity. And the NPA's role in advocating for positive change while preserving our bushland, opposing major freeway projects, fighting for schooling in the area, and protecting the heritage of our main street remains critically important. Take Henry Lawson's Cave, for example. The NPA has been advocating for its protection since historian and conservationist Eric Wilksch's time (see story, opposite page).



Naremburn Progress Association
 Founded 1901, incorporated 2004
 PO Box 393 St Leonards 2004
www.naremburnprogress.org.au

The opinions expressed in *Naremburn Matters* do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the NPA or its officers. The opinions of the authors are their own.

OUR PURPOSE

"The Naremburn Progress Association is a not-for-profit community organisation. The objectives of the Association are to promote the welfare and advancement of the Naremburn community, to preserve and improve the amenity and environment of the Naremburn District and nearby areas, to encourage a spirit of community and mutual help among all residents and to co-operate with other groups in pursuit of these objects. Matters of business will always be pursued on a non-political and non-sectarian basis."

Support the work of the NPA by becoming a member of the association. Please visit www.naremburnprogress.org.au/membership.

We're finally hoping to see it heritage-listed this year. It's fantastic that two other items the NPA has advocated for – the shops and the protection of our streetscapes (which are currently under threat by developer-led complying development) – will also be considered. These protections don't stop development but ask that it is more carefully considered with our rich heritage in mind.

Since our last issue, we have also:

- questioned aspects of Council's new operational and financial plan
- submitted to further consultation on the Warringah Freeway upgrade, advocating for: soundproofing for the shops, replacing the overbridge, capping the freeway for more green space, joining up and ensuring safe cycleways and pathways between Naremburn and Cammeray, and more
- undertaken research into the Donnelly Road site, uncovering more info on its history and the upcoming interim heritage review
- submitted feedback to the Walter Street development proposal and streetscape plans
- attended the first advisory committee meetings regarding Flat Rock Gully and Active and Integrated Transport
- followed up on the fish kill and sewerage spill; members can find more information



Among other things, the NPA has asked for translucent sound walls, such as those pictured, to buffer Naremburn shops from noise and pollution.

on our website. As one of the first people onsite when these major contamination events occurred, I am greatly concerned as to why resultant fines have not been allocated directly to Naremburn given the impact to our residents.

Planning is well underway for this year's Tastes of Naremburn, which focuses on promoting and supporting our local businesses – many of which are still struggling post-Covid. Let's all put 17 September in our diaries now to support the NPA and our local shops. I'm looking forward to seeing you there.

See our website for more information on any of the above. Our next NPA meeting will take place 17 August at 7.30 pm. I would encourage all residents and shop owners to attend.

LARISSA PENN, President

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES

By advertising in *Naremburn Matters*, you not only promote your business, but also contribute to the important work of Naremburn's recognised association. We've been sharing our community's expertise on a volunteer basis for the betterment of Naremburn since 1901! NPA's volunteers support businesses in the area by:

- keeping council accountable and advocating for upgrades
- advising government on major projects with local businesses in mind
- keeping Naremburn attractive by preserving our character, including the shops
- challenging overdevelopment
- voluntarily running community events and fostering community spirit
- improving traffic, safety, and access to businesses.

Without the NPA, Naremburn would be a different place, likely without a local village centre or many of the facilities we enjoy, such as Bicentennial Reserve. Our advertisers are our main source of revenue; please consider partnering with us by taking out a regular advertising space.

NAREMBURN MATTERS NEWSLETTER OF THE NAREMBURN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION (NPA)

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Next issue deadline: 10 November 2023

We welcome ideas regarding topics of interest to the community and letters. Please email naremburn.matters@naremburnprogress.org.au. We do not publish anonymous letters, and we will contact you should we need to edit your contributions.

Although all possible care is taken to be accurate, no responsibility whatsoever will be taken by the NPA, typesetters, or printers for articles, letters, or advertising.

A Poet, a Cave, a Legend

Did you know that famed Australian writer Henry Lawson wrote some of his poetry right here in Naremburn?

In his 1988 book *The Naremburn Story*, Eric Wilksch explained Lawson’s connection to Naremburn as follows:

“Henry Lawson is one of Australia’s leading writers of poetry and prose. Many collections of his work as well as biographies about him have been published. However, few have mentioned his connection with Naremburn.”

In fact, Lawson lived a semi-nomadic lifestyle, living in Naremburn at different periods in the early 1900s. The following is part of a letter Henry wrote in 1917 to publisher George Robertson of Angus & Robertson, which showcases Lawson’s appreciation for and connection with Naremburn:

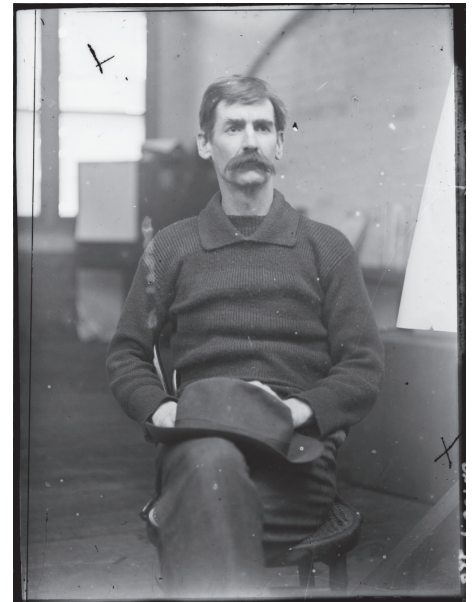
“Above Crow’s Nest was written in ‘06–’07 in an unusual little cottage in a little paddock of its own in Market Street, Naremburn, belonging to a Mrs M’Gill; and just at the head of a deep rocky gully running into Middle Harbour. A Catholic school is opposite ... Away to the west the Blue Mountains, to the east the (then) bare sky-line heights of the near shores of Middle Harbour ...”

Talk about ‘high lights’ I think Above Crow’s Nest is a better bit of scene-painting than ever an artist painted. It would be well worth your time to go to Naremburn about sunset some fine autumn day and wait till the afterglow. You’ll see it all, and, if you have the imagination, I believe you have, you’ll see the ‘Rider on the Skyline’ too. That and several good companion pieces (not disposed of) for the *Bulletin* were written there and then. Everything on that skyline is magnified and brought nearer – man, horse, and dray; but I never could make out what that solitary horseman was ...”

