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association

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with the support of
St Margaret's Church

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THE TUCKERBOX



HOLY CROSS ANGLICAN PARISH

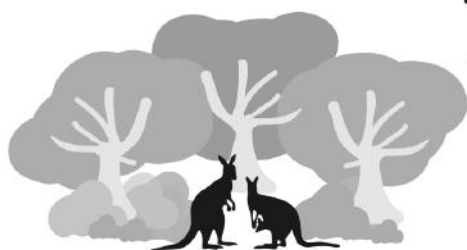
– **Opens every Saturday, 2pm to 4pm** –

The Tuckerbox is a not-for-profit service which helps those struggling to balance their budget. The Tuckerbox has bread, groceries (*milk, fruit and vegetables when available*).

Those on pensions, are low income families or unemployed will find this service very helpful. As a contribution, we ask a small service fee. Foodbank NSW provides the majority of stock.

Corner of Phillip Ave & Antill Street,
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THE WATSON

Newsletter of the Watson Community Association Inc.

Issue 103 – Summer 2019-20

Message from the Chair

Hello Watson, Spring has delivered that mild sunny weather we long for as we thaw out from the long winter. It was great to see so many of you out walking, riding, running and of course enjoying Majura Primary School's spring carnival and other community events.

In this addition, we again look back at 25 editions' worth of community action and news. See pages 4-5 for a trip down memory lane from 2012 to the present. Silvie Eckhardt's 'hints for your summer garden' column has lots of ideas for helping your garden survive (and thrive!) through our hot and dry Canberra summer.

Our Planning Sub-Committee has been busy meeting with members of the ACT Legislative Assembly and advocating on your behalf. Planning, or the lack thereof, is a recurrent theme of these meetings. With an ACT election in the latter half of 2020 we have an opportunity to press our position on these important issues for our suburb. The Planning Sub-Committee's meetings are open to all interested residents. Contact Simon Clarke via email at planning2602@gmail.com.

Look for the *Welcome to Watson* invitation in this issue and mark it on your calendar. With warm weather and sunshine here, it's a great time to get outdoors and engage with your neighbours and fellow Watson residents.

We are also looking for help. Do you have an eye for detail and enjoy writing? Do you have skills in website design? The WCA Inc. is on the lookout for a new Watson editor and website officer. We'd love to hear from you – please send us an email at watsoncommunityassociation666@gmail.com.

On behalf of the WCA Inc. I wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and holiday time.

Leonie Watts, Chair

Summer events

Sunset Cinema - ANBG

21 November to 11 January

Welcome to Watson

Sunday 24 November at 3:00 PM

Handmade Christmas Market 2018

Friday 6 to Sunday 8 December

Lanyon Christmas Carols and Picnic

Saturday 7 December

New Year's Eve in the City

Tuesday 31 December

Summernats 2019

Thursday 2 to Monday 6 January

Australia Day in the Capital

Sunday 26 January

Australia Day Public Holiday

Monday 27 January

WCA Inc. Quarterly Meeting

Monday 3 February at 7:30 PM

National Multicultural Festival

Friday 21 to Saturday 23 February

Enlighten Festival

28 February to 15 March

WCA Inc. Annual General Meeting

Thursday 19 March at 7:30 PM

Contact us

Deputy Chair

Julie Smith

02 6241 8861

www.watson.org.au

www.facebook.com/WCA1inc/

watsoncommunityassociation666@gmail.com

Watson Community Association Inc.

The Watson Community Association Inc. (WCA Inc.) aims to promote, protect and enhance the social, cultural and physical environment of the community of Watson, and the welfare, community spirit and quality of life of its residents. It also aims to inform the community about issues concerning Watson. One way the WCA Inc. does this is through the quarterly production and distribution of the Watson – a community newsletter.

The next WCA Inc. quarterly meeting is scheduled for **Monday, 3 February at 7:30 PM** - at the Hall in the Fair on Tay Street, Watson.

All welcome.

Reports ...

