

# May 2006

# Nillumvik

## news

Play, ride a bike, swing a club,  
walk, party, swim – which community  
assets do you use?  
pages 2-3

Have your say about local projects  
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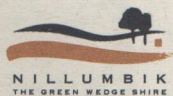
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Recycling & Recovery Centre  
hours of operation:  
290 Yan Yean Road, Plenty  
Friday-Monday 8am-4pm, and closed  
all other days and on public holidays.  
Telephone: 9436 3555

*Nillumbik News* is available in  
alternative formats upon request. Contact  
Communications on 9433 3105 or email  
[Barb.Whiter@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:Barb.Whiter@nillumbik.vic.gov.au).  
A large format Word version is available  
on CD by request to the Customer Service  
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# Play, ride a bike, swim

## – which community assets do you use?

### Great news! The latest Australian Sports Commission survey shows Victorians are out in front when it comes to getting physically active.

The survey asked Australians what kind  
of sport and recreation they took part  
in and how often they had exercised in  
the past 12 months. In 2004, 85% (or  
3,378,000) of Victorians aged 15 and  
over were involved in exercise, sport or  
recreation, compared to 82% across  
the rest of Australia.

By far the most popular activity in  
Victoria was walking, which also had  
the biggest increase in participants.

Nillumbik residents can walk or  
cycle using an extensive network of  
recreation trails covering some 30km  
across the shire.

When using the recreation trails,  
please think of everyone's safety, as  
well as using plain good manners!

- Wear a helmet – it is illegal to  
cycle without wearing one.  
Make sure it's correctly fitted.

- Nillumbik paths are shared footways  
– this means paths can be used  
by walkers, skaters, runners,  
wheelchair users, as well as cyclists.  
Keep to the left at all times and  
ensure others can overtake on the  
pathways. Cyclists must give way to  
pedestrians.
- Travel at an acceptable speed and  
be particularly careful in the dark,  
or in wet or slippery conditions.
- Keep dogs on a leash – unrestrained  
animals can be dangerous to cyclists  
(and of course the dogs themselves  
can be in danger).
- If you stop, move off the path.

After your walk maybe you'd like to try  
other community assets in Nillumbik?

### Yarrambat Park Golf Course

Yan Yean Road, Yarrambat  
(Melway 184 F5)  
Phone: 9436 2201

The most striking feature of the course  
is its championship length – 6085  
metres. It's generally an easy walk  
around the mostly flat 18-holes, but  
there are a number of hills to make the  
course interesting. Another feature is  
the water hazards.



Front cover: Yarrambat Park Golf Course; above: Eltham Skate Park; walking and cycling on recreational trails; golf at Yarrambat Park; Grove Street Playground; swimming; Kangaroo Ground Hall; and gym facilities.

# ving a club, walk, party, swim

Facilities include a pro shop, golf professional – clinics and private lessons; practice fairway (buckets of balls available); practice putting green and motorised carts.

Yarrambat Park Golf Course's Riverglen function centre/bistro features a fully licensed bar, large atrium style windows and a conservatory overlooking the picturesque golf course. An open fireplace adds character and warmth in the cooler months. Ample car parking is available.

## Diamond Creek Community Centre and Diamond Creek Outdoor Heated Pool

Main Hurstbridge Road, Diamond Creek (Melway 12 A6)  
Phone: 9438 5299

The Community Centre is open seven days a week and offers a wide variety of YMCA programs catering for all ages and abilities. There is a function room and a stadium for hire, it has its own ladies netball competition and it's the home of the Diamond Creek Basketball Club. From November to March, Health Club membership also includes entry to the Diamond Creek Outdoor Heated Pool in Elizabeth Street.

The facilities include the Health Club, a cardio room, a basketball stadium, a function room, a fully-equipped kitchen, and a crèche. Both the Health Club and cardio room boast modern gymnasium equipment. There are over 20 classes per week available to Health Club members.

## Grove Street Playground

Grove Street, Eltham (Melway 22 A4)

This playground is situated opposite Eltham East Primary School. It was recently upgraded by Council, and a new play unit installed. It offers balance and coordination with imaginative play activities for 4-14 year olds.

The playground includes a slide, monkey bars and climbing net, and a double swing set on western side of playground with one cradle and one infant seat matching the combination unit – for extra safety there are rubber mats under the swings. There is also a see-saw.

## Kangaroo Ground Emergency Operations Centre hall

corner Kangaroo Ground-St Andrews Road and Ness Lane, Kangaroo Ground (Melway 271 E9)

Council operates several community halls and venues, which are available for hire,

throughout the Shire. Bookings, brochures and details on each of the facilities are available by contacting 9431 1034.

One venue you could consider for your next celebration is this attractive mudbrick centre located in Kangaroo Ground, which has picturesque rural views. The Centre has a large hall, meeting room and large kitchen and is available for weddings, 21st birthday parties and dances. There is adequate parking surrounding the venue.

