

THE St Clair & Erskine Park Report

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER FROM CHRIS BOWEN MP - YOUR FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PROSPECT ■ MAY 2007

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Saluting their service: defence medals awarded

■ In the lead-up to Anzac Day, Chris Bowen awarded six veterans with the Australian Defence Medal (ADM) in recognition of service in Australia's armed forces.

'On Monday 16 April I was proud to present, along with Major Bradley Orchard, the Australian Defence Medal to six veterans at a morning tea held in their honour. With Anzac Day recently in our thoughts, it was appropriate that the community paid tribute to those who have served our nation with pride,' Chris said.

The Australian Defence Medal is awarded to Regular and Reserve Force members, volunteers and National Servicemen since World War II who

have completed their initial enlistment period of service, or four years, whichever is the lesser.

'The nation and the local community are committed to recognising the contribution to our proud military history made by Australian men and women in uniform,' said Chris.

'It was an honour to present these medals to these six Australians, who between them, have served in all three of the armed services – the Army, Navy and Air Force.

'We congratulate Mr Graeme Crooks and Mr Robert Humphreys, both from St Clair, who were among the six recipients of the Australian Defence Medal.'



SALUTING THEIR SERVICE: Chris presented the Australian Defence Medal to veterans including locals Graeme Crooks (3rd from left) and Robert Humphreys (4th from left).

Chris Bowen writes ...

In this edition of *The St Clair & Erskine Park Report* we discuss the Federal Government's move to put Badgerys Creek back on the agenda (see page 3). Labor has promised not to proceed with an airport at Badgerys Creek, so the only way to push the airport off the agenda will be with the election of a Rudd Labor Government later this year.



We also report some positive local news with the St Clair Youth and Neighbourhood Team (see page 2) and the Fabulous Forties social group (this page). There are important community announcements on the cervical cancer vaccine Gardasil and about the dangerous illicit drug 'ice'.

There's also plenty of information on Labor's National Broadband Network, Fair Work Australia and BAS Easy for small businesses.

As always, if there is any Federal Government matter you would like to discuss with me, please contact me on 9726 4100 or chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au.

I will also be at Erskine Park Shopping centre on May 14th (see page 4 for details).

Chris Bowen MP
Federal Member for Prospect

Fun and friendship with Fabulous Forties Plus group

■ On Tuesday 1 May, Chris paid a visit to the St Clair Youth and Neighbourhood Centre's Fabulous Forties Plus group.

Fabulous Forties Plus was set up in response to requests from St Clair women aged forty and over for their own group. The aim is to provide a forum for social contact, support, learning and fun.

All members are involved in program planning for each term, and ideas from group members are encouraged and always welcome. The program is varied, including activities such as craft and guest speakers, outings, sharing your skills, ideas and experiences. But most of all the focus is on fun and friendship!

The group welcomes new members at any time.

FABULOUS FORTIES: Chris with some of the ladies at the Fabulous Forties Plus group at St Clair.



Fabulous Forties Plus meets fortnightly on Tuesdays between 12.30—2.30pm at Autumnleaf Neighbourhood Centre, 1 Autumnleaf Parade, St Clair.

For more information contact the St Clair Youth and Neighbourhood Team on 9834 2708.

Labor's BAS Easy: Making your Business Activity Statement easy

■ Labor will cut the time taken for small businesses to complete BAS paperwork.

One of the big time wasters that small business owners tell me about is the time taken to complete their Business Activity Statement (BAS) under the Coalition's Goods and Services Taxation system.

Let's face it, spending hours acting as the Federal Government's unpaid tax collector is not the best way to increase productivity!

A special survey on red tape released by MYOB in January 2007 found that over two-thirds (68%) of small businesses reported the bookkeeping requirements of the BAS to be by far the most onerous red-tape burden.

Federal Labor's **BAS Easy** option will provide simpler and faster ways for small businesses and independent contractors to estimate their GST

obligations. **BAS Easy** would mean BAS paperwork would take minutes instead of hours.

How BAS Easy would work

Under Federal Labor's **BAS Easy** option, small businesses would be able to apply simple rules to their sales and purchases, allowing them to quickly estimate their GST payments.

They would do this by taking a snapshot of their net monthly GST payments twice a year and applying that ratio for the rest of the year.

Small businesses wanting to stay with the existing BAS system would be free to do so.

If you're interested in these small business measures, and would like updates on Labor's Small Business policies, sign up to Chris' Small Business E-Network by emailing him at chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au

Labor's new fairer IR plan

Labor's industrial relations plan will abolish the Howard Government's WorkChoices laws and build a new industrial relations system based on fairness and flexibility.

Labor's industrial relations plan will see:

- The creation of Fair Work Australia to replace four existing government agencies;
- A uniform national industrial relations system;
- Unfair dismissal exemptions for small business – up to 12 months;
- Mandatory secret ballots for industrial action;
- An end to strike pay.



