



Wilson Residents and Ratepayers' Association

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Spring Edition 2004

WRRRA represents you in Wilson by working co-operatively with:

- City of Canning
- Mason Ward Councillors
- Canning River Regional Park Community Advisory Committee
- WA Government Depts.
- Neighbourhood Watch & WA Police
- State & Federal Government Politicians
- Wilson Wetlands Action Group Inc. and other community groups
- Community Newspapers

The WRRRA Committee meets in the Wilson Community Hall on the 3rd Monday of every 2nd Month (on odd-numbered months)

The next meeting will be held on 15 November 2004 @ 7:30pm.

Members are invited to attend Committee meetings.

SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY

In preparing this editorial, I couldn't help but think about a line from the classic song "The Big Yellow Taxi"

Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got till it's gone ...

Whilst the WRRRA Committee is encouraged by the positive responses we have received regarding the South Wilson downcoding issue, the Fern Road upgrade and the CRRP path network, **we are again faced with the challenge of declining memberships**, which is posing a "real threat" to the association's future.

Similarly, local amenities such as the Bentley Library are being threatened with closure for much the same reasons.

We urge you to take time NOW to complete the enclosed membership form to join the association to help in our campaign to further improve both local amenities and lifestyle.

Membership is still only \$5 per Family (or Household).

We are also looking for community-minded residents (of all ages) to join the committee, which meets for a few hours every 2nd month. Please call Maria Valli on 9458 3041 for further details.

Perhaps also make a point of visiting the Bentley Library. For our part, the association will continue to lobby the City to ensure that all library users are properly consulted before any decision is made on the library's future.

For members without Internet Access at home, I encourage you to use the free facilities at the Library to view our website: <http://wrra.iinet.net.au>.

In conclusion, I would like to formally introduce our newest committee member, Lester Durbin (who has written two articles for this newsletter) and the new co-opted committee members: Geoff Rees and Russell Gorton.
by Max Zeller

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LOCAL AMENITY THREATENED

Bentley Library is being threatened with closure under the City's plans to replace it with a new library on the corner of Wharf and Sevenoaks Street in Cannington.

The Bentley Library is conveniently located to both Wilson and Bentley residents (particularly those without cars) and provides a ideal location for meetings, relaxation, information, research, reading and borrowing library

materials, children's story telling and access to Internet-based services.

For residents without their own transport, the new Cannington Library is simply too far away and a mobile library service is not considered a suitable alternative.

Bus services 34, 72, 170, 171, 173, 176 and 177 all stop near the Bentley Library.

Continued on next page ...

THREATENED LIBRARY CLOSURE

By Paul Duncan

Continued from Page 1

WRRRA has since written to the Council opposing the planned closure (without proper community consultation).

If you too are concerned about the closure, we encourage you to write to the Executive Officer, City of Canning, Locked Bag 80, Welshpool WA 6986 to oppose the closure of the Bentley Library.

Breaking News: The Council has acknowledged the concerns raised and has agreed to undertake a review of the original Development Plan, including the investigation of alternative options. [12-Oct-04]

FERN ROAD UPDATE

By Lester Durbin

Final plans for the Fern Road improvements have been issued and the budget is approved.

WRRRA is pleased to report that the final plans for the Fern Road and Riverton Bridge improvements have been approved with a budget of \$1.6 million. With one exception, all of WRRRA's suggestions were incorporated in the design and we are pleased with the result.

The final plans include:

- Traffic calming features such as a median strip in coloured bitumen and traffic roundabout/chicane redesign.
- Riverton Bridge repairs and repaving with a redesign of the footpath/cycleway to 1.8m. width. [Which is still well short of the Dual-Use Path Standards] [Editor]
- Construction of a new traffic

roundabout on the Riverton Drive/ Barbican St. East junction to smooth traffic flow.

Present indications are that works will commence in January 2005 and will involve the Riverton Bridge being closed to traffic but not pedestrian access for approximately 6 weeks.

The one outstanding issue concerns safety on the short stretch of Fern Road from Surrey Road and Upnor Street roundabout which has a pronounced brow. WRRRA has requested that a small number of planter boxes or trees be sited in the median strip to prevent overtaking and emphasize that extreme driver discipline be exercised in that area.

This request has been rejected on the grounds that in view of the amount of traffic, flow could be restricted by stop/start vehicles such as buses or

garbage trucks if no overtaking were allowed. [This response ignores the fact that it is both illegal and unsafe to overtake on this stretch of Fern Road] [Editor]

WRRRA strongly feels that such features are successfully incorporated into other roads in the metro area and that the safety and comfort of the increasing number of residents with properties fronting onto this length of Fern Road should come before the occasional and minimal inconvenience to the through traffic much of which is still unaware that it is a 50 kph designated road.

Safety and traffic flow are always a compromise and we are presently re-submitting our case through the Mason Ward councillors in the hope of additional modifications to better address our concerns and will continue to lobby on behalf of our members to this end.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH UPDATE

By Maria Valli

Hello everyone!

