



FRIENDS OF CALLAN PARK
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PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2018

Our recent lobbying to press the State Government and Opposition to take urgent action on Callan Park by investing in improving the parkland, protecting vital heritage buildings, establishing a Trust and restoring some community mental health services to the site, is a fitting climax to our **20th year of activism, advocacy and achievement.**

It certainly captures what we have been doing for the past two decades with some measure of success. It is really heartening that 60 supporters turned out at Parliament House on Tuesday, 20 November to show support for Callan Park.

Certainly we still have a lot to do but one thing is certain, ***we will not be giving up.***

WORKING WITH OTHERS – NETWORKING

Speaking personally the most moving moment of the year was the Smoking Ceremony held on 11 November, Armistice Day, at the Sydney Harbour Bridge War Memorial adjacent to Waterfront Oval to honour the designer, Douglas Grant, an Aboriginal man who together with fellow veterans rehabilitating in Repat B Ward at Callan Park, built the War Memorial.

We continue to work with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), who are now the lead managers for portions of Callan Park. We certainly support the initiative of the NSW Heritage Council in requesting OEH to develop a Landscape Structure Plan to make Callan Park more accessible from Balmain Road and the foreshore. Executive members meet with the onsite OEH management team periodically and relations are cordial and constructive.

Our local Member of Parliament, Jamie Parker, continued his efforts to focus the government's attention on Callan Park. It was standing-room-only at the public meeting held in June at the Balmain Town Hall for the presentation and information session about the *Landscape Structure Plan* by OEH senior officers.

Mr Parker continues to evoke a sympathetic response from some government ministers and MPs but as yet no funding.

The State Government will not change the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002. In fact, the Minister for Environment and Heritage, Gabrielle Upton, made a public declaration in favour of preserving the Act. That Act protects public ownership of the site, forbids straight-out commercial activities on the site, and reserves the site for community, health and educational uses.

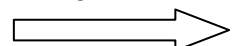
Labor continues to reiterate their support for a Trust for Callan Park which is encouraging. FOCP will push to ensure any Trust has strong local, independent representation and is well funded. Such a Trust would be the answer to many of the problems Callan Park now faces.

Onsite we continue to have a great relation with the major tenant We Help Ourselves (WHOS) which hosted our recent outdoor historic exhibition *Broughton Hall : Brought to Life* about the history of Broughton Hall (curated by Roslyn Burge). Presented for the History Council's annual *History Week 2018* in September, there was such a response that this self-guided exhibition is still in place.

FOCP's book of the exhibition, ***Broughton Hall : Brought to Life***, by Roslyn Burge will be launched by Garth Pople, Executive Director of WHOSS, at our AGM on Monday 3 December. It is pleasing to add another FOCP publication about the site following our 2015 publication ***Callan Park : Compassion & Conflict in the Asylum.*** There was a great turnout to our October meeting when FOCP member, Sarah Luke, spoke about her recent publication: ***Callan Park: Hospital for the Insane.***

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PTO



20 YEARS OF COMMUNITY ACTIVISM • ADVOCACY • ACHIEVEMENT

We continue to liaise with other stakeholder groups including local cricket clubs, to ensure they obtained their practice nets at Waterfront Oval. In this activity, as in others, we sometimes have friction with some elements on the Inner West Council and we try to ignore silly provocations and to be as polite as possible.

TOURS – LETTING THE WORLD KNOW ABOUT THIS WONDERFUL SITE - ADVOCACY

Demand for onsite tours continues with interest from the general public and a range of organisations such as the Royal Australian Historical Society (RAHS), Inner West Councillors, Mental Health Croakey (an organisation for mental health professionals), MHCC staff and WHOS staff and clients. Thanks to our guides Carole Allen, Roslyn Burge, Peter Gray, Lyn Latella and Sarah Luke who were supported by other members of the executive.

The Laneway annual music event held early February in association with the Sydney College of the Arts (SCA) helps to introduce Callan Park to a wider public and FOCP has an information stall there. We applaud OEH's concerns about mitigating the impact of 25,000 feet and commercial food stalls on the *exceptionally significant gardens* which are listed on the State Heritage Register.

The SCA is scheduled to leave Callan Park at the end of 2019 which raises the question of the future of the Kirkbride complex. The Minister for Environment and Heritage told our recent delegation that the government would be publicly advertising for Expressions of Interest from April/May next year.

MENTAL HEALTH – A GLIMMER OF HOPE

In June NSW Health announced that it was locating some step-down facilities in Callan Park – apparently in the Wharf Road cottage wards built in the 1990s. Unfortunately there has been no progress on this in the intervening months although FOCP will be meeting NSW Health officials on this issue soon.

Executive members Sue Steedman and Romy Baker continue to liaise with the mental health sector to reactivate the possibilities for community mental health services in the therapeutic environment of Callan Park.

Finally, it is a truth that needs to be universally acknowledged, that every organisation needs hard-working, selfless volunteers and we have an executive that fits that bill. I also wish to recognise and thank you the community for your continued support throughout another year.



Hall Greenland
President
26 November 2018

Donations Welcome: As a result of our lobbying activities and expenses associated with our Broughton Hall exhibition and publication, our coffers have been drawn down. Please assist by donating by either cheque or EFT:

Cheque: payable to Friends of Callan Park
PO Box 238
Rozelle 2039

EFT: BSB 633 000
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