You can read the full and remarkable account in *The Naremburn Story* available online via Willoughby Council.

NPA note:

We have successfully lobbied Willoughby Council to consider including Henry Lawson’s Cave, where he was known to retire and write, in its Heritage Review. Please write to the Council in support of its protection.



Portrait of Henry Lawson, circa 1900–1912, Lindsay, Lionel, Sir, 1874–1961. Image courtesy of State Library of NSW.

Sources: Henry Lawson, *Letters 1890-1922*, Colin Roderick (ed.), Angus & Robertson, Sydney 1970. Reprinted in “*The Naremburn Story*”, Wilksch, Eric, 1988.

ADVERTORIAL

Unmatched Real Estate Success with Team Chauncy and McGrath

As we’ve embarked on a new financial year, we’re excited to update you on Team Chauncy’s goings-on. Naremburn is enjoying a thriving real estate market and saw 30 sales last quarter, with our team behind 17 of these!

Several of these sales deserve special mention. Number 5 McBurney Street, a magnificent trophy home, achieved the second-highest sale price this year, at \$5,160,000, and 19 Martin Street sold for \$3,935,000 – setting a street record at auction! Likewise, 264 Willoughby Road sold for an impressive \$2,805,000 before auction.

We also excelled in off-market and pre-auction sales. Notably, 12/3 Talus Street in Naremburn sold for \$1,675,000 after only one open inspection, and 10/163 Willoughby Road set a block record with a price of \$1,370,000. What’s more, we achieved a record-breaking sale with 2/36A Park Road, setting a new benchmark for one-bedroom apartments at \$1,170,000.

Results like these have cemented Team Chauncy’s reputation as the go-to agency for Naremburn sellers. Our team delivers exceptional outcomes thanks to the strength of our network and our second-to-none market expertise. We’re proud to report a 100% auction clearance rate and a 60% market share for the last quarter, a testament to our team’s negotiation skills and meticulous preparation.

We’re also delighted to announce the sale of five apartments within The Francis complex, including two-bedroom and three-bedroom units. Currently, eight apartments remain, so if you’re keen to own a luxurious residence in this sought-after location, don’t miss this incredible opportunity.



Team Chauncy remains dedicated to delivering exceptional service, tailored solutions, and market-leading results. Thank you for your continued trust and support. We look forward to assisting you with your real estate needs in the future.

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A Non-Plastic Future for Community Ovals?

The debate over synthetic grass rages on.

In her July ArchitectureAU article “Cool grass, hot grass”, journalist Elizabeth Farrelly wrote that the NSW Government had finally released the Chief Scientist’s long-awaited report on the dangers of synthetic turf. The report stopped short of recommending a ban on synthetic turf containing toxic “forever chemicals”, as exist in California and elsewhere, but it did raise significant concerns. The Chief Scientist recommended further research into synthetic grass. Farrelly further reported that the use of synthetic grass has wider consequences than we may realise – for example, soil compaction and root death in nearby trees can cause more biodiversity loss and shade depletion. What’s more, when the synthetic materials degrade, this can intensify toxic runoff.

The publishing of the Chief Scientist’s report coincided with a well-attended community forum and expert panel – organised by the Natural Turf Alliance – at Ku-ring-gai Town Hall on 23 June. The expert panel consisted of a broad range of experts from many fields.

The alliance’s goals for the event were to:

- provide evidence-based information that upgrading sports fields with natural turf is the best choice for players, the environment, and the community
- provide evidence of the environmental,



- health, and safety dangers of plastic turf
- present the community with the process Ku-ring-gai Council used to implement synthetic turf at Norman Griffiths Oval without proper environmental assessments or thorough community consultation
- provide an opportunity to ask scientists and community members questions
- outline recommendations and suggest actions to ensure proper governance.

The expert panel called for a moratorium on laying more synthetic fields until the recommended research takes place. The European Union is currently considering bans on synthetic turf fill, and New South Wales has banned the export of plastic turf or fill for recycling. Currently, no recycling facilities are available in NSW.

Whatever your opinion on plastic grass, one thing seems certain: we need to know how to mitigate its impact on health and the environment if we are going to continue to lay large quantities in public spaces. It’s also clear from emerging research that there’s more we could be doing to extend the playing life of our natural turf fields.

For more information, visit the Natural Turf Alliance’s website at naturalturfalliance.org.

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Walk the Link Connecting Our Heritage Conservation Areas



A home in Naremburn's Town Centre Heritage Area

BY JULIE WADDINGTON AND PHILLIP BIGGS

Naremburn Central Township (NCT) and the Naremburn Conservation Area (NCA) provide historical context for Naremburn's significance as the gateway to Willoughby. They're examples of how 19th- and early-20th-century cottages give Naremburn

its distinctive, cohesive character. The areas are geographically distinct and quite different in character, too.

The NCT was the first European settlement in the area, bounded by Central, Market, Adolphus, and Slade streets. In the 1880s, residential development occurred concurrently with commercial development that was



A streetscape in Naremburn Conservation Area

expected to become the commercial centre of the north side of Sydney Harbour.

The development of the area now known as the NCA was part of the Crows Nest Subdivision of 1903. The uniform grid pattern of the streets bounded by Chandos Street, Willoughby Road, Lawson Lane, and Northcote Street, with small, narrow frontage allotments, was classified by the National Trust as an Urban Conservation Area in 1983.

Taking a walk in and between both areas provides perspective on how development that seeks to maintain the built environmental and social cohesion of Naremburn is the best way forward.

Sources: Willoughby City Library digital collection, including Naremburn Neighbourhood Walk.

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ADVERTORIAL

Willoughby City Council *City of Diversity*

LIVING LOCAL



FREE CANDLELIGHT CONCERTS

The Candlelight x Chatswood Culture Bites FREE public open event takes place at The Concourse, Chatswood Illuminated by the soft glow of thousands of twinkling candles, this delightful Candlelight Concert series is part of Willoughby City Council's flagship cultural program, Chatswood Culture Bites.

Thursday August 17, 2023, 6pm
Friday August 18, 2023, 6pm
Saturday August 19, 2023, 6pm

For details: www.culturebites.net.au

Sydney artists Sean Cordeiro and Claire Healy feature at The Concourse

Persistence of Vision; The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters.

Repurposed Lego is transformed into paranormal mosaics and sculptures of weapons from the January 6th insurrection in Washington DC.

