

MARCH 2015

Helping to build a better community



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www.ashfieldcan.info

You're invited

A Community Meeting

*The Swan River and
Ashfield Flats*

**Monday 30th March
7pm**

Ashfield Sports Club, Colstoun Rd

*Politicians, DoP and Swan River
Trust representatives, Town
of Bassendean Officers and
Councillors will be in attendance.*

The purpose of the meeting is the following:

1. To inform local residents and interested parties of the works being done in the area of the Ashfield Flats.
 2. This will include information regarding any proposed future work to be done along this area and in the Ashfield Bush Forever site.
 3. A concern often voiced by residents and groups along the banks of the River is the number of government agencies both state and local that own/manage or have responsibility for different aspects or areas along the river. The complexities of these relationships can often seem extraordinarily confusing. We would like to explore ideas for potentially finding ways of consistent integrated management, collaboration and support between government agencies and the community.
- Submit written questions to -AshfieldCAN PO Box 297, Bayswater 6933

A strong show of community support is essential if we are to be heard! Raise your voice for the River!

Calling all park people! Come and be part of the Gary Blanch Reserve Working Group The group will meet regularly through the year to plan events and develop ideas for future projects. Join us in this exciting, ongoing AshfieldCAN project. **Contact Emma Slavin on emmaslavin@bigpond.com for more information.**

Ashfield **CAN!**

THE DOG'S BREAKFAST is on again!

**Sunday 29th March 2015
8:30am -11:00am**

cooked breakfast for a
gold coin donation.
Walk trails. Games.
Fun for all the family!

**at
Sandy Beach Reserve. Bassendean.**

The logo for the Town of Bassendean features a stylized green tree and a blue wave, with the text "TOWN OF BASSENDEAN" and "Home by the Sea" below it.

? ? ? ? ? ?
 ? **Who am I** ?
 ? In the newsletter
 ? of November 2014
 ? correctly identified by
 ? Laurance DELPHIN of
 ? Ashfield.
 ? The answer was "Ben
 ? Ludlow" who has
 ? contributed to this issue
 ? by writing the "Bay Of
 ? Pigs" story in this issue.
 ? Ben is also a newsletter
 ? sponsor.
 ? Congratulations to
 ? Laurance.
 ? ? ? ? ? ?

ASHFIELD FLATS BURNS



AshfieldCAN working to represent and better our community.

Have your say at the next meeting
 March 16, 7pm, Ashfield Sports Club,
 cnr Colstoun Rd & Haig St.

About 4.00pm on Thursday 5th March Ashfield Flats started to burn. Fire brigades from five areas attended and were restricted by locked gates, wind conditions and the close proximity to the houses. One brigade unit was badly bogged in the inaccessible area. Helicopters came to the rescue of ground fighters and dumped numerous loads of water on the most inaccessible areas. Numerous houses were under threat with smoke and embers reaching Mt Lawley. Most of the land is owned by the DoP. Fortunately there was no reported loss of property. Investigations into the cause are continuing.

The Morning After



NEWS IN BRIEF

Christmas BBQ

The Christmas BBQ wasn't quite the happy relaxed event we imagined it would be. The fire at the Collins house quickly became the focus of the evening. None of us could believe how quickly the fire started and how devastating the final outcome was. The AshfieldCAN supported the Collins family with an immediate donation of \$500 just to help out at that very difficult time so close to Christmas. We also assisted by supplying information and organising where people could go to donate funds, goods and clothing. The Collins family seemed to really appreciate the support that was shown to them by everyone at that time.

Ideas for 2015

In 2015 we are looking for other small projects the community would like to see us involved in. Please don't hesitate to let us know if there is something else you think we could get involved in at the AshfieldCAN.

Route 55

At the last meeting Dave Ring suggested that we should request that the number 55 bus route be extended to go as far as the Bassendean Train station making it easier for people to get connections to places such as Morley, Ellenbrook, Caversham, Beechboro and Midland. On behalf of the AshfieldCAN Dave has written a very eloquent and well researched letter to PTA with this request. We will let you know what the outcome is!