Welcome to Watson

Three long term Watsonians enjoyed a Sunday afternoon chat at The Knox with three new families at the spring Welcome to Watson event – held on Sunday, 15 September. Two couples moved here from Sydney for work, and a young family from Hackett bought a house here in preparation for their new baby. Common friends were identified in the usual Canberra manner. Contact details were exchanged to arrange the lending of lawn mowers and arranging new homes for toys.

Welcome to Mark and Marion; Kate; Yve, Max and Liam; Fee, Matt and Zoe. We hope you'll feel right at home in Watson.

Our next 'Welcome to Watson' event will be held on Sunday, 24 November – invitation on Page 10.

Aileen Conroy, Event Organiser



Canberra Music Education School

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Kelly Sturgiss

Kelly is a piano, singing and flute teacher with over 10 years of teaching and performance experience. Kelly has a diploma in music and also holds a Bachelor of Fine Art, in which she has included music and sound into her work.

Kelly teaches all styles, levels and ages.

Lessons are \$35 per ½ hour

For enquiries, contact Diane on 0414 788 380

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E: canberra@aie.edu.au

Piano lessons in Watson

Ella Ragless is teaching piano in Watson. Ella is an active musician, enthusiastic about teaching anyone keen to learn piano in the inner north, including young children. Ph 0490 018 070

<https://www.musicteacher.com.au/ella-ragless/piano-lessons/>

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The Knox motto is 'Made in Watson' which means we use local and seasonal produce!

A chilled café where you can sit back and relax with family and friends but still enjoy amazing food and drinks.

Keen an eye out for our new menu and exciting weekly specials!

Opening hours:

Brekky and lunch 7 days a week

Monday-Friday 7:00 am to 4:00 pm

Saturday-Sunday 7:30 am to 4:00 pm

Dinner

Tuesday-Saturday from 4:00 pm

Are you bushfire ready?

The ACT is fondly referred by many as the “Bush Capital”, and we pride ourselves in having open space between our suburbs and throughout our streets, bringing nature well into the heart of our city.

In Watson, we live, work and play besides, or close to open spaces, reserves and nature parks. We are classified as living on the city-rural interface. We need to take action each and every fire season to prepare ourselves, our families and our homes – **PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.**

Still think a bushfire couldn't affect you?

Do you like to:

- Bushwalk or hike?
- Walk the dog in the reserve of an afternoon?
- Picnic or drive in the bush or country?
- Camp or 4WD in remote bushland or country areas?
- Enjoy orienteering or bird watching?
- Horse riding?
- Enjoy weekends travelling to the coast or mountains?

Then you too are at high risk from bushfire - **PREPARE. ACT. SURVIVE.**

PREPARE

Prepare yourself

- Know your risk! Check if your house is located in a bushfire prone area by searching for it on the online map – see www.esa.act.gov.au/community-information/bushfires/in-the-suburbs/#bushfireproneareas.
- Prepare your exit strategy by planning your exit routes in the event of an emergency.

Prepare your Bushfire Survival Plan

- Download and complete a Bushfire Survival Plan or the MyFirePlan smartphone app. This plan contains everything you need to know about bushfire safety and survival. Make sure everyone in your household is brushed up on the plan regularly!

ACT

Get your home bushfire ready by following the house preparedness tips. Prepare your emergency kit.

SURVIVE

Maintain your garden throughout the season.

Keep up to date with the ACT Emergency Services Agency via their website, or Facebook.

For more information visit www.esa.act.gov.au/bushfireready/.

Living Streets Association

'Living Streets Association' is a community organisation which promotes friendly community by the means of community building. Through "youth-led" community events, we can encourage participation by community members, enhance the experience of connecting to others and with each other, and enable children to develop social competence and social responsibility.

As individuals, we are often looking for a sense of belonging within ourselves and our community. Our group of Living Streets Association have a goal to bring people in the community together and create a sense of belonging for everyone. Our inspiration for these goals comes from the ancient wisdom, *The Great Unity in the Li Yun Chapter of 'The Book of Rites'*.

The Great Unity dreams of a community that has the same heart and goals, and where people display civic awareness. Leaders are ready to put their whole hearts into serving the community, listen to the voices of residents, and invite anyone with ability to come and contribute together.

