



GNCA

Griffith/Narrabundah
Community Association
www.gnca.org.au

NEWSLETTER Vol 46 September 2021

There is no escape from Covid

In our April 2020 Newsletter, we forecast that COVID 19 would be worse than the fires, smoke and hail we experienced in 2019/20. We used the word Apocalyptic - and so it came to pass!

We were going really well in the first half of 2021 and then along came Delta all the way from Sydney! It looks like we won't be back to anything like normal until 2022. Please support our valued GNCA Sponsors during these difficult times.

The ACT might be ahead of Australia's other jurisdictions in the race to vaccinate our residents, but globally our national performance is woeful. In early September, we had only administered 81 doses per 100 people. This is above the world average of 70 but well below the leader of the pack (UAE) at 185 doses. Most European countries have results over 100 (UK, 134; Germany 123) and they are still struggling to contain the effects of the virus. See <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/covid-vaccination-doses-per-capita>? For the up-to-date numbers.

We must be patient, considerate and get vaccinated!

It looks like we will have to wait until 2022 before we can get back to anything like 'normal'. In the meantime, we have to patient, considerate and thoughtful. During lockdown, pick up the phone and talk to friends and family. See how your neighbours is going if you haven't seen them for a few days, and keep wearing masks and checking-in, when you must go out of the house. Above all get **vaccinated!!**

New Artwork for Manuka



They - For Our Rainbow Children. Painted by the three artists, Aeode, Byrd and Hoon (above) on the old Evoenergy sub-station No. 69 in Manuka, with the support of an arts grant from the ACT Government. A bit of colour to spread some joy.

The Manor House Saga Continues

Demonstration Precinct Rejected

The Manor House saga has a history of its own. It started when Caroline le Couteur, a Greens MLA, called on the ACT Government in June 2017 to deliver one or more world-leading demonstration housing precincts that would include at least 600 dwellings in each precinct. She wanted the ACT to learn from the best examples in Australia and overseas to deliver a project to showcase on a national and international stage and provide a springboard for growth in the ACT.

She did not specify where any of these precincts would be situated, and the proposal was rejected by the Planning Minister Mick Gentleman.

Precinct replaced by Demonstration Housing

Instead of a precinct, the Minister offered a competition to deliver demonstration housing projects.

This called for proponents to put forward innovative housing delivery models in early 2018 to deliver sustainable and innovative design. A 4-unit two storey 'Manor House' was one of the six selected and in 2019 two presentations were made to the GNCA. After each presentation we made it clear to the proponent and the government that we would not support this proposal being built on a block, where the housing is low rise, predominantly single dwelling and low density in character (RZ1).

It turned out that this design was not even innovative, it was already being used in NSW.

Changing the Territory Plan (DV375)

To build the 'Manor House' the government had to change the Territory Plan, the Griffith Precinct Code and the Multi-Unit Housing Development Code, for just one block. It was an attack by the government on the integrity of its own planning system. When the Variation (DV 375) was tabled in February 2021 it generated anger and mistrust in the local community and over 520 objections were lodged.

The Petition

While ACTPLA was considering what it should recommend to the Minister, we submitted a petition, sponsored by Leader of the Opposition, Elizabeth Lee, requesting that "*the Assembly reject Draft Variation 375 so the character and amenity of Griffith can be maintained.*"

More than 850 signatures were obtained to support the petition and it was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 3 August 2021. Although most of the signatories were from Griffith and Narrabundah, people from 70 suburbs in the ACT supported the petition. It is not just NIMBY. Our observations confirm that there is widespread unhappiness with the current planning system.

Visits to MLAs

We visited, Elizabeth Lee and Peter Cain of the Liberals, Shane Rattenbury and Rebecca Vassarotti of the Greens and Louise Crossman, Senior Advisor to Planning Minister Mick Gentleman to discuss the issue. Kurrajong MLA Rachel Stephen Smith refused to talk to us.

What happens next

We are still waiting for ACTPLA's recommendation to the Planning Minister, and we are advocating that the legislation will be referred to the Assembly's Planning Committee, and that it will hold public meetings on the proposed changes to the legislation.

We have been told that the government only wants to change one block, but there is nothing to stop developers proposing similar changes to other blocks of similar size anywhere in the ACT.

We badly need a planning system that provides certainty and trust.

Capitol Hotel starts to take shape



Stage 1 of Capitol Hotel on 3 August 2021, before Covid lockdown, starting to look good.

