



Democracy in action at Bronte.

## A LESSON IN HOW DEMOCRACY WORKS

Sent in by **Stephen Lightfoot of Save Bronte Village**

**I**n reply to Duncan Horscroft's letter (Children Exploited During Bronte RSL Development Protest, The Beast, January 2013): why is it that those in favour of the multi-storey shopping mall proposal for the Bronte RSL site always try to deny that a development proposal exists? In his letter Duncan Horscroft dismisses protests as being "against something that has not even reached a development application stage". He should be aware that the developer (Winston Langley Burlington) and his RSL partners have presented their proposal to the community on two occasions, have discussed it with Waverley Council and said that they will lodge the DA in February. It is no secret that they want to construct a building that is at least two, and possibly three, times the size allowed under current planning laws and if we don't start objecting now, come February we will have missed the boat.

How is protesting against outsiders imposing an unwanted development on our community a bad role

model for our children? Are we not simply giving our kids a lesson in how democracy works?

Reading Mr Horscroft's talk of the "right" to raise points in a debate, you'd think you need be a signed-up member of the UN Convention on Bronte to have the right to comment on the WLB-RSL proposal. Saying we are not allowed to raise child safety issues related to the WLB-RSL proposal is as ridiculous as it is wrong. Anyone who has children, who knows children or who is remotely interested in children's welfare has the "right" to comment. If we adhered to Mr Horscroft's views on this, we would not be able to talk about child safety when discussing such issues as mandatory pool fences or safety vests being compulsory at Nippers.

Of course we can be concerned about the child safety implications of a major commercial development in the heart of residential Bronte, particularly when it is so close to Clovelly Public School and the Bronte Child Care Centre. The WLB-RSL proposal will cause a significant increase in traffic in all

streets surrounding the RSL site. Rat runs will develop in residential streets including more truck and retail traffic around Clovelly Public School, the Clovelly Scout Hall and the Bronte Child Care Centre.

Even if Mr Horscroft believes the Save Bronte Village group doesn't have the "right" to raise this safety issue, surely he can't argue with the "right" of the Clovelly School P&C to comment. The P&C has put a submission to Waverley Council that raises their concerns over the 'considerable' safety impacts on local school children of a large scale development at the RSL site. They are so concerned that they have requested that the council conduct an independent traffic impact assessment to look at the potential effect on the Clovelly School community.

The child safety impacts of the WLB-RSL proposal are not some fantasy dreamed up by the Save Bronte Village group. Waverley Council's own traffic consultants noted the safety implications of the development proposal and recommended further investigation of these with regard to the Clovelly Public School. The state government long ago recognised that traffic and school kids are a bad mix, and set a reduced 40 km/hr speed limit in school zones around all NSW schools.

**"Anyone who has children, who knows children or who is remotely interested in children's welfare has the "right" to comment."**

Our children have no less a "right" than you or me to enjoy our beachside suburb with its small shops and village environment in safety. Increasing the danger to children on the streets of Bronte is a real issue and we are well within our rights to raise it. No matter how uncomfortable it is for those in favour of this inappropriately sized development proposal, we will continue to voice our concerns about its potential effect on our kids.

iPhones we could time our run to perfection and simply stroll across the road and get the bus home.

That has now all changed and this is what we encountered on New Year's Day: we had to get off the bus just before Circular Quay as this is now the last stop, then we had to walk through a very busy Quay in the heat and up through The Rocks, dodging people walking towards us because nobody seems to walk to the left of the footpath, then up a little hill and finally to the pub.

After a few beers, a few pinot grigios and a ploughman's, we had the dilemma of getting home. After walking back through The Rocks to the Quay, I read that the 339 left from stand 'J' but we could only find up to stand 'D'. After walking aimlessly around for at least five minutes, I asked a Coogee bus driver where we could catch the Clovelly bus. He suggested we get the free bus back towards the city and get the 339 from there. We clambered onto an extremely full bus and got off at the QVB, then we had to walk at least two blocks up Market Street to Castlereagh Street and catch the 339 from there. I asked that bus driver if he knew where you get the Clovelly bus at Circular Quay but he wasn't sure. He then said "no one used that bus route". All I could say to him was that we did. Please bring back the Clovelly to the Lord Nelson Millers Point bus.

**Jo, Clovelly**

### STRANGER DANGER

Hi, I have been an avid reader of The Beast since its invention and love every page. Not many letters make me want to respond but Darren Holt's 'Helping Our Seniors' letter in the January issue made me sit up and think.

