

EMPIRE BAY & DISTRICTS NEWS

EMPIRE BAY PROGRESS ASSOCIATION
www.empirebayprogress.org.au

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2025
empirebayprogress@gmail.com



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hi everyone

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and is looking forward to 2025. Since the last newsletter, the Progress Association has held its annual Christmas eve BBQ. Thankfully the weather this year was favourable, resulting in a fantastic turnout as can be seen from the pictures posted online. Many thanks to everyone that attended and to the PA organizing committee and volunteers.

Updates on items mentioned in my November newsletter.

Recladding of the Progress Hall is on schedule to commence mid-January with completion by end of February.

Lengthy discussions were held between your Progress Association (P.A) and Crown Lands(C.L) in mid-December where a comprehensive update was provided in respect of the waterfront restoration. In summary:

C.L had been testing the seabed to a depth of 0.3mtrs. Environmental Planning Authority subsequently requested testing to a depth of 1.0mtrs. This work has now been undertaken with the results awaiting sign-off from the independent auditor.

When sign-off is received, work will commence on the Development Application (D.A) with expected submission to Central Coast Council by 30 June 2025.

There will be discussions / negotiations / refinements to the D.A before council acceptance and final sign-off which C.L is hoping will be no later than Dec 2025.

Remediation activity would then commence in 2026 with a best-case scenario for completion by the very end of 2026. Your P.A commented that progress to date is a strong indicator that the completion date is most likely to be well into 2027. C.L has not disputed this point.

Your P.A requested that the fencing be removed as a priority as the fuel tanks have long been removed with new sand / soil installed and grass laid. Retaining the fence for no obvious reason is unfathomable and unacceptable.

Your P.A requested that an update be provided on C.L's position regarding the posts remaining in the water, to which C.L commented the posts have an added complication given council has a heritage listing on the posts.

Your P.A commented that the community needed to see progress being made. It is unacceptable to have people's quality of life impacted for so long with the probability of a further 3 years before the situation is rectified.

Discussion moved to high level principles of what would be covered within the DA. This included repair of the seawall at the Marina, removal of the unofficial road, installation of new drainage and grass plus some installation in recognition of the original boat shed.

Your P.A asked why C.L and Council could not agree to also install the play area seawall at the same time as doing so would save significant cost and time as well as mitigate the

risk of damage resulting from secondary restoration to the adjoining waterfront area. C.L agreed that in principle this made sense, but it was not their decision and there was no budget.

Your P.A asked if things would happen quicker if C.L and Council communicated more regularly and worked more closely together.

It was stated that C.L and council do meet regularly but part of the issue remains that council is not the Reserve Manager and is reluctant to take on this responsibility. Without a Reserve Manager, many of the initiatives become more complicated to implement.

Your P.A commented that it was understandable that council was reluctant to take on the Reserve Manager's role at the present time given the substantial costs and issues surrounding the restoration.

Your P.A asked if C.L could guarantee the money would be readily available to complete all restoration works including for example, the play area seawall. C.L could not give this guarantee as C.L also has budget constraints - money would have to come from State or Federal government budgets.

Your P.A enquired if the money could not be made available from the C.L grant budget which has over \$10 million dollars available. C.L could not answer this question.

Your P.A raised the issue of reparation of the Empire Bay boat ramp. C.L commented that whilst Maritime owned the boat ramp it was Council that must do the work. It is further complicated by the lack of a Reserve Manager and therefore no clear ownership and no budget.

This is very frustrating and disappointing for everyone. Next steps for your association are to continue to write / meet with the key influencers and decision makers including council and state/ federal ministers to try and achieve a more positive outcome. This is an ongoing process.

You may recall from the last newsletter the PA was awaiting a detailed response from council explaining why our request for funding to host a waterfront event was declined. Simply put, Council required an event date be specified as part of the application, which in this case was not possible given the uncertainty of when the waterfront works would be completed, delivery of which is Council's and Crown Land responsibility. A very frustrating scenario.

Planning and organisation for Anzac Day 2025 has commenced. The next few months will be extremely busy in this respect to ensure everything runs smoothly and that the service respectfully acknowledges the sacrifices of veterans.