One of Australia's most respected contemporary artist duos Claire Healy and Sean Cordeiro will present their new work in a free public exhibition at Art Space on The Concourse in Chatswood from 9 August until 3 September 2023.

Willoughby Symphony

Get ready for flag-waving fun when the musical extravaganza **Last Night of the Proms** returns to The Concourse in 2023. Conductor and host Sam Weller leads the Willoughby Symphony Orchestra and Choir in a spectacular concert featuring rousing performances of Pomp and Circumstance March No.1, Jerusalem, Rule, Britannia! and more. Experience stunning performances of orchestral favourites and popular classics, with plenty of opportunities to sing along. Don't miss out! For bookings visit willoughbysymphony.com.au



The FWPA President's Update



At the last meeting of the FWPA, the Special Rate Variation (SRV) that Willoughby City Council has proposed was discussed.

Council has had two meetings – 15 May and 26 June – with the SRV on the agenda. The Council will decide the issue later this year, as a proposal needs to be with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) by February 2024. On 26 June, Council authorised the CEO to continue working on the proposal.

Council has informed the community that the SRV needs to be 15%. The CEO recommends that it be 15 to 20% and that the SRV become the new baseline for all future rate increases. This does not make it an SRV; it makes it the new rate, as the variation would not lapse in the future.

Of the 23 people who commented on the Long-Term Financial Plan 2023-2033, a majority did not support the SRV.

In the Council papers, global and sector challenges are the rationale behind the increase. The May agenda provides some detail on expenses, which at first glance are understandable. The repeated theme is that COVID-19 reduced Council's revenues. The Council papers neither explain nor document this assertion. Research of Council annual accounts back to 2016 shows that the Council case for the SRV is not so clear-cut.

Before the last local government election, Council let go of the special 7.3% Infrastructure levy stating that the financial future for Council "looked sustainable" without the levy. Revenue figures tell of the drop in fees and charges, but gaps exist in Council's presentation.

Looking at the 2022 annual accounts, there are further inconsistencies – for example, actual surplus was \$956,000 to a budget of \$447,000.

These inconsistencies raise questions as to why an effective rate change through an SRV is necessary. If the SRV is not to go into the Council rate baseline, this would alter the discussion.

In addition to addressing council issues, the FWPA sent a letter to NSW Minister for Transport Jo Haylen concerning the metro dive site's future use and to the local state member about reconstituting regular FWPA meetings with him as was the case before the recent state election.

STUART COPPOCK
PRESIDENT, THE FEDERATION
OF WILLOUGHBY PROGRESS
ASSOCIATIONS (FWPA)

Library News



Visit Naremburn Library at 7 Central Street in Naremburn; it's open on Mondays from 2pm to 4.30pm. Call us on (02) 9439 5584.

With the tail end of winter upon us, it's a great time to curl up with a good book. Whether you're looking for the latest bestsellers, riveting non-fiction, or new children's books, Naremburn Library has something for everyone.

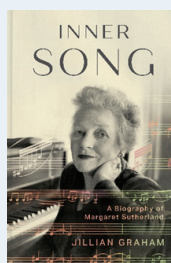
Naremburn Book Locker

Naremburn Book Locker is a free service that allows you to collect reserved items at a time that suits you. After-hours access is available 6am to 8pm daily. Simply apply online at <https://libraries.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Services/Naremburn-Book-Locker>.

Local Author Program

Have you checked out our local author program? We're keen to connect writers, artists, and illustrators with new audiences and develop community spirit. Learn more on our Talks@Willoughby page: <https://libraries.willoughby.nsw.gov.au/Events-and-programs/TalksWilloughby>

Book Reviews



Inner Song: A Biography of Margaret Sutherland by Jillian Graham

Melbourne-based writer and researcher Dr Jillian Graham was awarded the Redmond Barry Fellowship for writers and scholars in 2018. Her new book provides an insightful look into the life and work of Australian music pioneer Margaret Sutherland.

Throughout this engaging literary work, Graham explores the importance of Sutherland's contributions and the challenges she faced as a woman composer in a male-dominated field.

Graham masterfully delivers a narrative that intertwines the personal and professional aspects of Sutherland's life. This new book is an essential read for those interested in music history, gender studies, or simply the human spirit. Sutherland left a remarkable legacy in 20th-century music, and Graham's book rightfully recognises her notable accomplishments.



The One and Only Dolly Jamieson by Lisa Ireland

In this remarkable story and feel-good read, Ireland shines a light on the experiences of older Australian women with life stories that deserve the limelight.

This touching novel centres on Dolly Jamieson, a 78-year-old homeless woman who befriends a younger woman in the local library. As the bond between the women grows, the highs and lows of Dolly's life become evident.

From the glamour of Broadway and the West End stages in the '60s to her homeless existence on the street, Dolly's strong will and spirit shine through.

"Think before you speak. Read before you think."

FRAN LEBOWITZ,
AMERICAN WRITER

Navigating Willoughby's Future as Advisory Committees Are Re-Established



The NPA has asked the government to consider grade-separated, safe cycleways as part of the Warringah Freeway project to reduce traffic – similar to what Queensland is building (pictured). Image courtesy of Queensland Government, Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Willoughby Council has started implementing its new strategy on Advisory Committees. After many years of review and with unsatisfactory proposals, these committees replace the previous consultative committees. Hard-working volunteers, who made a significant unpaid contribution to Willoughby Council in their area of interest, supported those original committees.

The new committees have been in place for only a few months, and it's too early to determine their success. There are positives in the number of new people involved in the Active and Integrated Transport Committee – broadening scope, bringing new perspectives, and sharing information and ideas.

On the other hand, it takes time to negotiate opinions, bring everyone up to speed, and determine how the committee can most productively advise Council on its priorities. It's also becoming clear that it's logistically challenging for Council with so many new committees. This was never an issue when committees were organised within their own subject area.

The sole purpose of these new Advisory Committees is to provide independent, expert, and impartial advice on developing and implementing Council's strategic priorities.

The Active and Integrated Transport Advisory Committee replaces the

longstanding Bicycle Consultative Committee and aims to help Council develop and implement various transport strategies. These include the Integrated Transport Strategy, the Bicycle Plan, and other policies that support active and integrated transport. Subjects considered within scope include cycleways, e-bikes, and electric scooters; share vehicles; transport connections; pedestrian movement; technology integration; and movement and place.