Community members trust each other and treat everyone with kindness and goodwill. They will take the initiative to greet others first and watch over each other. Upon seeing neighbours' parents and grandparents, they will take time to chat a little longer. They will love and educate their neighbours' children as their own.

The elderly can retire in their own neighbourhoods and share their experiences and wisdom of life with the younger generations. Young and working-aged people contribute their talents and abilities to the overall welfare of the community. Children can find playmates in their neighbourhood, play together on the street. This gives them a sense of belonging and attachment to their neighbourhoods, therefore having a safe and happy childhood.

The community has facilities for people with disabilities, such as disabled parking spaces, ramps and paths. Resources are shared within the community. Individuals have close relations with their neighbours so there is no feeling of loneliness and isolation.

People in the neighbourhood community, regardless of age, exerts innate compassion to actively contribute towards the public interest. People have the courage to take responsibility for community affairs. Whether you are nine or ninety, you can pick up some small responsibilities such as delivering community tabloids or do bigger tasks of planning for the neighbourhood.

People place trust in others and can faithfully look after each other. Therefore, there is no need for doors to be locked because there is no theft, no deliberate destroying of others' possessions. The successful achievement of the vision of The Great Together will result in contentment and freedom for all community members.

Living Streets Association

Looking back ... editions 76-100 of the Watzon

In early 2019, we published the 100th edition of the Watzon. This is the fourth and final installment in our series looking back at Watzon's earlier editions. Here we look at issues 76-100.

Issue 76 to 100 of *the Watzon* covered the period from 2012 to 2019 - showcasing the thriving community spirit and diversity of Watson. As well as growing frustration about local planning, development and infrastructure issues, it reported continuing progress on rehabilitation of the Watson Woodlands, and displayed the poetic, artistic and culinary talents of local residents. Article series on native birds, soldiers, gardening, cooking, waste disposal recycling reflected local passions and interests, interspersed with sad obituaries for longstanding residents.

The Watzon reported several community events organised by WCA Inc. volunteers, including Parties at the Shops, Walks in the Woodlands, a Community Picnic, and Brushstrokes in the Bush – remember the Leaping Lizards? In 2017, a local resident started the 'Welcome to Watson' events, and a Dog Lovers Picnic was held in 2019. We celebrated the 50th anniversary of Watson in 2013, not only with a Party at the Shops, but also by distributing the Watson history brochure to all households with the Watzon.

Residents' stories about growing up in Watson next to 'the back strip', and the joys of living in Watson with its own special Mt Majura backdrop added some of our own histories.

YWAM established a community garden as one of many valued contributions to our local community, and the community mosaic was refurbished at the Watson shops. New murals featuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artistry were also celebrated in Watson. In 2012, local children won prizes for their creative entries for the WCA Inc. competition commemorating a decade since the successful campaign to save the Watson Woodland.

WCA Inc. calls for a wildlife corridor and a north Watson masterplan put to the ACT government in 2016, and a WCA Inc. Community Survey elicited residents' views on local priorities in 2017. A green and welcoming living environment were key. Unhappiness at the state of the old petrol station site and Summernats burnouts noise were recurrent themes.

In 2018, Watson's children brought their energy and ideas on kangaroos, cows and humans to 'Living Streets' discussions on planning for the undeveloped spaces at sections 74 and 76 north Watson.

The 'Mr Fluffy' tragedy also featured in several issues, with the lives of more than a dozen Watson families dislocated by the remediation processes.

Central to planning issues during the period of these 25 issues were concerns at the numbers of new dwellings constructed in north Watson, and complaints about ad hoc planning, inadequate infrastructure, and mature tree removal. Several Watzon issues noted the slow progress regarding a WCA Inc. request for a Master Plan to be prepared for new developments in north Watson.

Consultations with the National Capital Authority were reported, with disappointment at Watson's disconcerting invisibility to the planners as a Gateway to Canberra. Redevelopment of the old Watson High School site was foreshadowed in Watzon from 2016, in the context of earlier government promises it would remain a community space. Developer plans for Kamberra on the Federal Highway were also reported.