Lastly, **the next Progress Association meeting and AGM is scheduled for Wednesday, 12 March 2025.** At the AGM, your existing committee will be formally standing down and nominations will be called for a new committee to represent your interests for 2025. It would be great to see you there.

Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the AGM.

By Ken Shaw

LOCAL HERO

The Lady was a Tramp

Early morning walkers along the Empire Bay waterfront would have seen David Forsdyke as he completes his walking routine with a sit and chat at the boat ramp. But who would have known of David's 50 years' service in the Merchant Navy, until recently when the quietly spoken David shared some of his experiences.

The Merchant Navy is known as the "silent service". Merchant ships of all sizes quietly come and go. They visit ports both large and small across the world, carrying the raw materials of trade, oil and petroleum products and the manufactured goods of industry. Both in times of world conflict and economic crisis, the Merchant Navy remains an indispensable force that continues, in the background, as a low profile, but essential, service.

David explained, "I joined the Merchant Navy when I was 15 and retired when 65 after being on many ships. My first ship was a lighthouse tender, servicing all the navigation lights from Brisbane to Thursday Island, then an assortment of ships carrying general cargo (before containers), bulk carriers with sugar, grain, coal, iron ore, phosphates and other horrible things. I also served on container ships, offshore support vessels, and tankers."

One of many adventures from David's 50 years at sea was on board the "Nivosa". The Nivosa was 265 metres long, 140,000 tonnes crude oil tanker built to carry oil from the

Persian Gulf to the refineries in Sydney and Geelong. The return trip taking about 60 days.

David continues, "I joined the Nivosa in the morning and started to familiarise myself with all her machinery, pipe work and valves. Unfortunately, the Iran/Iraq war had just started, and tankers were being attacked with missiles in the Persian Gulf. During these trips, conditions on board were tough. No fresh food, no mail, or phone calls or going ashore. At times we were running at night with no navigation lights and hiding in neutral zones. We also had to do a lot of fast talking with an Iranian gunboat



David Forsdyke during his Merchant Navy days.

that pulled up alongside the Nivosa pointing a rocket launcher at us. Those trips made life more interesting. The company was more worried about losing their ship, then the crew. For the next three years we were "tramping" two or three more trips into the Persian Gulf. I always liked "tramping" as you never knew where you would end up. Every trip was a magical mystery tour."



David served 3 years on the Nivosa, surviving Gulf Wars and Iranian gunboats.

A "tramp" in the maritime industry is a cargo ship which does not have a regular route. To trade, she picks up a cargo and takes it to any destination as required, and then is diverted to any port which has available cargo for ongoing transport.

During David's 50 years as a Merchant seaman he travelled around the world many times, on a variety of ships, experiencing all the climate extremes from the heat of the Suez Canal and the Persian Gulf to snow and ice around Cape Horn in midwinter.

In 2001 David retired to Empire Bay where he enjoys the daily walks, good friends and the quieter lifestyle.

By Robert Thompson

Our War Heroes

Have you ever wondered what lies behind the names inscribed on the Empire Bay Cenotaph. Check out the following link

<https://www.empirebayprogress.org.au/cenotaph>

Thank you, Jenny Chippendale & Mary Gray, for researching and creating this document.

OUR COMMUNITY

Empire Bay Fishing Club



Zack Russ with his winning dolphin fish, 5.63kg

Hi Fishos, welcome to 2025.

Our first club weigh in was held Jan 12th and what a cracker it was too. There was great weather, tunes and a fantastic turnout from our members. We had 26 members weigh in on the day with a fair assortment of fish presented. The Weigh Gnome was a very busy man indeed. Our Juniors started strongly this year with almost all of our juniors presenting fish. Some of our more experienced seniors went wide and presented some very nice Dolphin fish, a couple almost as big as our Weigh Gnome. It was great to see so many members enjoying the day.

If anyone wishes to join the EBFC please feel free to come along to our next weigh in, February 9th, starting at 3pm at the Empire Bay Tavern or contact the club via email at empirebayfishingclub@gmail.com

Until then Fishos as always stay safe on and around our brilliant waters.