AshfieldCAN New Postal Address

PO Box 297
 Bayswater 6933

Fractured Pipe Causes Waterfall

Due to a burst waterpipe at the top of the Ashfield steps an attractive waterfall was created. The burst was believed to be from the main, servicing Ashfield Parade. As was the case several years ago just 40 metres along, the asbestos pipe fractured and water made an impressive display all the way down to replenish the river.



Mayor's Message

After almost six years of uncertainty the State Government has abandoned their local government reform process which means that our wonderful Town of Bassendean is here to stay.

This is a great outcome for our community and a big thank you to everyone for being so supportive of ensuring we retained our unique identity and town.

This is a clear case of our community spirit prevailing and now we can continue to deliver great benefits for our community.

One of the projects that we are working together to deliver with AshfieldCAN and the State Government Departments is addressing the Ashfield Flats Reserve foreshore erosion issues and the long term management requirements for this important wetland which is also a Bush Forever Site.

The Department of Planning and Swan River Trust have agreed to jointly fund the foreshore restoration work. You may have noticed that the Department of Planning as a result has recently erected temporary fencing, upriver from the boardwalk in preparation for the foreshore restoration works.

It is intended that the foreshore restoration works will commence in March 2015 and that volunteer bush care groups, who have previously been involved with Ashfield Flats Reserve, will be invited to participate in the foreshore planting work scheduled for April and May 2015.

As this much needed restoration work takes shape I will continue to keep you informed of the progress.

Cr. John Gangell, Mayor
 Town of Bassendean

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The importance of our Ashfield Flats BIRDWATCHING IN ASHFIELD

Ashfield flats and the surrounding area has a surprising variety of bird life which sometimes goes unnoticed.



Throughout the year quite a few of the larger birds are obvious but there are also some migratory species that only occur at particular times of the year. For instance in early October the Rainbow Bee-eaters and Kingfishers arrive



The elusive Buff Banded Rail
Photograph by John Goldsmith

from the north. The Bee-eaters are beautiful little birds which have a distinct call that sounds like a mobile phone ringing. They head north again about March. Palid Cuckoos generally turn up in July. As kids we called them Rainbirds and I guess for good reason because June/July is normally the start of our real winter rains. Autumn also brings up the flocks of little black Cormorants which fly up the river in the hundreds. Anyone who's walked regularly on the flats can't help but notice them flying quite low over the river and swimming and feeding in large groups.

Towards the end of summer a family of Splendid Wrens move down the drain to eat grass seeds between the boardwalk and the riverbank. If you catch sight of the male in his breeding plumage of bright blues you can't confuse him with any other bird species. His plumage is so glossy it almost looks plastic. We've even seen them sitting on the rails of the boardwalk but the rest of the year they live further up the drain in dense shrubbery. This year I sighted them on 21st of February and look forward to catching a glimpse of them over the next couple of weeks.

For many years we would notice a single Common Sandpiper arriving from Siberia. Why it didn't join big flocks at the various other parts of the river is a mystery but he kept his range to the area that is fenced from the fishing platform up to the start of the boardwalk.

One species that is now a regular visitor to the area is the Red Tailed Black Cockatoo. No one could possibly miss them and their raucous calls. they seem to have started coming to the area in the last 3 or 4 years and regularly in our lilac tree eating the seeds and nipping the ends off branches.

Occasionally we are rewarded with sightings of more unusual visitors. Until a couple of years ago we had never seen a Pied Stilt on the flats but now notice them more often. We've seen Nankeen Night Herons up the drain, an Osprey on the island and at the end of last summer for the first time ever saw Spotless Crakes in the dry drain. They like the Buff Banded Rail are very secretive birds which live in the long grass and rushes and pop out when they think there's no one about. John must have been very patient to get such a great photo.