Council invited applications for this committee in March and accepted nine applicants. The committee's initial meeting took place in May, with a follow-up meeting in June and additional meetings planned.

These early meetings identified two priorities:

- Bicycle Plan review – Council has requested advice on the form to take for a new bike plan, which the Operational Plan 2023–24 has identified. Council asks whether this should be a Bicycle Strategy or a more operational bike plan, along the lines of previously adopted plans. Research is underway.
- Feedback on Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) action items – the committee has been asked to review and provide feedback on the list of action items in this strategy.

LOOKING BACK ... AT A PROPOSED NORTHERN SUBURBS RAILWAY

BY KEVIN FITZPATRICK

As Naremburn is confronted with the proposed Northern Beaches Link tunnel and its impact on our environment, it's worth reflecting on a bygone era when our young Naremburn Progress Association was involved in a proposed railway link to the Northern Beaches.

In February 1927, the NPA formed a Railway League in the district to further Northbridge's claim to have a railway constructed from Seven Hills to Manly via St Leonards and Northbridge. It was considered the cheapest route. The NPA sought a meeting with the Minister for Works & Railways.

That same month, Willoughby Council called for delegates to attend a meeting to discuss the matter. At the same time, the Willoughby Federated Progress Association called on the Minister for Works & Railways to prepare a statutory report and urged affiliate associations to form a Railway League. Simultaneously, the municipality of Mosman expressed interest and proposed that it be part of the route.

By April 1927, Council pointed out that growth in the North Shore's population and the completion of the North Shore Bridge (Harbour Bridge) would increase its population. (We know that Naremburn's population doubled from 1920 to 1925.)

By 1928, despite enthusiasm for the project and numerous meetings, authorities proposed a more suitable and economical solution – a rail link to Circular Quay. A large delegation of 50 was told Circular Quay was the government's choice (supported by John Bradfield) for the transport link via ferries to Manly. Was this a golden opportunity missed?

AN IMPORTANT MATTER: NAREMBURN MATTERS

Local volunteer residents undertake all the work we do at the NPA. Unfortunately, due to increasing costs and fewer volunteers, we had to make the difficult decision to drop *Naremburn Matters* back to only three issues this year. We need your help to keep up the good work! Please become a member of the association on our website. Your \$20 membership fee goes a long way to ensuring we can pay our basic expenses to run the association. Of course, advertising revenue is also key, and we'd like to say a special thank you to the advertisers that have supported our important work.

Growing Together: Join Naremburn Community Gardens

Naremburn Community Gardens is calling all nature lovers, aspiring gardeners, and community enthusiasts to join our vibrant gardening community. Whether you have a busy schedule or ample free time, our flexible membership structure welcomes you to participate regularly, once a month, or whenever you can. Embrace the joys of gardening while fostering friendships and a genuine sense of community.

Explore our lush garden oasis

Join us at Naremburn Community Gardens and discover not just one, but three enchanting garden spaces! Attend one of our 'gardening' days, and our friendly members will gladly show you around, sharing their passion for gardening and the stories behind each plant.

Supporting our true community garden

We take pride in being a true community

garden, open to all and welcoming individuals from diverse backgrounds. What's more, to sustain the space and maintain our lush gardens, we need your support. Your involvement as a member will help preserve this green sanctuary for generations to come.

Abundant harvests and community compost

From luscious raspberries to aromatic fresh ginger and basil, fragrant mint to zesty limes and fresh rocket, our gardens are a cornucopia of delights! Witness the fruits of our labour and share the bountiful harvest with fellow members. Our community compost is the heartbeat of our garden, nourishing the soil for future harvests.

Come and grow with us

Discover the magic of gardening, where we sow the seeds of friendship. Join us on our 'gardening' days and embark on a journey of green growth, laughter, and shared memories. Let's make Naremburn a greener and more tightly knit community – one plant at a time.

Interested in becoming a member or learning more about Naremburn Community Gardens? Visit our Instagram [@NaremburnCommunityGardens](https://www.instagram.com/NaremburnCommunityGardens) or contact us at naremburgardens@gmail.com.

We hope to see you in the garden!



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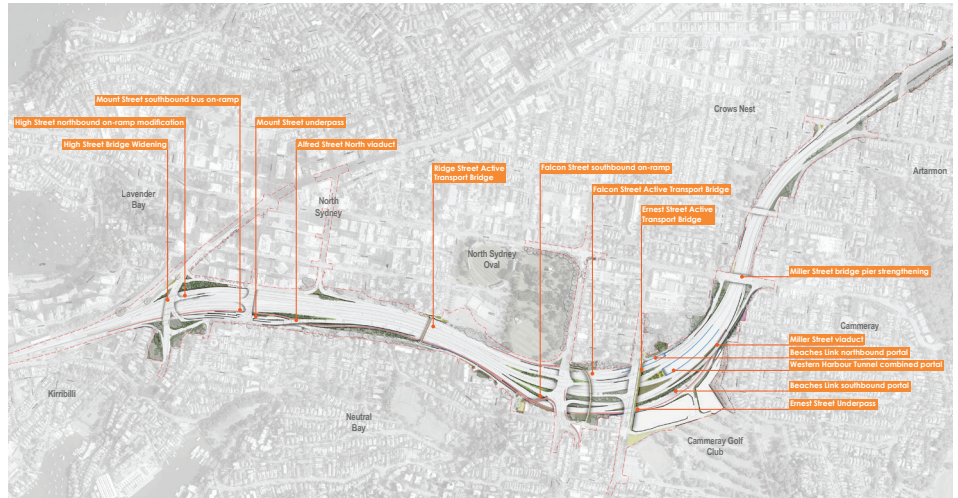
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Cancelled or Not? What's Up with the Beaches Link?

The short answer is that the Beaches Link is *not* cancelled. The newly installed Labor Government recently announced that the Beaches Link was on hold. This represented no change in status, as the previous Liberal Government had already announced an on-hold position pre-election. Concerningly, this appears to be a backwards step for Labor, which promised a cancellation pre-election. The long-awaited government response to the parliamentary inquiry into the Western Harbour and Beaches Link projects further confirms our concerns that this is only a short-term pause, stating, "It is noted that the Beaches Link Project has been placed on hold. This follows the decision of the former Government to deprioritise the project in the 2022 Budget".

