



# Edgewood Newsletter

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## Dear Residents,

Welcome to the first Edgewood newsletter for 2003. The circulation of this newsletter has been extended to residents of Duke St, now that our work is much closer to them. It is designed to keep you informed on what is happening within the estate, including news about the success of our Green and Golden Bell Frog habitat project, creek restorations and water quality.

### Environment

Restoring and enhancing an environment degraded by 100 years of brick making, has been an important part of the work we have done, to create Wollongong's best residential estate at Edgewood, on a site that was once a brickworks and quarry.

That transformation included one of the biggest single recycling projects ever conducted in the Illawarra, with the recycling of millions of tonnes of old bricks and concrete which were separated, crushed, graded and re-used across the estate. It included the removal, drying, mixing, replacing and compacting of nearly 1,000,000m<sup>3</sup> of loose fill.

Other projects have included major creek restorations on Hollymount and Collins Creeks, which are being returned as closely as possible to their natural state within a much wider recreation corridor. This is no small task after a century of degradation due to the previous industrial use of the site. The creek corridors are being heavily landscaped with species native to the area.

We worked closely with Wollongong City Council and the Department of Land and Water Conservation on the creeks project, which included planting more than 50,000 native plants propagated from seeds gathered in the bush above Edgewood. Further creek restoration work remains to be done in the southern part of the site in particular.

In January as part of our extensive bush regeneration program, we cleared lantana, coral trees and other noxious trees from sections of the bushland surrounding the estate. They are being replaced with native plants, as part of our commitment to the environment and to our agreement with Wollongong City Council and the National Parks and Wildlife Service to clear weed-infested areas and regenerate them with native plants.

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At Integral Energy's request, we also conducted some clearing from the high-voltage power easement across the escarpment. Some high-voltage lines adjacent to residences are to be taken underground for safety, and for the visual amenity of estate residents, where they pass across the estate.

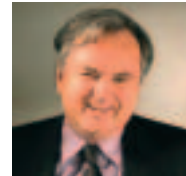
We've also been clearing old dumped cars and other rubbish from the escarpment bushland as part of our regeneration program. Some trees were removed during construction of six new breeding ponds for the Golden Green Bell Frog. These ponds were carefully located so as to minimise the impact on native trees. The trees in the area that had to be removed from electricity easements and from frog pond areas, were located at the top of the site overlooking Duke Street. Here we mulched the exotic species and weeds along with some black wattle trees and some native trees from the easement and pond areas. The areas from which undergrowth, black wattle and exotic species were removed will now be revegetated with native shrubs and ground covers and with local rain forest species (except of course for areas previously approved for housing).

## Apologies

In undertaking this work, we inadvertently failed to inform and discuss the work with the residents of Duke Street. For this we apologise. It alarmed some residents and consequently there were three or four understandable complaints. We will be having an information session on Sunday 30th March at 2pm, to properly explain the site and how the development will impact on residents of its southern boundary. By talking with estate and surrounding residents and addressing your concerns, we hope to extend the good relationships we have with residents of Gahan's Lane and the Princess Highway, who have worked constructively with us to achieve the best outcomes possible.

## Thanks

Finally, many of you joined us for our big Christmas party on 30 November, which was a great way to celebrate the success of the Edgewood community. There is a report and photos from the Christmas party later in this newsletter.



*Bob Winnel,  
Chief Executive  
The Village  
Building Co.*

# Creeks restoration project



Work is well-advanced on one of the showpieces of Edgewood Estate — the restoration of Hollymount and Collins Creeks. After almost a century of degradation the creeks are being restored and enhanced to provide even better amenity than the original creeks.

We have had very close and positive cooperation from Wollongong City Council and the NSW Department of Land and Water conservation to achieve an exemplary environmental outcome. This has involved rebuilding the watercourses with rockworks and contouring, then restoring natural vegetation.

There have been more than 50,000 native plants — 26,000 trees, shrubs and ground covers, and 25,000 wetland reeds and sedges — placed in the creek system. All have been propagated from plant stock collected from the creekbeds in the bush above Edgewood.

The long, dry summer has presented some challenges with the creeks project, but we are very pleased with the result.

The creek enhancement project is also an integral part of our overall flood management and drainage plan.