The ACT Government has now approved the construction of Stage 2 of the new Capitol Hotel in Manuka. However, this is subject to 12 Conditions specified by ACTPLA. Several of these were related to actions the developer must undertake before commencement of work and should be easy to comply with. For example, finalising the parking and traffic management plan during construction and the Stormwater Management Plan should not be difficult. Then there is approval to be obtained from Evoenergy and Icon water, that should be easy as well.

Several of the conditions are associated with how Stages 1 and 2 are linked. For example, the locations for the entry and exit to and from the basement parking and the location for the main entrance.

ACTPLA's recommendation that the main entrance be on Manuka Circle, makes sense, because it allows Franklin Street to be a more pedestrian-friendly space, but whether the developer will change that will depend on discussions with ACTPLA.

Finally, there is the issue of disabled parking for hotel guests. If there is no public access to the basement parking, where are the disabled hotel guests going to park? This issue needs to be satisfactorily resolved before construction starts.

ACTPLA decided that there would be enough room in the Manuka Terrace and Furneaux Street carparks to cater for the 330 additional carparks needed for the complete hotel, according to the provisions of the *Parking and Vehicular Access General Code*. It will be interesting to see how it works out.

We hope a good outcome can be obtained because the new hotel should provide significant benefits to the nearby residential and business communities through the provision of new cinemas, meeting facilities. We are looking forward to a high-quality redevelopment on this site.

Light Rail extension brings traffic disruption for Southsiders

There will be severe disruption for traffic crossing Commonwealth Avenue Bridge when the Government starts major works on the next section of light rail next year. These works will take several years to be completed and to complicate matters major repairs to Commonwealth Avenue Bridge will take place at the same time.

The ACT Government has formed an aptly named 'Disruption Taskforce' to deal with the situation. It supposedly brings together expertise from across the ACT Government in road and public transport network planning, behaviour change, community engagement and communications to plan for the multi-year build. To quote the government:

"The construction of light rail will be very disruptive for our road network, with lane closures and diversions in place for several years on major approach routes into the city from the south and west. This is expected to lead to longer commutes on key routes like Commonwealth Avenue, Kings Avenue and Parkes Way."

The plan at present appears to be to reduce traffic flow along Commonwealth Avenue by at least 80%, with a contra flow system. Further disruption will be caused by the permanent closure of access ramps to and from the bridge and a section of the existing London Circuit.



This diagram shows the present layout of roads near City Hill. The work, scheduled to start soon, will raise London Circuit by about 6 metres, remove the exit ramp from Commonwealth Avenue to London Circuit and install traffic lights at that intersection. This will allow Light Rail Stage 2a to join Commonwealth Avenue to cross Lake Burley Griffin. The car park shown near 116 will be converted into a works depot during construction. The area where exit ramp is now is scheduled for re-development.

It would not be so bad if the outcome was worth the pain, but the work will result in taxpayers footing the bill for an estimated \$2 billion, so that less than one percent of the population can travel from Woden to Civic, at twice the time taken by the current bus trip; together with the loss of green open space along Adelaide Avenue and Yarra Glen.

GNCA supports four local Volunteer Park Groups

Urban parklands provide some of the most valued features in our suburbs. The GNCA is supporting our local community to maintain these valued facilities.

All these groups have been affected by Covid restrictions and have not been able to work since the start of August 2021. It looks like the Spring plantings might be late this year.

We would like to acknowledge Manuka Grill'd for their support through their Local Matters Jar promotions that has seen \$400.00 in sponsorship for our parks in Griffith.

Blaxland Park was gazetted in 2013 and Friends of Blaxland Park was formed in 2017. Since then, we have planted more than 60 trees, with help and guidance from the City Services staff. These have been a mixture of native and deciduous exotic trees and there are more to plant in 2022. Future plans include a small native garden and continual maintenance to maintain the health of the trees. To join the Friends, contact Mac Howell at machowell@homemail.com.au



Planters at Blaxland Park after planting 29 trees.



Planters in Wells Gardens after the hard work.

The *Griffith Park/Wells Gardens Volunteer Group* planted 15 new trees in Wells Gardens and Griffith Park in the Autumn, with much help from the ACT Government volunteer support team. Colin Walters will be in touch with people who have volunteered to help with watering when the weather turns warmer and drier. Plans for more planting in Griffith Park are being finalised and will hopefully be completed before Christmas, depending on Covid regulations. Contact Colin Walters (info@gnca.org.au) for more information.