Empire Bay Fishing Club

empirebayfishingclub@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/EBFC2257>

Empire Bay/Bensville Rural Fire Brigade

Santa runs: We would like to thank the community for their involvement in the 2024 Santa runs. The Brigade held Santa runs from 19/12/24 – 22/12/24 and saw overwhelming support from the local community! Thank you for your generous donations!

Recruitment: 2024 brought 7 new members to the Brigade! 5 of these new recruits have completed their Bush firefighter assessment and are already responding to incidents in the local community. The Brigade is always looking for new recruits.

Being a part of the NSW RFS is not just about fighting bushfires. You will be part of a tightknit team, working along side other emergency services to help protect the community. Our training officers are knowledgeable and

generous with their time and will teach you life-long skills. You will make life-long friendships and have some amazing experiences!

If you are interested in joining or seeking more information, please feel free to visit us at the station on Tuesday nights (7:30pm – 9pm) or contact our membership officer, Sue Dengate – sue.dengate@ccrfs.org.au

Callouts: Crews responded to multiple callouts throughout the holiday period, including Christmas day and new years eve, a structural fire in Pearl Beach, on-call as part of a strike team to assist outside the local area and participated in a search for missing person.

Please check that your smoke alarms are functional and make sure you have a bushfire survival plan in place!

Awards: Awards were presented in December by Central Coast District Manager, Matthew O'Donnell. Captain Simon Funnell was presented his Group Leader certificate and Allan Ferguson was presented with his 50-year service award! Congratulations Allan, this is an amazing achievement! Fire permits: Bushfire season is well underway. Fire permits are required until 31st March. Please contact Central Coast Fire Control Centre on 1300 060 807. You can also find important information about permits, bushfire survival plans and a lot more at: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Matt Scorer, Empire Bay Rural Fire Brigade. For more information contact Central Coast District Office on 1300 060 807 or visit www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

Probus—Friendship and Fun in Retirement

Our Empire Bay Probus Club has been quiet over Christmas and New Year, as many of our members are away or entertaining family or friends over the holiday period.

We fire up our activities again now with luncheon dates at a number of interesting venues like the Gosford RSL Club late January, then lunch at the Avoca Beach SLSC in February and a Mini Golf day at Lisarow with following lunch late February. In March a much awaited Newcastle Harbour lunch Cruise in mid March.

We do invite any locals to join us for our regular monthly meetings to see what Probus is all about. Although we are unable to admit new members at present due to membership ceilings in our club. The ceilings were imposed last year as we are finding it difficult to arrange luncheons at smaller restaurants with low capacity. Visitors however are most welcome at our monthly meetings at the Club Umina on the first Thursday of each month. For more information contact President **Francis 0415 910 800.**

Ray Rumble

Empire's D'Lite



Thanks to everyone for their support over the Christmas period and we wish you all a very happy and successful new year!

We have lots of new products in the pipeline and of course if you are looking for anything in particular please ask and we will try

our best to source it for you.

Catering is always available which includes antipasto, sandwiches, fruit and sweet platters. Pop in store or order online—www.empiresdlite.company.site