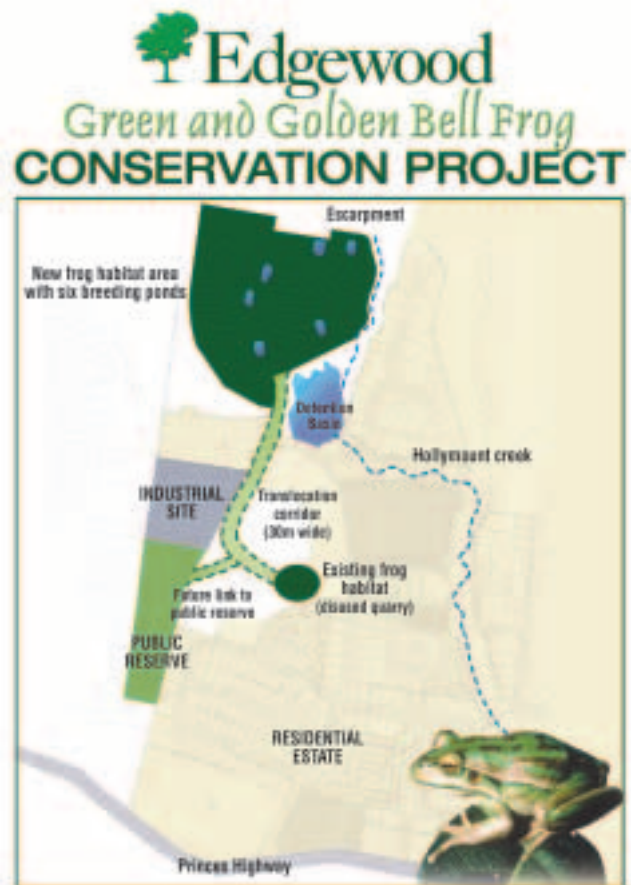
## Frog conservation project looks promising

We are greatly encouraged by signs that Edgewood's Green and Golden Bell Frog habitat program is well ahead of schedule. The endangered species has already started breeding at the specially constructed breeding ponds in bushland on the south-western hillside overlooking Edgewood.

That's very welcome news, because we have been working hard to achieve that outcome after a four-year study that began in 1998, found Green and Golden Bell Frogs living adjacent to a pond in a disused quarry in the estate. Initially, two frogs were found. Subsequent monitoring has revealed fluctuations from no frogs to six in any given year.

The Village Building Co. worked with the National Parks and Wildlife Service on ways to establish a permanent and viable frog colony at Edgewood, and noted frog expert Dr Arthur White was engaged to manage the whole process. The existing degraded habitat, was dramatically upgraded and relocated into the environmental protection zone, where a viable ongoing frog population was more likely to be achieved. To achieve this, we created a specially-constructed 30-metre-wide corridor to the new enhanced habitat. The new habitat, which is adjacent to creeks and a huge detention basin, features six ponds designed to foster breeding (see graphic).

We have cleared noxious weeds and introduced plants from the habitat and are regenerating it with vegetation native to the area so as to provide foodstocks for the frog colony. We then installed netting to stop birds like herons and kookaburras from taking the tadpoles and frogs.



The frogs will be tagged and monitored. An on-going management plan, financed by a trust fund established by this Company and by the owners of proposed low density Community Title housing will be put in place, to protect the frogs and maintain the habitat in perpetuity. This fund will also maintain 28 hectares of rain forest being preserved and enhanced by the development. This project could become a model for maintaining rain forest adjacent to other similar estates elsewhere in NSW in the future.

## Downstream water run-off reduced by 10 percent

A system of water quality ponds and a huge detention basin are an important part of the water management for Edgewood.

The ponds are designed to act as a big, natural filter for stormwater run-off from the estate, to make sure high quality water discharges into the creeks, and then into the ocean.

The system forms part of the overall catchment management plan, which is designed to reduce total water discharge from the entire creek catchment by over 10 percent, creating a real

benefit from the estate. Whilst not noticeable during times of drought, this will be a major benefit to existing downstream residents in the future. This was a goal set by ourselves, in addition to government regulatory requirements, so that the development would bring benefit to existing residents.

The next stage of the ponds project will see the addition of seating and fountains to improve the amenity of the area for both estate residents and existing adjacent residents.

## Massive recycling effort

When work started at Edgewood Estate nearly three years ago, the company embarked on what is believed to be one of the biggest single recycling projects ever undertaken in the Illawarra outside the Port Kembla Steelworks. By the time the estate was ready for its first houses, 30,000 tonnes of material had been separated, crushed, graded and re-used across the site.

As the Edgewood site had been used for most of last century as a clay pit and brickworks, half the site was covered in materials from that era. There were, literally, millions of broken bricks left behind in the remnants of the industrial buildings, and in huge and unsightly stockpiles throughout the site. More bricks had been used as fill in vast holes, and these had to be excavated, separated and crushed. And while the previous owners had demolished the main buildings on the site, there were still huge concrete bins with walls up to a metre thick,

vast concrete slabs, rail lines, and expanses of bitumen covering all kinds of other materials.