So birdwatching can be fun and adds another dimension to your walk. Many of the smaller birds really need to be quite close or be observed through binoculars. Keep your eye out for the brilliant red chest of the male Mistletoe bird or the yellow rump of the Thornbill as it flits away in the little family group.

Over the years we've ticked off the birds we have seen in our yard or in the air space overhead and it tallies over 60. Some like the Sitellas only dropped by once but hey we birdos are always looking to add to our list.

So if you are looking for a way to wile away an hour or two why not invest in a field guide and a pair of small 10x25 binoculars. Depending on quality you can set yourself up for \$100-\$150. We now incorporate birdwatching in all our holidays both in Australia and overseas and don't leave home without our binos. Recently we were in Sri Lanka and sighted a magnificent leopard in Yala National Park which to the others was just a brown blob in the distance. We could just about see the whiskers!

The Addisons

River Relationship Being Denied

To a person, the people living along Ashfield Parade lament the changes imposed by the Town of Bassendean on the riverbank and foreshore. Long term residents and casual visitors once enjoyed an intimate relationship with the river, a relationship that is now denied them, hidden behind a curtain of mostly inappropriate, densely planted vegetation (much of it failing to thrive) and a 'temporary' fence. Some vegetation, it seems, planted to spite the amenity of long term residents.

The question is being asked, 'Was the community consultation process a deception?' The project outcomes are in no way reflective of the large posters displayed at either end of the Parade. Erosion has not been halted. In fact this, the main reason for the project, has been an abject and extremely expensive failure. It was always deceptive for the consultancy firm to claim erosion could be halted by the project scope of works.

Mother Nature plays a role but catastrophic erosion along this small stretch of bank and that occurring along Ashfield Flats is caused primarily by decades old river realignment and an ever increasing procession of boats. The problem will only be solved by a combination of innovative restoration, hard engineering, public and boat owner education and enforcement of boating speed regulations. Furthermore to claim rain runoff is a primary cause of erosion is also a deception. Since major changes to the road profile along Ashfield Parade, runoff from properties and the natural incline of land that once occurred is not a factor. The road, as it was designed to do; now channels most rainwater down the road to the south, into stormwater drains. The narrow, once attractive but now sandy, degraded strip between the road and river has insufficient width to generate destructive water volume. Certainly what little runoff there is could be muted by planting species that open out rather than screen the river.

Curiously, the consultancy responsible for the previous failed and costly six year restoration program seems to have quietly disappeared, to be replaced by another, hence the *Ashfield Parade Action Plan, 2014*. Not only are they and the Town of Bassendean determined to continue along an ineffective, ideological path, they seem willing to break a contract with ratepayers. In the latest Town of Bassendean river restoration project it is clearly stated the 'temporary' fence, agreed to during the public consultation phase and overdue for removal, will now be maintained as permanent and seems to be extending surreptitiously along Ashfield Flats. Worryingly the new consultants now often use the term 'Unauthorised

Access', which implies ratepayers will somehow be breaking the law if they dare walk to, or along the riverbank. On this point, if we do not hold them to account, sitting quietly by the river, doing absolutely no harm, will become illegal.

A study of old photographs depicts a beautiful open river foreshore along the lower part of Ashfield Parade where interestingly the river bank profile seems to have changed little. People picnicked, played and fished along Ashfield Parade reserve without contributing to erosion.

People do recognise however that increased boat traffic is a growing problem but also believe the restoration projects have meant nothing in terms of protecting the steeper clay riverbank or improving their amenity. The continued effort to recreate a tenuous strip of 'native' vegetation along the foreshore seems a forlorn and somewhat naive attempt to turn the ecological clock back centuries.

We invite the Town of Bassendean to respond to the concerns of Ashfield Parade residents.

Bob Brown

**Join us to discuss the River
on Monday 30th March
see front page for details**



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The Bay of Pigs

This might sound like a strange headline but to me it brings back horrible and great memories of the early 60's.