Recipe

This recipe from the “*Capital Region Farmers Market (CRFM) Recipe Book*”, published in 2014, was contributed by Fiona Harmer, a member of the CRFM Cookbook Committee.

Spinach and pine nut frittata

Serves 4

6 **eggs**

250 g **cottage cheese**

1 big bunch of **spinach**, washed, steamed and chopped or use a packet of frozen chopped spinach

100 g (at least) **parmesan cheese**, flaked or grated

100 g **pine nuts**

2 slices of good **wholemeal bread**, cut into 1 cm cubes

pepper

1 **spring onion**, chopped small

No piecrust, no mess, no fuss!

Beat the eggs.

Mix in the cottage cheese.

Throw in a handful of the parmesan, plus the pine nuts and spring onion.

Squeeze the bread cubes with the spinach to make the cubes a little soggy.

Mix the spinach and bread cubes with the eggs and cheese.

Spread in a small greased flan dish.

Top with extra parmesan and pepper.

Cook in an oven at 180 degrees for 30-40 minutes, until browned and set in the middle.

Serve immediately or keep until later.

This dish can be frozen and reheated.

Variation: You can add cooked chicken or substitute chopped red capsicum for the spinach or substitute cooked polenta for the bread cubes. It's all delicious.

Local services



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Do you follow us on Facebook?

Please take the time today to follow us for regular updates, information and events happening in and around Watson.

See www.facebook.com/WCA1inc/

Woodlands Working Group

The Woodlands Working Group was formed as a sub-group of the WCA Inc. to protect, enhance and care for the valuable patch of threatened native Yellow Box/Red Gum Grassy Woodland known as Justice Robert Hope Park. Much work has been done to decrease the effects of years of commercial use, and increase indigenous species of flora and fauna in the park.

As those readers who have been in the Woodlands in recent months will have observed, the drought conditions that persisted through last winter combined with overgrazing by kangaroos and rabbits have left the Woodlands with a very sparse groundcover. These conditions have also been tough on the native wildflower plantings undertaken by members of the Working Group around this time last year.

On a more positive note, the trees and larger shrubs are still looking healthy despite the dry conditions. Although the ACT Parks and Conservation Service undertook a major rabbit control program in the Woodlands last autumn, already the number of rabbits is again increasing noticeably. Rabbit grazing and digging makes our task of restoring the native ground cover diversity particularly challenging. ACT Parks and Conservation Service has offered to fence some of the areas where we have established patches of the native Kangaroo Grass. That should help us improve the speed of restoration of the native ground cover once the drought breaks.

At the last meeting of the WCA Inc. there was agreement about the desirability of enhancing the wildlife values of that part of the Hackett horse paddocks that connects the Woodlands with the Mount Majura Nature Park. It was considered that there are at least two options to achieve this:

1. Re-zone the relevant part of the horse paddocks from the current zoning to Nature Park (potentially through use of the area as an offset for development approved elsewhere) and undertake a restoration program across the whole of the connecting land.
2. Undertake some enhancement tree and shrub plantings in connective patches or strips through the paddocks and continue to use the remainder of the area for horse agistment.

Our concern is that if residential development was eventually allowed to occur between the Woodlands and the rest of the Mount Majura Nature Park this would largely isolate the wildlife habitat of the Woodlands from the rest of the nature reserve and thus greatly diminish its conservation values. After all the effort the Watson community has put into protecting and restoring the Woodlands over the past 20 plus years the latter outcome would be extremely disappointing.

The significant amount of rubbish that has blown into the Woodlands from the current residential development along Negus Crescent is a concern and the WCA Inc. will be writing to the ACT Minister for Planning and Land Management to ask him to request the developers remove the rubbish.

John Briggs
Watson Woodlands Working Group Convenor

Looking back ... editions 76-100 of the Watzon (cont'd)

Also from 2016, the Watzon reported that the WCA Inc. had requested the ACT Government create a wildlife corridor connecting Justice Robert Hope Park to Canberra Nature Park. Housing developments of open woodland areas behind Prime, at the Carotel, and at Channel 10 elicited dismay, especially when approval was granted to remove several mature native trees.