Daily Telegraph 26.4.07

Labor will establish an industrial relations system for the 21st century that gets the balance right between the rights of employers and employees and is guided by the dual principles of fairness and flexibility in the workplace.

For more information on Labor's industrial relations plan go to www.chrisbowen.net



Chris participating in the Pollies For Small Business Program. Photo taken by Gene Ramirez and provided courtesy of the Fairfield Champion.

Learning Links charity ball raises over \$40,000

■ Chris Bowen hosted Learning Link's Charity Ball at Club Marconi on Saturday 21 April.

'This was an opportunity for the community to assist Learning Links, a worthwhile local charity, and they responded magnificently,' Chris said.

'Over 380 people attended the Enchanted Evening. They were treated to an inspirational speech by Peter Garrett, experienced the auctioneering prowess of Sky News' Kieran Gilbert, and enjoyed dazzling performances by the Three Waiters and the String Angels.'

\$40,000 was raised on the night, with every dollar going to Learning Links' new facility that will service the Western Sydney region.

Learning Links first came to Fairfield in 1999 and

helped with weekly specialist services 52 children struggling to learn. Since then their services have grown and now include early childhood intervention, specialist education support, therapy, family counselling, case management, professional development and group programs.

The same location that helped 52 children in 1999 is now trying to squeeze 250 children through the doors. That's why Learning Links are fundraising to help build a new larger facility.

'I want to thank all the gold and silver sponsors – clubs and local businesses – for their generous support. Special thanks also to WoW Factor Events for concept and project management,' said Chris.



Chris (right) with Ninos Khoshaba, State Smithfield MP, Nick Lalich, Mayor of Fairfield City, and Warren Johnson, CEO of Learning Links. Photo courtesy of Santa Grasso.

ST CLAIR YOUTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD TEAM: NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

■ WE OFFER:

- **Kiddies Craft** for kids 5–8 years on Tuesday Afternoons
- **Line Dancing** for 5–12 year olds on Monday Afternoons
- **Heartmoves:** Gentle exercise classes for the over 40s
- **Panic and Anxiety Support Group**
- **Fabulous Forties Plus** Women's group meets every second Tuesday
- **Arabic Speaking Women's Group** meets on Wednesdays

- Our youth centre offers 'drop-in' for young people aged 12–18 on Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 3–6pm. There are arcade games, PS2, billiards, basketball and more. There is also a large range of information available for young people and their parents.

■ BRAND NEW

'Just walk it' walking group, a Heart Foundation Initiative. Walks start on Mondays at 9.15am from Autumnleaf Neighbourhood Centre. For information about any of these programs, please contact Helen on 9834 2708.

- We are proud to announce the opening of the 'Learning Lounge' at the Youth Centre. The Lounge has been developed to provide homework assistance in a non-school setting for young people aged 12–18 years in St Clair and surrounding areas. It will open on Tuesday afternoons from May. Contact our Youth Development Worker Linda on 9834 2708.

Badgerys airport is back on the agenda

Fairfield Champion 7.3.07

Liberals put Badgerys Creek airport back on the agenda

■ The Deputy Prime Minister Mark Vaile has delivered another blow to the campaign for no airport at Badgerys Creek.

Mr Vaile has written to councils in Western Sydney confirming that there would be another 'review' of Sydney's airport needs in 2009 and until then, the land at Badgerys Creek would be held in reserve.

The Deputy PM has well and truly put Badgerys Creek back on the Federal Government's agenda. This is bad news for families across Western Sydney who are looking to build a new home or set up a business. The uncertainty of another review is also bad news for land values.

'I call on the Prime Minister to come out and rule once and for all that no airport will be built at

Badgerys Creek,' Chris said.

'Labor is already committed to not building an airport at Badgerys Creek.

'Last year I said: The 2005 review of Sydney's airport needs was merely a review that promises further reviews into the future and further uncertainty for hundreds of thousands of people.

'Now as I predicted, the Coalition has delivered another review and more uncertainty for residents and business in and around Badgerys Creek and in the Fairfield-Liverpool region.

'The truth of the matter, confirmed by the Deputy Prime Minister, is that a 'Yes' or 'No' decision has not been made by the Federal Government on Badgerys Creek.'



Chris Bowen and Labor remain opposed to an airport at Badgerys Creek.

Airport site still on hold

By councils writer JIM DICKINS

THE Federal Government has quarantined Badgerys Creek as a potential site for a second Sydney airport until at least 2009, when there will be another inquiry into air traffic flows.

Sunday Telegraph 25.2.07

Vaccine to fight cervical cancer

Important changes to the National Immunisation Program that could affect you!

While not as common as breast cancer in women, cervical cancer can be just as lethal. 1 in 183 Australian women will develop cervical cancer by the age of 75.