Having raised my children in Bondi, and spending most of their younger years telling them not to talk to strangers, not to go into a car, a house or alley with strangers, I feel sorry for that young boy who may have been told the same thing. A 90 year-old who has the ability to actually go over to the supermarket and shop should also have the ability to pick up the phone and get a delivery! Particularly if she lives 'literally across the road' as Darren Holt said, and with an ill husband can't manage to carry the bags. Or

she could have gone to the supermarket and selected her shopping and got it delivered.

On the lady's part, what was she thinking asking a teenage boy into her home and offering him money?! She's lucky she wasn't bashed at her door and robbed.

**Kathy, Bondi**

**"A 90 year-old who has the ability to actually go over to the supermarket and shop should also have the ability to pick up the phone and get a delivery! "**

### JANUARY 2013 ISSUE

Hi guys, just a note to express my disappointment with the current issue, that you would think of including stills, albeit 'censored', from RedTube.

As you would know, there are a lot of children in the areas that you circulate and this magazine is pitched as a general/family type magazine. It's obviously the type of magazine that the readers should feel confident they can leave around the house and it would be Okay for their kids to flick through the pages. I think that some kids would get a bit startled to see these stills and it may teach them a thing or two they did not know but their parents would like them not to know about for some time, or at least not found out about in that way.

The pictures, although covered with the tantalising red star, do not leave much to the imagination. In fact, the captions make things quite clear; "Hot schoolgirls anal threesome is fun". For teenagers, they will now get a hot tip from The Beast on the best free porn sites. Thanks, Uncle James and Dan! . You've certainly made it clear that 'porn is cool'.

Well, you may be suprised but a lot of Clovelly feminists (a.k.a. educated women) with children do not think porn is cool. Can you leave references to it out of your magazine next time please? Thanks.

**Elizabeth Gascoigne, Clovelly**

### COMMENT ON TODD MAGUIRE

I'd like to thank Todd Maguire on his article on page 46 of The Beast's January 2013 edition. I wanted to write an article on the same subject, but Todd has said it all and better than I could have written it.

How true the RSL Club Ltd was a great place for all to meet and socialise. The Club Ltd also for many, many years supported all the sporting and community groups in the area.

It's a shame the recent arrivals into our little hamlet (what village?), and by recent I mean in the last ten years, did not support the RSL Club Ltd. If they had of we would not be in the position we are in now.

**Terry Ireland, Clovelly**

### A NEED TO DIVERSIFY

I'm a keen 'The Beast' reader and really appreciate you guys keeping us informed on local issues. I have to say though a number of recent articles and the overriding tone of the editorials has got my goat.

As an example, articles such as 'Is The Old School Really Dying?' (The Beast, January 2013) promote an 'us' (locals) versus 'them' and 'change is bad' mentality.

What we need more of is balanced or even better opposing views such as Duncan Horscroft's article on page 14. So keep up the good work but a more diverse range of articles would be appreciated.

**Arturo Norbury, Randwick**

### MISSING THE SALIENT POINT

In reply to Duncan Horscroft's letter in the January 2013 issue about children being exploited in regard to the proposed development, either he has missed the main reason for the residents' protest or, as President of the RSL Club Ltd with a vested interest, he is ignoring the salient point: it is not the inclusion of new premises for the Bronte RSL Club - after all, local residents have lived with the club's existence for over 60 years - it is the Harris Farm Markets component of the proposed plan and its hazards to the area that is the problem.

Whilst not agreeing with the spray painting on the club's awning, why shouldn't concerned residents include their children in the protest? It is their future that their parents are fighting for. Rather than showing a bad example, they are simply saying

"do not let greedy developers walk all over you, stand up and fight, at least have your say".

**D. Newman, Bronte**

### THANK YOU... AND THE RSL

Hi guys, thanks so much for a great local mag. Always enjoy it, especially Pearl! A quick note re Duncan's rant on the RSL...

Seems odd when he refers to "our kids". I'm surprised that his kids are involved in the protests if he isn't. I also agree that the club should not have been graffitied and am seriously hoping no one's kids were encouraged to do so.

Meanwhile though, one of the biggest concerns in this whole proposed development (and while the DA hasn't yet been lodged, the developers/RSL have made no secret of their plans - see bronte-rsldevelopment.com) is that children (mine, yours and anyone else's) are most endangered by the potential for increased traffic in the area.