With new estates opened up in north Watson, the number of Watson dwellings has nearly doubled, and traffic, parking, paths/cycle paths, open space and other infrastructure issues attracted attention over this period. In 2018-19, the Watzon reported that over 100 concerned residents turned out *on-masse* to oppose a proposed Draft Variation to the Territory Plan for Sections 74 and 76.

Issue 89, began a series on the 'High Fliers' of Watson: this featured local native woodland bird species such as the nationally Regent Honeyeater (not seen in Watson since a breeding event in 1996), the Swift Parrot, Owls, Gang Gangs and Black Cockatoos. One edition reported on the variety of wildlife at the Watson Woodlands – blue tongue lizards, bobtail goannas, shinglebacks and echnidas as well as tadpoles and kangaroos. Even an out of place Apostle bird was sighted there. Dogs on leads only in the Woodlands, was the plea.

The federal government inexplicably decided that the WCA Inc's. remediation of the Woodlands could be counted as an environmental offset to nearby housing development behind Prime TV. Since then, the WCA Woodlands working group has continued its remediation efforts alongside ACT Government activity, with the Watzon reporting progress on removing internal fences, controlling rabbits, and many new plantings of native trees, shrubs and grasses which have added to biodiversity in the area. Amidst ongoing controversy about the ACT's kangaroo cull, residents appreciated seeing the quietly grazing families of kangaroos that sought refuge in the Woodlands, notwithstanding some concerns at additional grazing pressure.

Another Watzon series reported on five soldiers who were associated with Watson in various ways, such as holding soldier settler blocks in the Watson area in the decades before it became a suburb. One edition of Watson noted that the suburb's history was closely linked to moving the Department of Defence to Canberra in the 1960s.

As always, a constant in the life of the suburb has been the children, with the preschool Fete, the Majura Spring Festival, activities at Rosary Primary, and the Scouts featuring regularly in Watson.

For most of the past three decades too, a constant has been the support of Signadou for the printing of the Watzon – for this support the WCA Inc. offers a sincere and heartfelt thanks and appreciation.

And most of all, thanks are duly extended to the numerous volunteers, organised by Liz Grace, who distributed the Watzon to the several thousand Watson households, four times a year, every year since 1990. And a special thanks to our editors and co-editors, listed below.

Anne Milligan (1990-1992); Julie Smith (1993-2000); Lyn Davey (2001); Carrie Wright (2002); Petra Lean, Loredana Ford (2003), Simone Abbott (2004-05); Carrie Wright (2006); Nicole Spencer, Barbara Lang, Marija Lemic (2007); Heike Phillips, Martin Blaszczyk (2008); Penny Campbell, Kimberley Britt, Sarah Clough (2009-12); Richard Larson/Karen Bulpitt (2013); Danae McCulloch (2014-16); and Fiona Hill-Stein (2016-).

Local services



The WCA Inc. particularly wishes to thank the Australian Catholic University (ACU), Signadou Campus in Watson, for printing this Newsletter as a community service.

The Campus has about 1,000 students and is conveniently located 5km from Canberra's city centre.

For more information on courses available please call them on 02 6209 1100—Mon to Fri 8:00 am – 5:00 pm or visit www.acu.edu.au.

Community Notices

Rosary hosts the Catholic Primary Schools Netball Carnival

On 19 October 2019, Rosary Primary School had the opportunity to host the Catholic Primary Schools Netball Carnival at the Calwell Playing Fields. Over 20 schools, 100 teams and 1,000 players participated in the Carnival.

What a fantastic day it turned out to be! Apart from the wind, which was the one thing out of our control, it was a beautiful day.

All the teams enjoyed their games and many representatives from other schools commended Rosary on the excellent organisation of the day. Everything ran smoothly and the students enjoyed their games, the company of friends, the support of families and the goodies on offer.