The *Griffith Woodland* Group aims to protect and improve an urban space off La Perouse Street. This site contains a wealth of native trees, shrubs and grasses, including Yellow Box gums, estimated to be at least 150 years old. It needs to be protected so that it can remain a valuable recreation area, habitat and food source for native fauna. Working Bees normally take place every 2nd Sunday of the month, from 9am to 10:30am - ending in tea and biscuits. Anyone is welcome to come along! Contact Libby McCutchan at griffithwoodland@gmail.com for more information.

Bass Gardens park dates to the 1930s and was named after George Bass, navigator and surgeon. It is now an ACT Heritage park with a wonderful range of native grasses and other small flowering plants. Come and visit this Spring, which is promising to be a great year for flowering. It is also a habitat for the golden sun moth. You may also sight a Golden Sun Moth, some Gang Gangs and even some wallabies or kangaroos.

Our volunteer group is attacking invasive weeds and reviewing adaptive mowing regimes.

The volunteers work to protect and recover native grassy ecosystem plants. Contact Sue Ross (sueross@grapevine.net.au) for more information.

Come to our AGM Wednesday 24 November 2021
The Crema Room, East Hotel, 69 Canberra Avenue, Griffith, 7.00pm
Other arrangements will be made if we can't hold the AGM at East Hotel

7 00 pm, Keynote Speaker: Gordon Lowe, director of planning, The Molonglo Group who will speak on Participation in the Planning Process - Say Yes to Better.

7:40 pm the GNCA 2021 AGM, including election of committee for 2022

8.50 pm David Denham: some thoughts on the future and closing remarks.

Refreshments and go home

Sprent Street Park Confusion



Sprent Street Park is a small well-used neighbourhood park in Narrabundah. It contains a children's playground and several stands of mature and semi-mature trees. Unfortunately, after very heavy rain

one of the houses in Finnis Crescent occasionally floods. This has been known since this part of the suburb was developed in the late 1950s and finally, without any consultation with residents, the ACT Government produced a Development Application to deal with the problem. It involved building a stormwater retarding basin, removing 27 mature and semi-mature trees from the park and spending \$1.6 million of taxpayer's money. In the image on the left you can just see the playground. The trees around it will be removed and all the shade with them. After much protesting, the DA was withdrawn. There needs to be proper consultation next time.

Participating in the Inner South Canberra Community Council

The Inner South Canberra Community Council is a federation of eight Community Associations in Canberra's Inner South. These are: *Old Narrabundah Community Council, Griffith Narrabundah Community Association, Kingston Barton Residents Group, Forrest Residents Group, Oaks Estate Residents Association, Red Hill Residents Group, Deakin Residents Association, and Yarralumla Residents Association.*

ISCCC provides a representative voice to government for the whole of Canberra's Inner South. It has been very active on many issues affecting our area, particularly in stopping the proposals for waste processing facilities in Fyshwick, which the government banned after the last election. Visit the website (www.isccc.org.au) for more details of its activities.

Meet our Kurrajong Members of the Legislative Assembly

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Rachel Stephen-Smith ALP
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A big thankyou to our sponsors during 2021

Antica Ricetta: An authentic and traditional Italian eatery; our pasta, made in-house; dine in or take away; Shop 14, Palmerston Lane, Manuka; 61900914; <https://www.anticaricetta.com.au/contact/>

Aubergine: A local favourite in Canberra, at 18 Barker St., well known for its consistently high levels of food and service; 6260 8666; www.auberginerestaurant.com.au

Bambusa Restaurant: Acclaimed pan-Asian cuisine to eat in or take away in a warmly lit restaurant with smart, modern decor, at 38 Franklin St., Manuka; 6295 1036; <http://www.bambusa-ac.com>.

Body Temple: For massage, beauty, manicures, pedicures, waxing and tinting; uses only natural organic products, at 6/16 Barker St; 0411 543 107; <https://suezgeelan.wixsite.com/bodytemple>;

Caphs Café Bar & Restaurant Manuka: Has a wide selection of modern Australian cuisine to suit the whole family; 6295 9783; www.caphscanberra.com

East Hotel & Apartments: 69 Canberra Av, Griffith. Studios, restaurants, apartments and meeting facilities combined with a great location and excellent service; 6295 6925; www.easthotel.com.au.