NPA President Larissa Penn contacted the Department of Planning and Environment directly to clarify the project's status, as the press release caused much confusion among our members. She was informed initially that there had been no status change from a planning perspective and that the Department of Planning and Environment had not been informed. Subsequently, the department has sent a letter to Transport for NSW (TfNSW) stating that it has put planning activities on hold due to TfNSW's announcement. The planning status of the project on the department's website, however, remains under "Assessment" with "more information required". The project has not been formally cancelled or withdrawn. In fact, it can be continued through planning to approval should TfNSW provide more information.



As of July 2023, Beaches Link portals continue to be included in the Warringah Freeway Upgrade scope. Image source: Place, Design and Landscape Plan, Executive Summary.

The recent Place, Design and Landscape consultation by (TfNSW) further confirmed our concerns that the Beaches Link remains in play, as key elements are included in the plans from that consultation. It's clear that no work has been done to redesign the Warringah Freeway works to operate without the Beaches Link.

What does this mean for the community of Naremburn? We have a reprieve from the immediate impact of a major dive site in our midst, but in the longer term, the threat remains. Regardless of timing, under the current plans, increased traffic and flow changes due to the Warringah Freeway project and Western Harbour Tunnel work will impact central Naremburn.

The NPA continues to lobby strongly against either tunnel stage proceeding and for better outcomes for Naremburn should they go ahead. We have asked our councillors to ask Willoughby Council to take a strong stance in demanding greater accountability and proper cancellation of the Beaches Link, as promised. This means the Minister either rejecting the EIS or TfNSW withdrawing the Beaches Link from the planning process. To date, neither has occurred. Please write to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and ask for an explanation. Now is the time to replan the project without the Beaches Link. If this doesn't happen, the Beaches Link will surely proceed.

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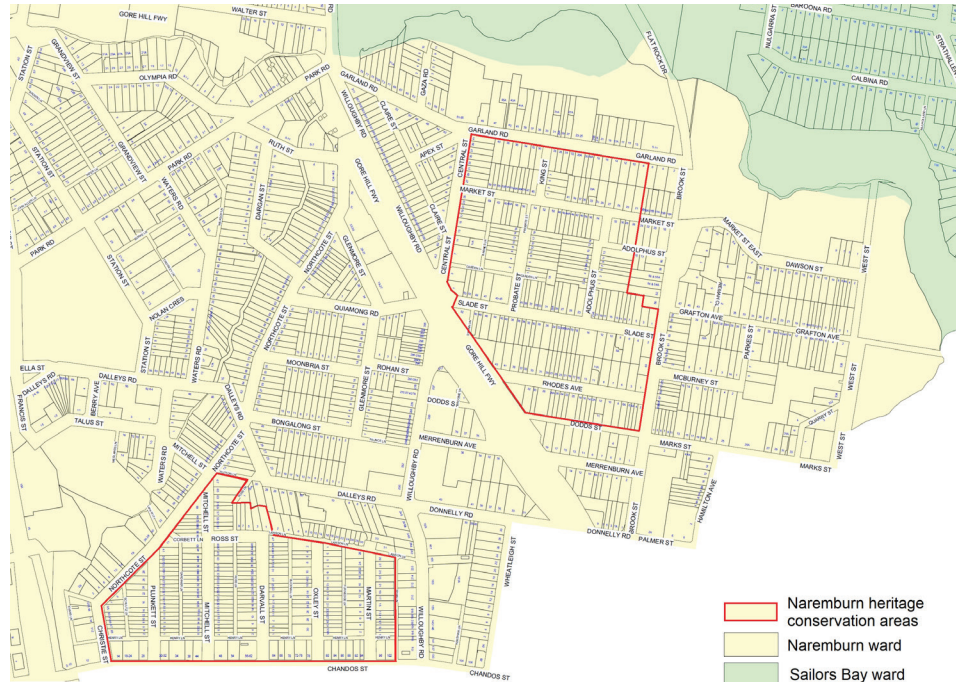
CONTINUED FROM PG 5

Walk the Link Connecting Our Heritage Conservation Areas

Along Willoughby Road from the NCA towards Naremburn shops, of interest is the adaptation of Willoughby's earliest school district. Medium-density housing has been erected in the former Naremburn School grounds on Dalleys Road, including the Schoolhouse in the south and the Meridian in the north. Any development of the church site opposite at 43 Donnelly Road needs to embrace – at a minimum – the same historical perspective and maintain the streetscape.

At the Naremburn shops, Forsyth Cafe operates in a 1907 building. This village shopping centre development was prompted by the extension of the tramlines along Willoughby Road to Willoughby in 1898. Behind the shops in Rohan, Glenmore, and Bongalong streets are well-maintained Federation period homes, built from 1910 to 1918.

The shops are the hub of our village, and the planned streetscape upgrade to begin later this year will enliven the public domain that draws residents from both sides of Naremburn. A new, modern, accessible footbridge from the shops (or land bridge) to the Central Township



The map highlights Naremburn's two heritage conservation areas.

heritage area would be a wonderful way to ensure residents of our very desirable suburb have a sense of place!

And the NPA's Tastes of Naremburn at the shops on 17 September will be a celebration of our gateway suburb and its people.

Should I Have the Shingles Vaccine?

Having recently had a few clients wishing to discuss the shingles vaccine, Dr Lalana Kapuwatte of Willoughby Medical Practice answers some questions for the community here.

What is shingles?

Herpes zoster, or shingles as it is commonly known, is a painful blistery skin rash caused by the reactivation of the varicella-zoster (chicken pox) virus. The rash usually presents itself on the chest or abdomen, but it may appear anywhere, including the face and eyes. Shingles can be serious. Some people can experience long-lasting pain known as post-herpetic neuralgia long after the rash heals.

What are the available vaccines?

Two vaccines are currently available in Australia: Shingrix and Zostavax.



Shielding against shingles: the vaccine can reduce disease severity and long-lasting pain.

Shingrix is recommended for adults aged 50 years and older, whether or not you've had shingles. You can consider getting a shingles vaccine even if you have had Zostavax in the past. Shingrix is an inactive (not live) vaccine consisting of inactive virus components, given in two

doses, two to six months apart. Medicare does not currently cover it. The most common side effects are local irritation, redness, pain, itching at the injection site, and mild headache. The Shingrix vaccine demonstrated high efficacy against herpes zoster.

Zostavax is a live vaccine, currently funded for people aged 70 to 79. It is given as a single-dose injection. As it is a live vaccine, it is not recommended if you have a compromised immune system or you have contracted shingles in the past 12 months.