The story started when a US spy plane discovered Soviet Russia deploying nuclear missiles in Cuba not far from many US cities and military bases. The build up of tension the then US President JFK and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev was looming towards a catastrophic nuclear war! And I can tell you it scared us kids to hear my father a WWII air force veteran and his old war buddies saying there wouldn't be a need for foot soldiers because the next war would be guys pressing buttons to launch missiles and super fast high flying bombers.

You're probably thinking what's this got to do with Ashfield?

Well because Australia was completely financially devastated by WWII and Korea we had no offensive or defensive weaponry. So in a gesture of goodwill and support the UK deployed two Volcun Delta Wing bombers to Australia. At that time they were the biggest bombers in the world.

The head master at Ashfield Primary School Mr Weir knew of the arrival date and time of the planes, which were to pass over Perth on their way to the Eastern States (yeah that'd be right). So he allowed all the kids an extended break so that we (and the teachers) might get some sort of glimpse of the planes somewhere in the distant sky.

To his and all the kids surprise the two planes passed right over the Ashfield Primary school, wing tip to wing tip only about 300ft off the ground. I felt like I could almost reach up and touch them! The noise was almost deafening and soon after the smell of burnt jet fuel was quite strong, (it smelt like kerosene. It was an experience never to be forgotten as it was the first time most of us kids had ever seen a jet, let alone heard or smelt them.

As it turned out Ashfield probably got the best view of these monsters. When I arrived home after school Dad was talking to one of his friends Sid Smith. Sid said it only took the bombers 17 or so hours to get here. Dad said "yeah 16 hours 55 minutes to late (sh. . t)".

Ben Ludlow

Request for Information

Information and photographs are wanted about the McNair family-early farmers in Watley c1920's-1950's whose property was named Kenmuir.

Tom McNair was a member of the Bassendean Branch of the Pensioner's League and played in the band at various functions. His brother may be Mr H. G. McNair of 108 Whitfield Street

Bassendean who celebrated his 40th wedding anniversary in 1951.

Contact Janet Megarrity, Local Studies Librarian, Bassendean Memorial Library phone 9279 2966 or email baslib@bassendean.wa.gov.au

"CARTOON COMMENT"



Billy the Kid vs Dangerous Dog on the Ashfield Flats or send your best caption to PO Box 297 Bayswater.

In2 Cricket a Hit at Ashfield Primary School

Cricket has made a big impression on the students at Ashfield Primary School this year with the school establishing its very own In2 Cricket Centre. In2 Cricket is a Western Australian Cricket Association (WACA) endorsed program that is designed to teach kids the basic skills of Cricket in a fun and friendly environment.

With the support of the WACA, the school has been able to become a centre, which meant being able to access resources and equipment that is available to any other junior cricket club. For a registration fee of only \$65, the students receive an In2 Cricket Backpack that contains a bat, ball, drink bottle shirt and hat. Also being a Kidsport club, some parents were able to pay for the fees using this service.

The program is run by the school Principal, Matt Snell and Deputy Principal, Christiaan Moir, who are both qualified cricket coaches. 'We were looking to run a program that provided our kids with the same opportunities that they would get if they joined a local sporting club,' Mr Snell said. 'By running it at the school, the parents don't have to travel anywhere to get their kids to a club, yet they are getting the benefit of being engaged in a sporting activity.' 'We thought if we were able to get a few kids to come along, then we would be happy with the program.'



Mr Snell and Mr Moir have been blown away by the response with over 30 kids attending on a weekly basis. 'To be honest, we did not expect it to be so popular, but when the word got out there, the kids just really wanted to come along and be a part of it. Hopefully the flow on effect will see some of these kids seek to join the local cricket club and in the future and play cricket in a team environment.'

In2 Cricket runs on a Thursday after school on the Ashfield Primary School oval and will continue until the end of Term 1. 'This is just one of the many exciting and engaging opportunities we are providing for the kids here at Ashfield,' Mr Snell said. 'It's a great little school, where everyone knows one another and the support from the parents has been fantastic.'