Currently, Wilson has 124 registered NHW participants and we are fortunate to have 10 active and enthusiastic Street Reps who contribute their time and energy to developing and supporting NHW within the suburb.

It's comforting to know that many residents and neighbours do get together and 'look out' for each other. However, if you would like to be a NHW participant or even better a Street Rep for your street it takes only a small amount of time and it's a great way to get to know your neighbours and be part of a positive and proactive program.

For information or registration forms please contact Suburb Manager-Maria Valli 9458 3041 or Victoria Park Policing 9472 1874.

The success of NHW depends upon your active participation!

HISTORY OF RIVERTON BRIDGE

By Lester Durbin

As major repairs are due to start shortly on the bridge, we felt a brief history would be both topical and instructive.

So near and yet so far, or so the far bank of the Canning River must have seemed to the few early residents of rural Wilson and Riverton prior to 1910. There were crossings of the river at Nicholson Road and Canning Highway of course but quite a detour if you wished to conduct business with Perth. Both suburbs were dedicated to farming and in no way could be identified with their present residential character. Riverton in particular had few residents prior to the 1940s.

In 1908, market gardeners, Fred Riley and Jack Metcalfe had a pressing need to access Perth markets to sell their produce grown in the area of Riley Road, Riverton and named after the Riley family. Prior to this time, they crossed the river close to the present bridge site with their wagon loaded onto a punt. Due to the efforts of Fred Riley, who donated both his time and money on the enterprise, the bridge was commenced in December 1910, built of locally felled timber and

completed in early 1911. It became known as the Watts Road Bridge, although there was no road access on either side other than a sandy track. The central arches were raised high enough to enable barges to pass under even at high water, there being some commercial river traffic from enterprises upstream. Watts Road was named after the pioneer family of George Stedman Watts who came to the Swan Colony in 1830 and settled in the locality.

In 1912, it was proposed to rename the bridge the Fred Riley Bridge in appreciation of his efforts but with a modesty not often found nowadays, Fred rejected the accolade and in 1916 requested that it be named the Riverton Bridge as it has remained, although such was the regard with which he was held, locals referred to it as the Riley Bridge for years afterwards and it can be found so named on several early maps and documents. Fred Riley died in 1948 after a long and active life in the district and was very generous with his recollections of 'the early days' much of which was documented for future generations.

By the 1930s the bridge was falling into disrepair and only used on a 'use at your own risk' basis, a situation that continued until 1954 when the bridge was replaced by the present structure sited slightly upstream. Parts of the original bridge were retained as a swimming jetty but this became a hazard to bathers and was demolished in 1980. By the 1970s although much of Leach Highway was in existence, all traffic crossing the Canning River at Wilson still had to pass over the wooden bridge and it formed a major bottleneck which was both a traffic hazard and a source of frustration - *plus ca change!* The Shelley Bridge was built in 1978 from concrete modules cast on site and became the main crossing of the Canning River in our suburb thus taking the heavy traffic off the old wooden bridge.

For many Wilson residents, the Riverton Bridge is our major route into and out of our suburb and with the repairs and improvements due to commence in the New Year, it will remain so for many decades to come.

Acknowledgments:

Canning River Regional Park Historical Survey by Department of Planning & Urban Development (October 1991)

WILSON WETLANDS UPDATE

By Russell Gorton

Over 6000 plants have been planted this year with the help of many volunteers.

On behalf of the Wilson Wetlands Action Group (WWAG) Committee, I would like to thank the teachers, students and parents of all the local schools that participated in the planting program this year, and the many volunteers who offered their time to participate in the ongoing wetland restoration projects in the Wilson Wetlands.

Special thanks to the City of Canning Council and its staff and to the Dept of Conservation and Land Management, Regional Parks team for their continued support this year. WWAG look forward to working with the community and stakeholders again next year to further improve biological diversity and ensure the protection and enhancement of this conservation area for future generations.

[Excellent community effort] [Editor]



Come and help the Wetlands
Contact Russell Gorton for further details

Ph: 9258 7301

E-Mail: wwag@inet.net.au

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YOUR SUBSCRIPTION WILL HELP OUR WILSON COMMUNITY

Remember, the more members we have, the more power the Association has to lobby the City of Canning and State Government Departments to improve services within Wilson.

WRRRA Membership Subscription Form

To join the Association, simply complete the following details, enclose your Annual Membership Fee of \$5 per Household and return it to us (as per the instructions below). Receipts will be issued.

NAME(S).....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE.....E-MAIL.....

Post form to WRRRA, 12 Foreshore Entrance Wilson 6107 OR drop it in WRRRA Box at the Eureka One Stop Deli (on Eureka Road).
Please do not enclose cash payments. Mark Cheques payable to the "Wilson Residents and Ratepayers' Association".