Can people develop shingles despite the vaccination?

Yes, some people can, although the disease severity and duration will be less due to the vaccine. Most importantly, the vaccine will reduce post-herpetic neuralgia. You cannot transfer the infection to others after receiving the vaccination.

Please speak with your GP for further information.

Spring Into Action: Naremburn’s Best Bike Routes

Bicycling! It’s the easiest way to get around Naremburn and even to Lane Cove!

We are all so fortunate to live in Naremburn – for many reasons. It’s close to many more urban centres but still green and suburban; plus, it boasts our own local village. It’s also a great place to get around by bike – from short, local trips to some longer ones into neighbouring suburbs. And it’s often the fastest way to get places and avoid busy roads.

Bicentennial Reserve’s shared pedestrian and bike path is a lovely and convenient route to start your bike exploration, as it connects to the main bike path through Naremburn in the Gore Hill Freeway corridor. What’s more, it’s a safe place for young and inexperienced riders to hone their skill on open grounds such as the netball courts (when they’re not in use, of course!).

The paths connect directly from under Willoughby Road to the major bike path along the Gore Hill Freeway that’s the quickest and least stressful (intersection-free!) way to get to Lane Cove. With the Willoughby Leisure



Centre’s pool currently out of action due to upgrades, Lane Cove is our closest public pool, so why not double-up your exercise and get there on two wheels?

You can access this bike path from a number of Naremburn streets: Market Street East, Gaza Road, Slade Street, Ruth Street, Park Road, and Francis Street. Farther west, you can access it through Artarmon Reserve and

follow the shared path and back-roads route all the way to Chatswood.

Last year, Willoughby Council upgraded the Pacific Highway to shared-use status between Chatswood and St Leonards and that part of the highway also intersects with our great bike path.

So, dust off your bikes for spring, and get out and about in our community by bike!

ADVERTORIAL

North Sydney Electorate Free Community Conversations

The Voice Referendum – Let’s get informed

Presented by your Federal Independent MP, Kylea Tink



Wed 16 August 6:30-7:45PM

Media perspectives on the Voice Referendum moderated by Kylea. The panel includes journalist Emma Rossi.

Willoughby Bowling Club

Wed 23 August 6:30-7:45PM

All you want to ask, moderated by Kylea.

Lane Cove Community Hub

Tues 29 August 6:30-7:45PM

All you want to ask, moderated by Kylea.

Hunters Hill Town Hall

Thur 17 August – Sat 19 August

Art Show for the Voice co-presented by Chinese Australia Forum and Stanton Library.

17 August opening event 6:00-7:30PM is a panel discussion moderated by Kylea with Dr Shireen Morris & Simon Chan.

Stanton Library, North Sydney



Bookings and further details



COUNCILLORS' REPORTS



**Councillor
Georgie
Roussac**

Regarding the St Leonards and Crows Nest 2036 plan, in July, I represented Willoughby Council at the first working

party meeting with North Sydney and Lane Cove councils to explore a coordinated approach to the planning, design, and management of the St Leonards and Crows Nest precinct.

The 2036 Plan from the NSW Government prescribes significant changes to height and density of buildings. The working party will be an important opportunity to collaborate with neighbouring councils and advocate for the necessary infrastructure (such as schools), open space, community facilities, and traffic-flow management to meet the needs of the existing and future population. If you have any views or would like to know more, please give me a call.

I also want to encourage you to give some love to our locals. Streetscape works at Naremburn Village are scheduled to start around October. It will be exciting to see improvements to the village, but the construction period will be tough on businesses. Plans are afoot to introduce an initiative to keep local businesses top of mind. Buying locally helps our shops thrive and keeps our community vibrant and connected.

GEORGIE ROUSSAC

P | M 0459 879 379

E: Georgie.Roussac@willoughby.nsw.gov.au



**Councillor
Nic Wright**

Like many organisations, Willoughby City Council has recently been impacted by a range of external financial issues,

including inflation costs and interest rate rises.

In June, Council resolved to consult with the community around a proposed Special Rate Variation (SRV) that could see rates increase by as much as 20%. I encourage you to look out for these surveys and consultations - and participate where you can. As with all decisions on Council, it's important that

the community's voice be heard on these important issues.

As I have for more than a decade, I will continue to insist that Council staff examine responsible savings measures and will continue to advocate that Council manage your money responsibly. This consultation will help us understand what areas need prioritisation and whether rates should increase to support those. I assure you no decision has been made yet, and the input from residents will guide that outcome.

If you would like to add your feedback to the process, please feel free to email me.

NIC WRIGHT

P | M 0481 033 442

E: nic.wright@willoughby.nsw.gov.au



**Councillor
Anna Greco**

The making of our new local environmental plan (LEP) on 30 June brings the welcome strength of heritage controls

to our conservation areas. Specifically written into the LEP is the understanding that Council will not support applications to demolish a heritage item or contributory buildings within a heritage conservation area.

Demolition of heritage items will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Additional assessment criteria have been added to clarify the meaning of "exceptional circumstances", including Council's ability to request an independent peer review of the applicant's dilapidation report.

The budget has been approved for this term of Council's heritage review, and it was exciting to learn that Council's Heritage Advisory Committee recommended the extension of Naremburn's Conservation Area in Council's review. Also included in the 2023-24 heritage review is the Henry Lawson Cave and St Leonards Church Presbytery and school building.

Listing local heritage items in the LEP protects our valuable legacy and continues to tell our unique story for future generations. I would love to hear from you: What is *your* favourite Naremburn story?

ANNA GRECO

P | M 0459 866 064

E Anna.Greco@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Tanya Taylor provides an update on Naremburn goings-on.



Heritage listing to protect the historic Donnelly Road church site

Council took a decisive step to safeguard the historic integrity of the 43 Donnelly Road site in Naremburn by implementing an

interim heritage order. This order encompasses all currently unlisted parts of the land, including the church, presbytery, and school buildings.

During our February Council meeting, Council resolved to identify the Presbytery as an item of potential local significance. Moreover, it will be part of the upcoming 2023-24 Council heritage review.

The preliminary heritage assessment suggests that the site's significance extends beyond the church's immediate surroundings. This prompts a careful examination of whether the heritage curtilage should be adjusted accordingly. At our May meeting, Council requested to be notified whether the school buildings also hold any potential heritage value.