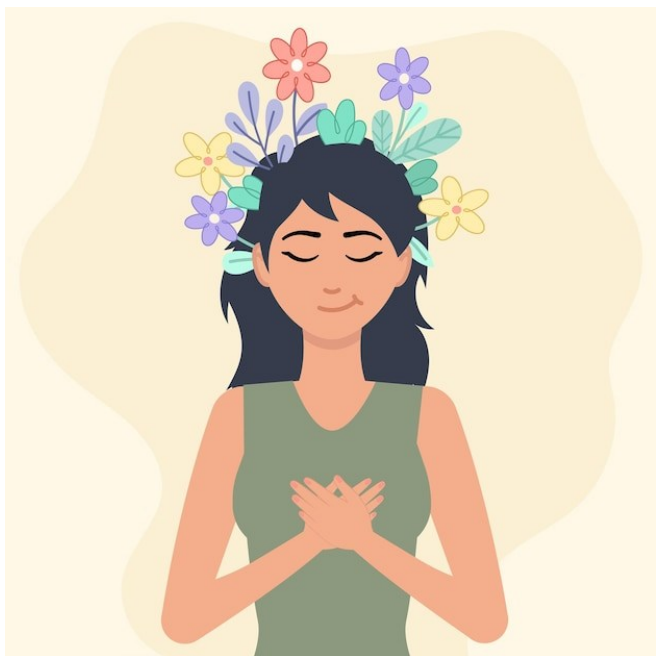
COMMUNITY WELLNESS

We often become quite religious about eating healthy food, sleeping enough hours, and exercising regularly. But do you know one very vital factor for staying happy and healthy? **Your mindset.**

Your thoughts shape your reality. If your mind is constantly steeped in negativity, stress, or self-doubt, it doesn't matter how many green smoothies you drink or miles you run—your body will feel the weight of that mental load. Your mindset is the foundation of your overall well-being and the lens through which you experience the world.

A positive, growth-oriented mindset doesn't mean ignoring life's challenges or plastering on a fake smile. It's about how you approach those challenges, how you frame your experiences, and the story you tell yourself about what's possible.

Practices like meditation and gratitude can significantly shift your mindset. Meditation helps you create space between your thoughts and emotions, reducing stress and cultivating inner peace. Gratitude rewires your brain to focus on the positive, helping you see abundance rather than lack.



Another powerful tool is the **Sedona Method**, which teaches you to release negative emotions and let go of resistance. By asking yourself three simple questions—“Could I let this feeling go?”, “Would I let this feeling go?”, and “When?”—you can free yourself from the grip of fear, anger, or insecurity.

When you cultivate a mindset of gratitude, self-compassion, and resilience, your body follows suit. Your stress levels decrease, your immune system strengthens, and your energy improves. You start to make healthier choices because they align with how you see yourself: as someone who deserves to feel good, inside and out.

Here's the thing—mindset isn't static. It's a practice. Just as you work out to build muscle, you can train your mind to focus on what's empowering and uplifting. It starts with small shifts:

- ◇ Replace “I can't” with “I'll try.”
- ◇ Focus on solutions instead of problems.
- ◇ Celebrate progress, no matter how small.
- ◇ Surround yourself with people who lift you up.

By nurturing a healthy mindset, you're not just adding years to your life—you're adding life to your years.

By Christie Chen

PET CORNER

Oh No – Holidays are almost over

Christmas and New Year celebrations are over – everyone has had a great holiday break, the lazy mornings and spending lots of time in each other's company are over. The kids are heading back to school, parents back to work and the dog is going to be spending more time at home. How can we help our dog be settled when our holiday routine is over?

Being creatures of habit, dogs thrive on routine, and new habits may become new behaviours after a few days of consistent repetition. So, if your dog's routine is spending 24/7 in your company, he may become confused, restless, noisy and a little destructive when you return to spending more time away from him.

Now is the time to help ease your dog back into accepting what you envisage to be your household's new routine. Here's my Top 5 Tips:

1. **Ensure your dog is spending time alone** and away from you in his usual daytime space – ideally where he can't see or hear you. Begin for just a few minutes throughout the day and then **gradually** build up the time.
2. Provide him with some **enrichment toys** and **problem-solving games** that he can amuse himself with.
3. If your dog is sleeping during the day, **don't wake him up to go for a walk** or play. Dogs sleep and rest a lot – especially young, growing dogs. Let them have their sleeping, eating, exercising and toileting routine. Work with their energy level and plan interactions and outings accordingly.
4. Keep your walks to the same number that you'll be able to maintain long-term (be realistic). The more physical exercise you give your dog the more he'll need. Try to strike a happy balance, enough exercise to keep him fit and healthy without creating a canine fitness fanatic. **Physical exercise should be balanced with mental exercise and rest.**
5. **Teach a 'quiet' command** and practice impulse control through play and games to help minimise boredom barking.