After a strong community campaign, the Commonwealth Government has decided to fund the cervical cancer vaccine, Gardasil®, for girls and women aged 12 to 26 from the start of 2007.

The cervical cancer vaccine took 2006 Australian of the Year, Ian Frazer, 15 years to develop and could prevent 70 per cent of cervical cancer.

As part of the National Immunisation Program, Gardasil® is being funded by the Federal Government, commencing in the 2007 school year for:

- An ongoing target group of 12 and 13 year old girls in a school-based program, generally delivered in the first year of high school;
- A catch-up group of 13-18 year old girls in a largely school-based program.

Women aged 18 to 26 will be also able to access the Gardasil® vaccine through their local GP from June-July 2007.

Women seeking to have this vaccination should contact their local GP for more information.

If you would like a Fact Sheet on Gardasil® and the National Immunisation Program, please contact my office on 9726 4100.

Labor's new national broadband network: Faster internet connections for St Clair & Erskine park

Bowen backs ALP plan for faster internet links

Fairfield Champion 4/4/07

■ Labor has announced a \$4.7 billion investment in partnership with the private sector to establish a national broadband network.

The new national broadband network will connect 98 per cent of Australians to high speed broadband internet services, delivering speeds up to 40 times faster than most people can currently access.

Labor's broadband network will ensure every house and business in the Prospect electorate will have access to high speed broadband.

Plenty of households in the local area do not have access to the existing ADSL broadband.

The benefits of the network include:

- Slashing telephone bills for small business;
- Enhancing business services such as teleconferencing, video conferencing and virtual private networks;
- Providing high definition, multi-channel and interactive TV services.

The national broadband network will be rolled out over a period of five years.

'I am pleased that Labor's national broadband network recognises the problems of the existing slower, broadband network, and will deliver high speed broadband to 100% of households and businesses in the local area,' Chris said.

Labor's world class national broadband plan

Federal Labor has taken an historic decision to create a world class national broadband network. We believe this is critical for Australia's long-term economic future.

We're proposing to invest up to \$4.7 billion in the proposal in partnership with the private sector to deliver for 98% of Australians a broadband service which is 40 times faster than most current speeds.

We regard this as an important part of nation building for the future. Nation building in the 19th century was about building a new national railway network for Australia. Nation building for the 21st century lies in building a new national broadband network. It's part of our pathway to the future.

Why is this necessary? When you look at Australia in the international comparative data, it's obvious we have a problem on our hands. We are 17th in the OECD in broadband take-up, and 25th in the world by available internet bandwidth.

Against these measures, we have a problem in terms of our international economic competitiveness and, unless it's fixed, we're going to face a real problem of lower productivity growth in the long-term.

If we're going to build long-term economic prosperity beyond the mining boom, then we've got to do something about turning around productivity growth.

Investing in a better economic future Shadow Finance Minister Lindsay Tanner says: 'Labor has fought long and hard in support of public ownership of Telstra, but we have lost that fight. The Government's share ownership is now around 17 per cent, and that is a passive shareholding. We accept that we can no longer defend the idea of 17 per cent shareholding in Telstra being in the public interest. 'We therefore believe that we have to redirect this investment into another telecommunications investment, which will be the broadband network that sets Australia up for the 21st century. That is crucial to growing our economy, to lifting productivity and ultimately, lifting Government revenues. 'We accept that we have lost the fight to keep Telstra in public ownership. We also are absolutely committed to building the broadband network of the future.'

Broadband will help small business, students and regional Australia

Labor's Education Revolution will boost the level of investment and the quality of investment in education, skills and training.

If we get our infrastructure strategy with broadband right, we believe that we can equip the Australian economy for the needs of the future.

Our broadband proposal is critical for the needs of the small business sector. When you speak to home-based small businesses right across Australia, they're saying they can't get their businesses up and functioning properly because they've got problems with broadband access and broadband speed.

When it comes to the Education Revolution and communicating modern curriculum support materials across the country, we need an effective broadband network.

Regional and rural Australia have an even bigger issue with inadequate access. You can't travel anywhere in the regions in rural Australia today without running into this as a very large problem.

Therefore, against all those measures, productivity growth, the small business sector, education needs right across the school communities of this country, in addition to regional and rural Australia, we think this is a correct step forward.

“... the next generation of broadband could produce economic benefits of \$12bn to \$30bn a year ...”

Max Walsh The Bulletin, April 2007

The drug 'ice': What you and your family can do about it

Over one hundred parents and teenagers turned out to a public forum on the illicit drug 'ice' held by Chris Bowen at Smithfield RSL on Wednesday 18 April.

'On the street it's known as crystal meth or 'ice'. But whatever you call it, methamphetamine is a dangerous drug, being stronger, more addictive, and more dangerous than heroin,' Chris said.