The interim heritage order underscores Council's commitment to protect and appreciate the site's heritage significance. I look forward to updating you further on this matter in the near future.

Willoughby Leisure Centre update

Works are underway on the important stage of installing the foundation piling works for the new pool hall. In addition, at press time, the drainage stormwater works are underway on the eastern end of Small Street.

Please visit the Willoughby Leisure Centre Project page to keep updated on the progress of the works at www.haveyoursaywilloughby.com.au/willoughby-leisure-centre-pool-upgrade.

Council opposes damaging increases in emergency services levy costs

At our May meeting, Council adopted a Mayoral Minute outlining its strong opposition to the NSW Government's last-minute decision to impose an enormous Emergency Services Levy (ESL) cost increase on councils for 2023-24. This will impact Council's budget by \$500,000.

The NSW Government recently announced plans to scrap the ESL subsidies, which will shift costs back to councils without any mechanism for councils to recover costs. Council's ESL has increased by 63% since 2018-19.

Willoughby strongly supports a well-funded emergency services sector and the critical



contribution of emergency services workers and volunteers (many of whom are councillors and council staff). However, it is essential that these services be supported through an equitable, transparent, and sustainable funding model.

We thank Local Government NSW for representing councils on this matter and hope that our combined voices will be heard.

Adoption of the Long Term Financial Plan 2023-2033 and Operational Plan 2023-24

Following a public exhibition period, we resolved to adopt both foundational documents. The Operational Plan was relevant to financial year 2023-24 and provides information on the Council’s capital works spend, budget, and revenue policy; overall changes to fees and charges, including for the Domestic Waste Management Charge; corporate performance indicators; and business improvements.

The Long Term Financial Plan covers the decade from now to 2033 and outlines the Council’s response to the unprecedented and volatile economic climate that has challenged Council’s financial sustainability. It was agreed

that we will begin public engagement on a potential Special Rate Variation (SRV). We will further consider this matter at the August meeting.

I’m really looking forward to the next Tastes of Naremburn event on Sunday, 17 September.

The event forms part of our broader Emerge Festival – a month-long festival of events across Willoughby.

MAYOR TANYA TAYLOR
WILLOUGHBY CITY COUNCIL

SYDNEY WATER FINED FOR CONTAMINATION EVENT

On 11 June, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) issued a press release about legal proceedings against Sydney Water. It reads: “Sydney Water Corporation has been convicted and fined \$365,625 and have separately agreed to pay \$500,000 to environmental projects, after around 16 million litres of raw sewage resulted in the relocation of 39 residents in Naremburn in 2020.”

According to the release, an Enforceable Undertaking was put in place and commits \$500,000 in funding to North Sydney Council, Willoughby City Council, and the Aboriginal Heritage Office to assist with a variety of environmental projects, including

works within the Flat Rock Creek catchment.

The Mayor has informed the NPA that Willoughby will use its portion of this sum to build a biofiltration rain garden on Marden Street in Artarmon. We are very aware of the awful impact these ongoing issues are having on Naremburn residents. The NPA will continue to follow up with council, ministers, and Sydney Water, advocating for more funding to address the cause of the problem – our crumbling, old infrastructure. Read the full release at [www.epa.nsw.gov.au/news/media-releases/2023/epamedia230711-sydney-water-to-pay-over-\\$865k-after-huge-sewage-overflow](http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/news/media-releases/2023/epamedia230711-sydney-water-to-pay-over-$865k-after-huge-sewage-overflow).

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CONTINUED FROM COVER STORY

Naremburn: At the Heart of Education

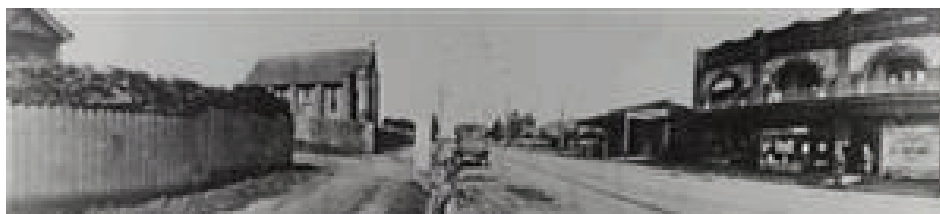
who lived at the convent in the grounds of St Leonard’s Church walked down to Market Street daily, hail, rain, or shine” and that concerts took place on the convent’s verandah.

The nuns were keen to ensure all children in the area had access to education and were fed, particularly during the Great Depression years. The second Market St school quickly became overcrowded.

According to longtime residents the Betts family, by 1930, both sites were in use as one school, complete with music lessons, kindergarten, and first class students educated at the convent. Longtime resident Ada Campbell remembers that the nuns were overworked.

The Sydney Catholic newspaper of the day, *The Freeman’s Journal*, reported the laying of the foundation stone for the new school in 1932:

We could not have realized our long wished for hopes – the building of this school hall – said Rev. Father J. Rohan ... without the generosity of the Sisters of St. Joseph, who gave us a free grant of land for the school. That is not the first thing which the Sisters have done for the parish, added the Parish Priest. From the outset they have toiled and worked and given us a magnificent staff to look after the schools of the parish ... The building was a necessity



In 1919, there’s no Catholic church or school yet, and most of the shops were still around at Market Street. St Cuthbert’s Anglican church is visible on the left. Image courtesy of Picture Willoughby, Willoughby City Council.

for the district, not only for a school, but as a hall where the societies could meet, and the social side of the parish encouraged ...

Very Rev. Father E. O’Brien ... said that the occasion would be remembered as an historic one in the Naremburn Parish, as the foundation stone had been blessed of what would be one of the most imposing structures in the northern suburbs, and a prominent landmark in the district. They were building for generations.

The generous gift of the sisters to the parish and their continued staffing of the school until 1983 represent an important chapter in the history of Naremburn.

It’s also worth noting, in this era of sustainability, that little of the school in Market Street was wasted when it closed. In fact, 39,000 bricks, timber, roofing, slate, glass, and other materials were put to use in the construction of the new school buildings.

Sadly, a slump in enrolments led to the closing of the school in 1996. Parents at

the time did what they could to persuade the diocese that there would soon be a population increase but to no avail. Today, the future of the site is uncertain. Will its rich heritage be enough to save it?

Heritage and Education in Naremburn: Some Questions and Answers from the NPA:

■ **What happened to Merrenburn House?**

A search of the archives indicates that the building remained in place until at least 1935, when the nuns moved to the current convent.