If you'd like to learn how to teach quiet, impulse control or need training assistance with your dog, don't hesitate to reach out we are extremely happy to give you guidance.

Happy Training!

Louise Harding - Author & Canine Behaviour
www.animaltalent.com.au/dog-training/



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Troubadour Folk Club

continues at Empire Bay

Every second Saturday each month Troubadour holds Club Night showcasing various local musicians in 15 minutes sessions, come and enjoy the music with a cuppa.

Empire Bay Hall 7pm, everyone is welcome.

COMMUNITY CONNECT CALENDAR

Mondays - 10:30-11:30am Zumba with Fiona

Tuesdays - 7:45-8:45am Yoga with Robyn

9:15-10:15am Yoga with Abi

Tuesdays - 7:45-8:45am Yoga with Abi

Fridays - 7:45-8:45am Yoga with Robyn

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January: 23rd; February: 6th, 20th; March: 6th, 20th; April: 4th

Bensville—near Kallarook Road park, 12:45—1:30pm

Empire Bay—Kendall Rd near the wharf, 1:45—2:30pm

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EMPIRE BAY PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

AGM

Wednesday, March 12th 7:30pm

The Hall, 1-3 Gordon Rd, Empire Bay

Membership \$5

Further information email:

empirebayprogress@gmail.com

EMPIRE BAY HALL TIMETABLE

MONDAY

8:15am—9:15am, Gentle Yoga with Julie

12:15pm—4:15pm, Social card games for everyone

6:00pm—7:00pm, Yoga with Julie

7:00pm—8:00pm, PT Group Fitness Training with Tony

TUESDAY

9:00am—12:00pm, Scrabble, all levels

WEDNESDAY

9:15am—10:15am, Tai Chi with Alain

1:15pm—2:45pm, Singing Circle with Barb

3:30pm—5:00pm, MH Dance Academy with Mikayla

6:30pm—7:30pm, PT Group Fitness Training with Tony

7:30pm—9:00pm, Empire Bay Progress Association (EBPA) (meetings now held quarterly)

THURSDAY

7:45—8:30am, EBPA Walking exercise (free)

9:30am—11:00am, Gail James Yoga (Starting from Feb 6th)

FRIDAY

9:30am—10:30am, MH Dance Academy with Mikayla

6:30pm—7:30pm, PT Group Fitness Training with Tony

Yoga with Julie 0438 228 372: build core strength, become more aware of your body and mind and be calm.

MH Dance Academy with Mikayla Holt on 0404 824 775: RAD ballet, Jazz, Cheer, Acrobatics, Lyrical, hip hop, etc for 18 months- 25+.

Social card games for all members of the community. Contact Shirley on 4369 2034 or Jan 0402 246 427.

PT Group Fitness Training with Tony on 0466 303 700: for all fitness levels, over 16. Great social atmosphere while you get fit, burn fat.

Scrabble contact Shirley on 4369 2034: caters for all levels. Everyone is welcome.

Qigong with Jen gentle exercise for the mind, body & spirit.

Tai Chi & Qigong with Alain on 0422 795 365: gentle form of exercise, described as meditation in motion.

Singing Circle with Barb on 0435 004 264: fun and uplifting, no experience needed.

EBPA, contact empirebayprogress@gmail.com

OUR CENOTAPH FLAG If you have lost a family member, a friend or a neighbour please advise Robert Thompson on 0408 415 765 so we can lower our Cenotaph Flag as a mark of respect.



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BOOK OUR AIR CONDITIONED HALL?

Weddings Anniversaries Birthdays Farewells Wakes—

Ducted air-conditioning, kitchen facilities including fridge, oven, microwave, tea & coffee making facilities, accessible bathroom inside and outside, enclosed secure garden area, plenty of chairs and tables for both inside and outside, BBQ, TV & DVD player with overhead monitor.

Hall hire information

available on our website -

empirebayprogress.org.au/hall-hire

Check the hall booking calendar on the website to check date is available and then contact Sharon, Hall Booking Officer on EBHallbookings@gmail.com or 0457 650 955 9am to 5pm weekdays only.