'Ice is a potent form of methamphetamine, almost 80% pure in some cases. It's a very different drug to what's been out there before.

'That's all the more frightening because it's considered fun, a party drug, aimed squarely at young people.'

The forum included special guest speakers Dr Gilbert Whitton, Drug and Alcohol Specialist at Sydney South West Area Health Service, Beaver Hudson, a Clinical Nurse at St Vincent's Hospital and 'BJ', a former ice addict.

The number of arrests for methamphetamine use and trafficking has shot up from 3,900 in 1996-97 to more than 10,000 in 2004-05.

'Enough is enough – we must act before ice gets totally out of control,' Chris said.

Kevin Rudd and Federal Labor are committed to tackling the ice epidemic, facing the problem

with a plan that includes:

- Working to ban the importation of ice pipes and other drug paraphernalia under the Customs Act (at present there is no such ban);
- Working with State and Territory governments to make it a criminal act to sell pseudoephedrine to minors (pseudoephedrine is a major ingredient in speed and ice); and
- Tailoring existing national education programs on illicit drug use, specifically targeting young people and ice.

Locally, it is important that young people and parents are informed about what this drug is and what it can do.

For a copy of the 'ice' information kit please contact my office on 9726 4100.



At the 'ice' forum: (left to right) Chris with Dr Gilbert Whitton and Beaver Hudson.

I'll be holding a Mobile Office at Erskine Park Shops on Monday 14 May.

I don't think a Federal MP should be stuck behind a desk, waiting for people to come in ... I like to get out and meet as many people as I can.

This is very important in a big seat like Prospect.

It can be difficult for people in Erskine Park to get down to Fairfield where my office is. I want to make it as easy as possible for you to see me, especially if you have any issues you would like to discuss.

I will be at Erskine Park Shopping Centre with State MP for Smithfield, Ninos Khoshaba, who will be available to discuss any state government issues you may have.

Mobile office details:

Erskine Park Shopping Centre
(Cnr Swallow & Peppertree Drives, Erskine Park)
Monday 14 May
10.30am to 12 Midday

If you can't make this time, but you would still like to see me to discuss a matter, feel free to call 9726 4100 to make an appointment. You can also send me an email at chris.bowen.mp@aph.gov.au.

Chris in Canberra

These are the speeches that Chris has made since the last *St Clair & Erskine Park Report*:

- Tax Laws Bill (2006 No.7) – 29 March 2007
- Corporations Committee – Report – 29 March 2007
- Governance Review Implementation – 28 March 2007
- Trade Practices regulations – 28 March 2007
- Labor's Broadband Network – 28 March 2007
- Liberal Democratic Party – 26 March 2007
- Australian Crime Commission – Drugs – 26 March 2007
- Australian Energy Market – 1 March 2007
- Corporations Takeover Bill – 28 February 2007
- Personal Explanation – Managed Investment Schemes – 28 February 2007
- Customs legislation – 28 February 2007
- Human Rights – 26 February 2007
- Housing – 26 February 2007
- Grievance Debate – Iraq – 26 February 2007
- Tax Laws Bill (No.7) 2006 – 7 February 2007
- Vietnam: Human Rights – 4 December 2006
- Human Cloning Bill – 30 November 2006
- Australian Technical Colleges – 29 November 2006
- Judiciary legislation – 28 November 2006
- Chaldean Catholic Church – 27 November 2006
- Australian Citizenship – 2 November 2006



If you would like copies of any of Chris' speeches in Parliament please phone 9726 4100 or go to www.chrisbowen.net

GOING MOBILE

Costello fails to deliver Easter eggs to Australian motorists

You might recall the media commentary on petrol prices with the petrol price spikes during the Easter holiday break.

The Treasurer, Peter Costello, made some comments saying that he would be asking the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to keep an eye on petrol prices over Easter.

These comments by the Treasurer were nothing more than lip service to motorists.

The ACCC always informally monitors petrol prices around the country.

But the Treasurer still refuses to give the ACCC, Australia's consumer watchdog, the power to act and to formally monitor petrol prices.

Mr Costello, price monitoring by Google is not formal price monitoring.

The ACCC cannot move to formally monitor and investigate petrol prices without notification from the Treasurer under Part VIIA of the Trade Practices Act.

It should not be up to the Treasurer to determine when the ACCC can formally monitor and investigate petrol prices.

Labor has consistently argued that the ACCC needs to be given the power to act independently and formally investigate petrol prices as it sees fit.

Petrol pricing is complex, and the biggest impact on petrol prices is world oil prices. But the Australian people deserve to have their watchdog, the ACCC, given full powers to do their job.

Chris is Labor's Shadow Assistant Treasurer with responsibility for petrol prices. You can keep tabs on Chris' progress as Shadow Minister by going to www.chrisbowen.net