■ **Could the slate-roofed building with its much older features at the centre of the site be an adapted part of the original Merrenburn House?**

We hope the heritage review will give us some interesting answers.

Regardless of the ages of the buildings, it’s clear that the social history of the site goes back to Naremburn’s early settlement.

■ **Could the site be repurposed again for the calling the sisters so faithfully pursued for more than 100 years – that is, for education rather than luxury residential development?**

With our area rapidly densifying, changing government approaches to school land ratios, and staging (preschools being incorporated into schools), surely this historic site could be put to educational use more in keeping with its history. It seems like a better option than current government plans to open a high-rise school among high-rise apartments. Visit our website and let us know your thoughts in the member comments section.



In 1935, note the church spire, trams, and east-side shops (since demolished for the Warringah Freeway) on Willoughby Road, Naremburn. Image courtesy of Picture Willoughby, Willoughby City Council.

Sources: “Cultural significance of the school,” submission in response to DA 2021/340 by T Fogarty, Willoughby District Historical Society and Museum; *The Naremburn Story*, by Eric Wilksch; *St Leonard’s Catholic Primary School Centenary 1894–1994* magazine; *The Freeman’s Journal*, 30 October 1919 and 14 April 1932; parish website archive, <https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20160302032930/>; <http://www.lns.org.au/Others/OurChurches/StLeonardsChurch.aspx>; various Trove articles and subdivision records.

Go Loco for Local in Naremburn!

BY KASEY CLARK

Immerse yourself in the vibrant heart of Naremburn and experience everything our local businesses have to offer.

Looking for a tranquil sanctuary amid the hustle of our dynamic suburb? At Select Health Effects, Jill, a seasoned and qualified reflexologist, creates individualised treatments with an array of services to rejuvenate and restore. From soothing facials and detoxifying ion cleanse to natural face lift and innovative Japanese cosmofliting, her adept hands bring out your inner glow.

Giselle's GPower Dance studio offers fitness and dance classes for people of all ages and skill levels. Giselle is a former US Champion and World Finalist in Ballroom/Latin DanceSport. She has performed all over the world with the Broadway production of "Burn the Floor" and on TV programs *Dancing with the Stars* and *So You Think You Can Dance* in both the US and Australia.



The Ivy League offers a little slice of floral heaven on Sydney's Lower North Shore. Cara and her friendly team have a passion for all things weird and wonderful in nature and aim to offer something special. In addition to flowers, the Ivy League offers a selection of plants, homewares, and gifts both in-store and online.

After invigorating your senses, indulge in local culinary delights. Savour the flavours of Thai Tanium takeaway, Old English Fish N' Chips, and Naremburn Pizzeria. Forsyth Café's aromatic coffees offer a perfect pick-me-up, and The Urban Teahouse provides a great afternoon tea experience. Flat Rock Brew Cafe serves as a meeting place for friends of all ages and offers a range of authentic handcrafted beer styles brewed onsite with live music every Sunday night.

RESCUING NAREMBURN FROM FREEWAY MADNESS



Image courtesy of POLA Landschaftsarchitekten GmbH

Naremburn has been hit with three major freeway projects in its history! In addition to sound walls and proper congestion planning, the NPA is advocating for space. Freeway "lidding" – building green space over the freeway – is becoming common overseas to help cities recover space from a bygone era of city and transport planning.

Imagine the space that would be created if this was done up and down the Warringah Freeway! With at least five more years of work to go and 6,000 trees to plant, now is the time for the government to (re)consider this option. A huge thanks to the designer of this lid for allowing us to show you what's happening right now in Hamburg.

Remember to follow us and tag [facebook.com/naremburnmatters](https://www.facebook.com/naremburnmatters) or [@naremburnmatters](https://www.instagram.com/naremburnmatters) to share glimpses of your life in Naremburn :)

Community activities

Naremburn Community Centre

7/8 Central St, Naremburn
Ph: 9967 2917
willpark@willoughby.nsw.gov.au
Contact the centre for room availability.

Willoughby Community Pre-school

Ph: (02) 9427 4260
director@wcp.org.au
Monday to Friday 8am-4pm

Naremburn Progress Association

The NPA meets every second month in April, June, August, October, and December. The annual party will be Monday 11 December. Unless otherwise stated, meetings take place on the third Thursday at 7.30pm at 7 Central St in Naremburn.

Our next meeting dates are 17 August and 19 October. All community members are welcome. To stay up to date and support our work, please join as a member.

Please check our website for details at www.naremburnprogress.org.au or contact secretary@naremburnprogress.org.au.

Volunteers urgently needed! Naremburn Community Playgroup

Volunteers needed to help us get the Naremburn Community Playgroup up and running again. We are looking for parents or carers willing to form the committee to run the playgroup, otherwise we may need to close this valuable community group.

Please contact Pooja at naremburnplaygroup@gmail.com

Tastes of Naremburn

Sunday 17 September, 1-4pm

Bushcare

Bicentennial Reserve Bushcare:
Meet on the 2nd Sunday of each month
9am-12pm. Sue: (02) 9958 2122

The Drive (Flat Rock Gully) Bushcare:
Meet on the 2nd and 4th Friday of each month.
Heidi: 0405 454 300

To join a group, please fill out Willoughby Council's Bushcare Volunteer Application Form at: bushcare@willoughby.nsw.gov.au

Willoughby Community Men's Shed

Warners Park, The Outpost, Northbridge
Monday-Friday, 10am-3pm
(Women attend on Wednesday)

If you just want a chat, you can ring Neville, the shed coordinator, on 0408 204 805. For other inquiries, email the shed at information@willoughbymensshed.com.

Naremburn Community Gardens

Bongalong Street 9am-11am Sundays
Station Street 9am-12pm Sundays
Marks Street - coming soon

The NPA is run by a group of very busy local volunteers. If you can help, please do reach out! We would love to hear from you secretary@naremburnprogress.org.au

Brought to you by the
Naremburn Progress Association



TASTES OF NAREMBURN

Sunday 17 September, 1pm - 4pm
Naremburn village shops carpark

Come sample local Naremburn
produce, meet your neighbours and
support local businesses

**Live music, market stalls,
jumping castle, and a wonderful
celebration of your community!**

Follow us for more Naremburn
community news and events

 @naremburnmatters
 facebook.com/naremburnmatters



This project has
received funding from
Willoughby City Council

