

Northbridge Progress Association AGM 2009

President's report for 2009

Major issues

At the beginning of the year, we were working hard to limit excessive redevelopment of Northbridge Plaza and Council car park site. NPA was represented on two Council Masterplan committees and retained a town planning consultant to advise us. In February, a big meeting of members told us clearly that they wanted a maximum 10% retail expansion of the Plaza and no development on the Council car park. In March, AMP and Council announced that the Masterplan process would be shelved and all work ceased. In all, the Association spent \$29,000 on its campaign, much of which was raised by donations from generous members.

In June, NPA, five other community organisations and two Councils began discussions with RTA about its designs for a safety barrier on the Suspension Bridge. The community was unanimous in supporting the prevention of suicides from the bridge but was adamant that RTA's preferred lowest-cost design did not suit the architectural and heritage values of the bridge. NPA led the call for a design competition. It now appears that RTA will be ignoring strong community views and will shortly proceed with one of its preferred options.

Other local issues

NPA continued to urge action against Northbridge Hotel, which renovated extensively in 2007 without any Council approvals. Recently, Council officers again recommended refusal of the hotel owner's latest amended DA (*see page 3*).

NPA and vocal local residents continued to object to new residential units proposed in Cliff Ave adjacent to the Suspension Bridge on several counts. Council agreed with the community and the proposal is now in Land & Environment Court.

NPA has contributed to numerous other Northbridge issues including: improved lighting at Eureka St roundabout, the Northbridge Park draft Masterplan, improvements to the Bonds Corner cafe, safety nets at Northbridge Golf Club, the planned upgrade of Northbridge Plaza car park, the proposed rezoning of the Plaza car park, upgrading of Harden Park, Council's draft Management Plan and Budget and additional aquatic facilities in Willoughby.

Community activities

During 2009, we supported Council in many of its activities including the Warners Park upgrade and the move (now imminent) of the Branch Library to its new home at the corner of Namoi Rd. NPA has committed a donation of \$2000 to a new Northbridge history section.

We commend Pam Clifford on her valuable research and writings about Northbridge history and thank her for coordinating NPA's 90th birthday celebrations on November 14.

Thank you

My thanks to our invaluable advertisers in *The 202* newsletter. many of whom have been loyal to NPA for several years. Without them, NPA would be much less effective. Please support them all.

Our sincere thanks also go to Chartered Accountant Michael Ball who acts as the Association's honorary auditor. NPA is fortunate to have such a well-qualified, community-minded person to act as its auditor.

I commend our three industrious Ward Councillors for their sincere efforts on behalf of Northbridge residents.

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone else who makes the Association successful: our 430 members (a record, representing about 15% of Northbridge households), our voluntary 'walkers' who deliver *The 202*, our excellent guest speakers and the hard-working members of NPA's Committee.

Northbridge is fortunate to have such a caring and committed community.

Peter McNair