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Bridging the Gap - Building Social Cohesion in Australia
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Bridge to Beach Bulletin

Welcome to the first Bridge to Beach Bulletin

The Bridge to Beach community along with Greenacre in South West Sydney are the two areas which together form the Benevolent Society's Bridging the Gap Social Cohesion Project. The Project brings together community work, research and advocacy. Thank you to everyone who has helped make our first couple of months in the area such an interesting, worthwhile and welcoming experience. Over the last two months we have met with over 30 people, including residents of the community and representatives from organizations / groups connected to the area.

Community Show & Tell Drives We have had so much fun doing these and the knowledge we have gained from the locals has been amazing. The idea is to drive around the community with a local resident and ask them to show us some of their significant places in the area...we also have a photographer come along to have a visual record. We asked lots of questions and will feature a community member that participated in a show & tell drive in our next newsletter.

Suggested Ideas / Projects Meeting with community members and organisations has been wonderfully inspiring. So many people have so many different and exciting ideas for community projects/ initiatives, we have listed just a few for you to ponder....Mural Boards, Sports in the Neighbourhood, Flags for Bridge, A Community Workshop, Positive Media Campaign, Beautification of Main Rd, Buy Local Project, Intergenerational Activities, Identifying a Theme for the Area, Moving Bus Stop, Local Park Improvement. As community workers these ideas sound fantastic and we look forward to getting our teeth into an idea or two...we would love your help... any thoughts, offers, more than welcome.

Funding Update Unfortunately we were not successful in our first application for an Australian Research Grant. The Benevolent Society along with our University partner (University of Western Sydney) are considering making a new submission in the next round – first quarter of 2009. When we hear more news on this we will let you know.

Getting around the Bridge to Beach Area Transport solutions – tell us yours...

One of the issues that comes up regularly – not just in Toukley but across the Central Coast is the challenge of transport availability. We are keen to further our discussions with the Regional Coordinator from the Ministry of Transport on transport in the Bridge to Beach area. Call or email us if you have some ideas (it does not matter if its an "out there" idea we want to hear it). There maybe an opportunity for a small amount of funding to be applied for to put a transport related project in place in the Bridge to Beach area.

Margot Castles

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Bridge to Beach

AREA STRENGTHS

**People, Wisdom, Pride, Hope, Enthusiasm,
Location, Climate, Schools**

Toukley in the 1920's and 1930's

When we first came here (in 1923), we came on horseback.... There was no bridge and you had to come by launch from Wyong and get off at a little jetty. On the Gorokan side there was virtually nothing and all around Toukley there was just bush. (Alwyn Quoy) The Ecology of the Tuggerah Lakes. An Oral History by Anthony Scott 1998.



Photograph taken on a Community Show & Tell Drive.
Photography by Dionne Molina.

Toukley - Walk the Town Centre

We are very happy to be able to support the Together for Toukley Working Group initiative of Walk the Town Centre. These two walks with community members (one day, one evening walk) will look at how we can make the CBD a safer place for all. Further info contact Annette Evans – Wyong Shire Council – 4350 5524 or Margot or Hellen.

Where to next? The Benevolent Society has contracted Frazer/Howard consultants to do a discovery report on older people (especially frail older people)in the Bridge to Beach Community. Not only will they be looking at data, they will also be looking to see what services are provided for the elderly and how well older people feel connected to their community.

Hellen & Margot will be gathering interested parties together to discuss how we could move the idea of some mural boards for the area forward.

In the new year we hope to host a community gathering / event as a way of introducing ourselves to the larger community and hear thoughts and ideas on the Bridge to Beach project.

Hellen Dib

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