In the 23 years we've lived here (feeling like a real old-timer, no wonder Pearls' rants resonate with me), we've seen an enormous increase in traffic. Every morning on Chesterfield Parade I have my heart in my mouth passing Clovelly Public School as yet another of Pearl's favourite silver SUVs swings out from Inverness Street without noticing oncoming traffic, let alone school children trying to cross, and again at the top of the road at the Arden Street intersection as kids attempt to use the pedestrian crossing.

I think of that poor little boy at Kingsgrove Public School who was run over recently and just thank the lord it hasn't happened here. More local traffic, especially trucks and residents heading down towards Chesterfield Lane, will simply up the ante - no question - and children will be most at risk.

Admittedly, few people allow their children to walk to school these days anyway (which only increases the SUV traffic). But if we had a supermarket under the new RSL high-rise, it would only get worse. More people will drive, more people will drive in from surrounding areas, more mothers will fear for their kids' safety if they walk unsupervised to school - which should be possible in this day and age, for heaven's sake! My kids certainly did. And so it goes on.

We really don't need a supermarket in Bronte shops. Everyone's kids would prefer to live in a quiet neighbourhood unspoiled by excessive retail and the associated traffic. If we don't act to stop this, my children and yours, and Duncan's, will soon be living behind the equivalent of Coogee Bay or Bondi Road. And that's no exaggeration. This proposal is simply the thin edge of the wedge and it's our duty - for our children's future and that of our suburb - to oppose it as mightily as we can.

Thanks again for all that you do! Kind regards and best wishes.

**Joanna Savill, Bronte**

**"More local traffic, especially trucks and residents heading down towards Chesterfield Lane, will simply up the ante - no question - and children will be most at risk."**

### BRONTE RSL CLOSES ITS DOORS

I was saddened by the news of the old club's possible demise. I helped to build the old club in 1946, then I lived in Trafalgar Street and stayed in the Bronte area until 1977 when I moved to the Central Coast.

As a professional musician I played for numerous functions at the club. Now I live in an assisted care set-up. I lost my wife nine years ago. I've just spent six months and two operations in hospital and am 92 years old but still get around. As they say: "Life goes on".

**Regards, Bill Johnston**

### FRUSTRATED

Hi Dan, I understand your frustration with getting a parking fine last month. I'm a resident above the cafe and I was also fined \$234 whilst putting suitcases in the boot of a friend's car.

It was a hot autumn Sunday when no parks were available. I was not interfering with traffic and anyone looking at my activity would see that I was being picked up for the airport.

The biggest concern and the un-

fairness of the matter is that in order to fine me the parking inspector had not belted and was hanging out of the window with a camera, breaking the law to catch this hardened crim trying to get to the airport for a business trip.

I have not paid this fine as yet as I'm struggling with rewarding such behaviour of this parking officer! We have requested the photo as evidence of this major traffic infringement and have been advised that there was none! Total BS if you ask me!

**Oliver, Bronte**

### BRONTE RSL

Dear Beast, I felt I had to make a comment on the letter Duncan Horscroft wrote: what piffle!

I have lived in Bronte for over 20 years and was a member of Bronte RSL. The RSL building the developers, WLB, presented to two meetings recently, means the larger the structure they can get approved, the more money will come to the Bronte RSL Sub-Branch (not the club).

I don't agree with graffiti mentioned by Duncan, but to say it is desecrating the RSL is ridiculous. The RSL is closed! It's got huge gym signs over the front, which is graffiti in a different form! I expect the ex-servicemen and women he refers to are pretty upset with him and his cronies on the committee of the ex-club. I would keep my head down if I were he.

All the best for the New Year and keep up the good work.

**Andrew Prior, Bronte**

### GET OVER YOUR FEELING OF ENTITLEMENT

Dear Editors, in response to a letter you received called "Parking Officers-Part III" in the January 2013 issue, I felt compelled to reply to J in Bondi.

I would like to state for the record that no one likes to receive parking tickets and we all agree being a parking ranger is a thankless job.

Now that this is out of the way, I can't get over J's feeling of entitlement that he/she expects a ranger to knock on the door to ask for the car to be moved when J blatantly admits being on the couch only 5 metres away!

If you are a "reasonable person" you would've parked your car correctly in the first place. A pedestrian with an infant in a pram or a disabled person should not have to danger-