There were considerable environmental advantages in recycling almost everything. For starters there was the major environmental benefit of re-using these materials, rather than removing them and having to find somewhere suitable to dump them. Keeping all the materials on site also significantly reduced truck movements, making life easier for our neighbours in surrounding streets. The site has required treating over 1,000,000m<sup>3</sup> of loose fill by drying, separating, mixing and compaction. This means that 1,000,000m<sup>3</sup> of fill will not leave the site, and no fill will be brought into the project over the six year life of the project. This has meant the temporary stock piling of some material within the site during our work.

The cost of doing this was able to be largely offset by cost-savings of turning all these materials into something that could be used on-site to prepare Edgewood for building, instead of trucking in new gravel, road base, fill and other materials.

## Streetscapes complete the transformation

Edgewood is completing the transformation from an old industrial site into a showpiece residential development in the Illawarra, thanks to our urban design guidelines.

These include sympathetic architectural styles, earth tones and pastel colours, landscaping, setbacks and efficient land use which have resulted in a fresh, modern feel to the streetscapes.

The estate also contains a range of sizes, styles and prices of housing, to suit a wide market, from new home-buyers to families and retirees — making the estate an attractive proposition for buyers in all categories, contributing significantly to the social mix within the estate and increasing property values at Edgewood and in neighbouring streets. It also enables families to grow and change by shifting into different house types at different stages of their life instead of moving to new areas as they grow older, disrupting valued social ties.

These factors, combined with the environment and infrastructure projects, have seen Edgewood capture the imagination of Illawarra home-buyers, with 70 percent of our sales being generated locally, and the remaining 30% of buyers coming from the southern Sydney and South Coast markets.



## Apartments and over-55s accommodation

There has been considerable interest in the high quality apartments under construction in the south-eastern part of Edgewood Estate, facing the Princes Hwy. There is a strong demand for this style of housing on the estate, with most of the 44 units already sold, even before the first 16 are at lock-up. Seventy per cent of the demand is generated from locals.

Our architects have now lodged a development application and are developing plans for owner-occupied dwellings targeting the needs of over-55s — those ready to retire or the so-called “empty-nesters” whose children have grown up and left home. Such a development will further add to the mix and



diversity of the estate, further boost property values and provide a type of housing much needed by existing residents of Northern Wollongong. Many locals no longer need their older high-maintenance homes on large lots, and look for new low-maintenance homes with low maintenance courtyards. They in turn sell their houses to people with families, supporting schools and shops in the area and lessening the impact of aging on the social mix in the area.

## Traffic improvements

Traffic improvements at Edgewood Estate have been designed to enhance access for all residents, not just those within the estate. The bridge we built across Collins Creek on Red Ash Drive near Gahan's Park, links the communities and provides better access to the Princes Hwy for residents north of the estate and creates a safer path for children on their way to schools in Gray St.

In response to residents' concerns, and to give access to the over 55's apartments, we've lodged a development application with Wollongong City Council for traffic lights at the intersection of the highway and Forestview Way. That second set of lights would greatly improve the safety and convenience of traffic movement into and out of the estate, further improve the safety of children crossing the highway and create lower traffic levels within the estate. The lights will be coordinated with the Gray St lights, so as not to impede traffic along the Princes Hwy. It is another example of the community consultation process that has worked so well at Edgewood.



# Christmas celebrations went off with a bang

Edgewood's Christmas celebrations certainly went off with a bang, when nearly 500 adults and children gathered at the water quality ponds on Sunday, 30 November. It is great to see such a diverse and friendly community in a house-proud estate.

Everyone tucked into plenty of good food and Christmas cheer, while the children were entertained by magicians, clowns, face-painters, pony rides, a jumping castle and an animal farm.

Member for Keira David Campbell, who has kept a close eye on Edgewood and the facilities it offers since inception, also dropped by to wish everyone a Merry Christmas. We also took the opportunity to let people know about our plans for the coming year.

The finale of the evening was to be a giant fireworks show, but Mother Nature got in on the act as well with a thunder and lightening show to coincide with the fireworks and provide an unforgettable ending.



**We hope to see you at the Information Session on Sunday 30th March from 2pm.**

## *The Edgewood Team*

Front row: *Michael Church, Project Sales Consultant; Warwick Woodford, Superintendent; Dayna Martin, Project Sales Assistant.*

Back row: *Andrew Taylor, Housing Manager; Vanessa Smith, Projects Assistant; Wayne Farley, Project Sales Manager; Rebecca Thompson, Receptionist; Phillip Shipard, Projects Manager; Bruce Martin, Martin Morris Jones; Glen Da Deppo, Glennos Constructions.*