Enormous thanks are extended to the Rosary community – teachers and parents for the huge effort that went into making the day a success. Special thanks to the staff members who led the organisation of the carnival. They took on this huge task without hesitation and led with enthusiasm, and a calm, organised approach that made everyone feel highly supported. Special thanks also to the parents who took on lead roles on committees. Heartfelt thanks also go out to the many, many parents and family members who helped out on the day and to the teachers who supported in a myriad of ways in the lead up and on the day. A special mention to Merici College – with sincere thanks for helping to fill our volunteer roster with a generous commitment of time.

Thanks again to everyone who contributed in some way – without you, this carnival would not have been the wonderful success that it was. Blessings upon you all.

Vicky van der Sanden, Principal

Poem

The world goes round

The Whistler Lazing under a hazy wattle
He's down from a long day done
The eyes a languid shade of shut.

The first few notes are drifting out
Slowly, soft, unsure
And just a touch of tempo.

His whistling songs come easy now
When clouds are white and slow
Now that the fog is gone.

The melody comes with the drift of the day
Written in the air
Wispy and whispery at first.

Then warm and rich of sound, he sits up
And clear as a bellbird's call
The melody is born.

Mozart stirs, McCartney smiles
But when the magpie stops to listen
He knows it's done.

*Laurie McDonald
Majura Café Poets*

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WELCOME TO WATSON

Please Join Us

The Watson Community Association Inc. invites newcomers to Watson to a casual, free event!

Friendly locals are also invited to welcome our new neighbours

**Sunday, 24 November
at 3:00 - 4:30 PM**

**The Knox Cafe, Watson Village
Shops**

Local groups, organisations, businesses,
sporting & hobby clubs have been
invited

More information:

watsoncommunityassociation666@gmail.com

Watson property sales

Ever wondered about house prices in Watson?

We've compiled a list of Watson sale prices for the period 1 July – 30 September 2019 for you.

Exchange (sold date)	Address	Price	Type
01/07/2019	49 Irvine Street	\$905,000	House
31/07/2019	28 Bettie McNee Street	\$780,000	House
26/08/2019	13 Manning Street	\$730,000	House
25/09/2019	56 Irvine Street	\$715,000	House
27/07/2019	33 Knox Street	\$715,000	House
07/08/2019	62 Higinbotham Street	\$670,000	House
03/07/2019	62 Whitmore Crescent	\$545,000	House
26/09/2019	46 Tay Street	\$450,000	House
11/07/2019	81 Negus Street	\$370,000	Land
01/08/2019	223 Aspinall Street	\$635,000	Townhouse
30/09/2019	43/215 Aspinall	\$601,000	Townhouse
28/09/2019	41/15 Aspinall Street	\$510,000	Townhouse
27/08/2019	11/10 Federal Highway	\$480,000	Apartment
20/08/2019	66/21 Aspinall Street	\$375,000	Apartment
04/07/2019	53/23 Aspinall Street	\$365,000	Apartment
24/09/2019	73/20 Federal Highway	\$353,000	Apartment
24/07/2019	55/35 Tay Street	\$315,000	Apartment
01/07/2019	9/23 Aspinall Street	\$260,000	Apartment
15/08/2019	7/156 Knox Street	\$195,000	Apartment

The contents of this list and other ACT house sale prices and information are freely published online.

Summernats

Summernats is an annual motor festival held at EPIC in early January, attracting large crowds from interstate, as well as locally. The WCA Inc. has worked with Summernats organisers over several years - raising concerns principally around noise, smell and visitor behaviour and establishing a less combative relationship.

The WCA Inc. recommends Watson residents report any concerns during the event by contacting **Access Canberra** on **13 22 81** – the official government process. Access Canberra will on forward any reports it receives to the Summernats organisers.

During the event, a representative of WCA Inc., along with other stakeholders, will attend a meeting each evening with Summernats organisers. The WCA Inc. will also use this forum to report any concerns to the Summernats organisers.

Summernats will be held from 2 – 6 January 2020. Further information is available at www.summernats.com.au.

Planning Sub-Committee report

Let's keep Watson livable and sustainable!