Ashfield Primary School is located at 65 Margaret Street, Ashfield and can be contacted on 93770211. The website is www.ashfieldps.wa.edu.au if anyone wants to know what else is happening at the school.

Dave Kelly Supporting AshfieldCAN

Thanks to the firefighters who saved several houses on Hardy Road from the fire on the 5th of March. They did a great job. I am concerned however that the State Government's refusal to put in place a comprehensive management plan for the Ashfield Flats may have made the fire worse than it may have otherwise been. Several residents also commented that it was a shame the Bassendean Fire Station and Bassendean Volunteer Brigade were both closed last year by the State Government.

Colin Barnett has abandoned his forced amalgamation plan for local councils. This means Ashfield will stay in the Town of Bassendean. However, councils will not be reimbursed for costs already incurred. WA ratepayers have paid more than \$21 million, including \$200,000 by the Town of Bassendean. These funds could have been put to better use in our local communities.

Our schools also received a nasty shock on the last day of the 2014 year. Local schools like Ashfield Primary and Cyril Jackson Senior Campus have been hit by yet more budget cuts this year – even more than they were already expecting. In all, WA schools have had more than \$220 million in cuts since 2013. I will continue to work with our fantastic local P&Cs to pressure the Government to change its mind.

As always, can I congratulate AshfieldCAN for your continued good community work.

Keep up the good work!

Dave

Dave Kelly – Bassendean State MP
(the electorate of Bassendean includes the suburb of Ashfield)

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Ashfield is part of the State Electorate of Bassendean

How was your street named?

Did you know that many streets in Ashfield are named in relation to World War 1?

Many streets are named for military generals such as General Kitchener for Kitchener Street and Haig Street for General Haig and Sir John French.

Other streets are named in reference to military battles including the Battle of Midos and the Battle of Mons Mons.

Other streets are named for places in France such as Villiers and Anzac Terrace in Bassendean acknowledges the sacrifice of early soldiers.

Smallman Place

Mr Jack Smallman served in the first World War and was a long time Freemason. He was initiated into the Lodge in 1922 and ten years later was Master. He was a woodworker and cabinetmaker at 62 Whitfield Street.

He was a Chairman of the Bassendean Roads Board and long serving Justice of the Peace.

Jack married Violet Hyatt in 1923. Violet died aged 76 07/07/1977.

Sons Don and John were involved in Freemasonry.

Mr Smallman died in 1994 aged 95.

The Smallman family lived at 62 Whitfield Street, Bassendean.

Woolcock Court

Frederick Arthur John Woolcock and Jane Marion Woolcock came to West Guildford in 1910. They had eight children- Myrtle, Lillian, May, Daphne, Vera, Millicent, Frederick, Les, F.A.J Woolcock was a foundation member of the Bassendean Bowling Club.

Mrs Woolcock was a foundation member of the Bassendean Croquet Club. Mrs Woolcock died in 1952.



Notes from Verna
Suburb Manager
Ashfield
Ph: 0432 563 800

I spoke recently with acting Senior Sergeant Holdway at Kiara Police Station. He informed me that while crime has been proliferating in our neighbouring suburbs, Ashfield has had no major crime incidents lately. Congratulations to all those residents who are doing the right things in keeping our suburb a great place to live. In order to keep it this way, the following basic acts need to become second nature to us...

- Get to know your neighbours and chat regularly with each other.
 - Review your home security regularly.
 - Ensure items of value are marked for police identification.
 - If you are spending time out the back, make sure the front of your residence is secure and vice-versa.
 - Ensure tempting items such as laptops and mobile phones are not visible through unsecured windows.
- Well done to all those residents who have joined Neighbourhood Watch and displayed signage on their bins. This also acts as a visible deterrent. If you haven't yet joined Neighbourhood Watch and would like to do so, my e-mail address is : verba1@optusnet.com.au

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