Essence Salon & Spa: Treats problem skin through proven and advanced skin care therapies, at Barker St; 6295 0276; <http://www.essencebeauty.com.au>

Fox Antiques; 51 Collie St, Fyshwick. The best range of French antique furniture and Australian original landscape art; 0409 111 723; charlieallott@outlook.com

Griffith Butcher & Bakery; Free range pasture fed specialist butcher without herbicides, pesticides or hormones; home of award-winning pies 6295 9781; <https://griffithbutchery.com.au/>

Griffith Vietnamese: Top quality Vietnamese cuisine in relaxed setting, dine-in or takeaway; 6B Barker Street; 6295 6505.

Grill'd, Manuka: Pop in if you feel like a burger done good or order online, 1/40-42 Franklin Street, 62396111, <https://www.grilld.com.au/restaurants/australian-capital-territory/canberra/manuka>

Gryphons: A chic venue with a relaxed atmosphere, at 16 Barker St, offering quality dining for breakfast, lunch and dinner – or just a snack at any time; 0419 618 679, <http://gryphons.com.au>

Jewel of India: Classic Indian Cuisine in traditional Indian setting or excellent takeaway; 1st Floor, Manuka Court, 11 Bougainville St, Manuka, 6295 6277; <https://jewelofindia.com.au/>

Macka's Griffith Newsagency: Provides Stationery & Office Supplies, Newsagency and NSW Lotteries services, 4 Barker St; 6295 8332; <http://www.mackasnews.com.au>

Manuka Veterinary Hospital: Provides a very high standard of medical and surgical care as well as taking excellent care of our customers; 85 Flinders Way; 6295 6089; <https://www.manukavet.com.au/>

Mountain Creek Wholefoods: For all your culinary herbs and spices, dairy, eco clothing, essential oils and other delights, 14 Barker St; 6295 1474, <https://mountaincreekwholefoods.com.au>

Organic Energy: Offers the best organic fruit and vegetables, as well as house-made organic raw food products, 8A Barker St; 02 6295 6700, <http://www.organicenergycanberra.com.au>

Pro Thais Massage: For relaxing and healing Thai style massages to suit your needs, 10A Barker St; 61564755, www.thaimassagecanberra.com.au

Rubicon: One of Canberra's most exquisite dining experiences, renowned for its award-winning Australian Cuisine, 6a Barker St; 02 6295 9919 <http://www.rubiconrestaurant.com.au>

Shop-Rite: Provides all your grocery and liquor needs, at 2 Barker St; 6295 0781; <https://grocerandco.business.site/>

Studio Skye Hairdressing & Make Up: Studio Skye Hairdressing & Make Up - Shop 1/ 12 Barker St; 0415 880 149

Sweet Little Café: Come and enjoy the coffee and food, with a range of gluten-free options and fresh smoothies, at 12 Barker St, Griffith, 6239 7554.

The Hierophant: The place for natural medicines, homeopathic remedies, herbal extracts, herbal teas, flower essences and essential oils, 6 Barker St; 6295 6939, <http://www.thehierophant.com.au>

Your Discount Chemist, Griffith: At 12 Barker St, over 11,000 products online at www.yourdiscountchemist.com.au; 6295 6725.



2022 Membership Form

GNCA - Membership Application / [Renewal Form](#) (for 2022)

If you are not already a GNCA member, please consider becoming one. The more members we have, the greater our influence will be with ACT Government and in the wider community.

Membership Application: New Member () Member Renewal () Date

Name (s):

.....

Full Address:

.....

Phone:(h).....(m)

Email Address:

.....

Membership Fee: \$.....\$10 per person for Annual Financial Membership

Donation: \$.....Donations are appreciated. Total amount:

The GNCA has four (4) Membership payment methods. Your support is highly valued!

1. Online EFT payments to Griffith/Narrabundah Community Association, BSB 032 722; Account 134058 (**preferred option**) or
2. Pay by credit card at <https://www.ticketebo.com.au/gnca> (*the GNCA incurs a fee of around 10% using this method*) or
3. In Person at a Westpac Branch - please provide your *telephone number* to the teller, Westpac cannot process your name when paying in person.
4. Cheques addressed to the GNCA & posted to PO Box 4127, MANUKA ACT 2603.

When using methods 1 or 2 please ensure you add your NAME to the payment description. Otherwise we will not know who the payment is from!

Membership Renewals

Providing you have identified yourself via the payment description, we do not require a new Membership Renewal Form unless your contact details have changed.

Attention New Members: Welcome! Please ensure you scan the completed Membership Application Form and forward to info@gnca.org.au OR please mail the form to PO Box 4127, MANUKA ACT 2603. Enquiries or questions, please contact the Secretary at info@gnca.org.au.