Lots of developments are afoot - both across our suburb and within the Planning Sub-Committee of the WCA Inc. As you read through the latest planning news below, think about whether you'd like to get involved.

Planning activities recently seem to have meant lots of time in political and corporate offices. We have met with Ministers Mick Gentleman and Shane Rattenbury, Opposition members Candace Burch and Elizabeth Lee; plus meeting with Geoff Rutledge (EPSD). We are still trying to meet with Minister Stephen-Smith.

Unsurprisingly, the politicians talked the talk and told us how much they were listening. We clearly stated what we wanted and undertook to hold them to account if undertakings were not kept. With less than 12 months to the next ACT election we have a window of opportunity to prosecute our case.

Specific undertakings of interest were:

- There will be no lessening of green space on the Watson High School site.
- Minister Stephen-Smith has been clear that she wants recreational space set aside on Blocks 74 & 76 before other planning is done.
- All the mature trees of these blocks will be retained.
- They are seeking innovative housing suggestions for these blocks.
- They are thinking in the order of 200 & 300 dwellings on these blocks.
- Lessons have been learnt from the Norrebro and Ridge developments (debacles?)
- While no plans are current for road upgrades there is awareness that some pedestrian and cycle linkages need work in Watson.
- Any businesses wanting to lease space in the new Service Station redevelopment will need to show that they can manage parking requirements.
- Height limits will be enforced and be similar to Gateway limits.
- Sadly, the question of a public toilet for Watson was met with "No!" No reason was given.

We also asked about any plans for the land south of Antill Street (Mt Majura horse paddocks) and were told it is zoned NUZ3 – Hills, Ridges and Buffer Zones. We assured them that any attempt to change that would be met with concerted community action.

The Planning Sub-Committee will keep monitoring all these issues and advocating on your behalf. We also plan to continue public comment through the Watson, letters to papers etc, the WCA Inc. Facebook and website etc. We will also monitor DA's and be involved in (or auspice) public meetings of Kurrajong candidates so we know where they stand.

Please feel free to contact me via email (details overleaf) with comments, questions, suggestions or requests. I will try to respond in a timely fashion.

Finally, I was privileged to be asked to speak to the young people involved in Watson's Living Streets group. It was inspiring to see and hear their passion, values and commitment. They have a great dream for community building, outlined in their article.

They know there are hurdles, including public liability. If anyone has expertise that might help, please email me at planning2602@gmail.com.

*Best wishes to all,
Simon Clarke, Chair*

Hints for your summer garden

How to make your garden summer strong

With average maximum January temperatures of 28.5 degrees, a Canberra summer can be hotter than a curry from Watson's own Lolo and Lola. And there is no respite as the Bureau of Meteorology's outlook is for much of the same with a warmer and drier than average spring 2019 predicted to be followed by a hot and dry summer 2019-2020.

With climate change increasing the length and severity of droughts and soil moisture levels significantly declining, Canberra, along with many other cities, is planning to adapt to a changing climate. One good news story is the government planting 17,000 trees over the next four years to help restore Canberra's declining canopy cover to counter urban heat islands that can be 10 degrees hotter than more shaded areas. Such a strategy can be used on a smaller scale to cool your garden in summer and retain moisture in the soil. Planting deciduous trees or growing a vine such as a grape or wisteria on a patio on the western side of your house will protect from hot afternoon sun in summer but let in winter light.

Some other longer-term strategies include replacing the lawn with an alternative that uses less water. Artificial grass or tanbark won't require any watering but using meadow plants, drought resistant ground covers or even clover can also use far less water and save you time on mowing. Installing a water tank to make use of water that would otherwise run off your roof means less guilt about watering your thirsty vegetables and favorite flowers.

Gardens can be adapted to better cope with Canberra's hot summers and an increasingly hot future with some small fixes too. You can reduce your watering needs by choosing cacti, succulents, native plants or drought tolerant varieties. Watering your garden in the mornings or evenings and spreading a thick layer of natural mulch will reduce evaporation so less water goes further. I try to save water that would otherwise go down the drain in large containers and use this to give my plants a much-needed drink.

Cheers!

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