## Eltham Skate Park

There are three BMX/skate parks in the Shire. One is located in Hurstbridge at Fergusons Paddock, another in Diamond Creek in the park next to the swimming pool, and the newest is located in Eltham at Alistair Knox Park West, near the corner of Bridge Road and Susan Street.

The development of the Eltham Skate Park was a collaborative project right from the start. During the design consultation phase, Council worked closely with the Eltham Skate Park Committee.

The resulting development is a superior facility where young people can gather, which also provides a path link into the Diamond Creek Recreation Trail and has access from Eltham train station.

# Environment (natural, built and cultural)

## Is your rural property as healthy as it can be?



### Better roads

The construction and sealing of Buttermans Track, St Andrews as part of Nillumbik Shire Council's Capital Works Program has been completed. One and a half kilometres of the rural road, stretching from Salters Rush Road to Rangeview Road, was sealed.

Not only does this work contribute to the maintenance of community assets there are also added environmental benefits as Nillumbik Shire Mayor, Councillor Greg Johnson explains.

'As well as providing residents with a better road on which to drive, these works also have environmental benefits. The construction and sealing of dirt roads reduces the sediment run off into our waterways and there is a decrease in dust which can aggravate health issues such as asthma,' explained Cr Johnson.

The \$151,000 works are being funded through Nillumbik Shire Council's capital works budget (\$50,000) and the Federal Government's Roads to Recovery program (\$101,000).

The economic and ecological values of rural properties within Nillumbik are immense, yet many properties function well below their potential. Property management planning, sometimes called whole farm planning, is an excellent way to maximise the value and viability of your property.

Whole farm planning is a way of understanding the physical and biological characteristics of your property and then designing an ideal farm layout to best suit those characteristics. With this process behind you, your property has a greater chance of being healthy, wealthy and productive, now, and into the future.

Council is hosting events to help you and your land:

WACMAC Landcare has arranged a free field day – **A demonstration and introduction to whole farm planning** on Sunday 7 May, from 1pm-4.30pm. Come along to a small rural property in Arthurs Creek where many interesting aspects of a whole farm planning are to be demonstrated. See a technical

presentation on the use of electric fencing and learn how the current landowners have designed shelterbelts, improved their paddock layout and protected their dams and waterways.

Another event is a one-day **Introduction to property management and planning** on Sunday 28 May. This course will introduce the concept of sustainable property management and cover topics such as property analysis, pest plant and animal control and vegetation protection.

For those keen to get further involved in farm planning, WACMAC Landcare, in association with the University of Melbourne, is hosting an accredited **Four-day whole farm planning course**. Participants will learn details of how best to manage their land and they will be assisted to design an ideal farm layout as an overlay to a large scale aerial photograph of their property.

For further information and bookings please contact Megan Andrews, Personal Assistant, on 9433 3210.

## Biodiversity Enhancement Program

To protect and enhance Nillumbik's biodiversity, in particular native vegetation and faunal habitat, landowners can apply for grants of up to \$500 to undertake biodiversity enhancement works on their property.

Grants can be used to reimburse the cost of:

- purchasing indigenous plants to be used for revegetation
- materials associated with the fencing of remnant vegetation and revegetated areas
- hiring a contractor to undertake environmental weed control.

Priority will be given to properties in the following target areas:

- properties with Land for Wildlife status
- properties within the Environmental Significance Overlay 1 *Sites of Faunal and Habitat Significance*
- properties with good quality native vegetation
- properties abutting national parks, state parks and environmental reserves
- properties that help to link significant areas of native vegetation or habitat for fauna.

An application form and guidelines can be obtained by contacting Julie Graham, Land Management Officer, on 9433 3211.

Closing date for grant applications is 31 May 2006.

# Tackling weeds in Nillumbik

Weeds are a serious problem in the Shire and Council is committed to reducing the impacts weeds have in our environment.

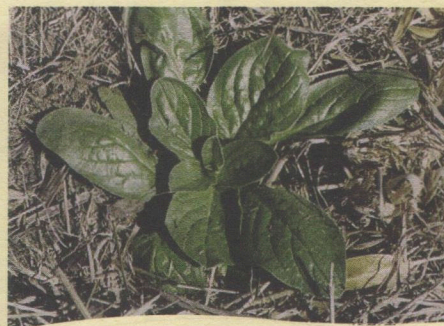
In 2005 Council received funding through the State Government's Tackling Weeds on Private Land Initiative to review current weed programs and raise community awareness on this topic. Council has completed a **roadside weed mapping project** which enables officers to plan and prioritise weed control operations efficiently. The annual blackberry control program was completed recently using this mapping system.

Council has also participated in, and hosted, a range of educational events to assist the local community gain a better understanding of weeds. A **Weed Identification and Tour** will be held on Saturday 6 May 2006 and will provide a

great opportunity for local residents to obtain further practical knowledge on weeds and their control. For bookings please contact Megan Andrews, Personal Assistant, on 9433 3210. There are more weed educational events planned. To obtain a copy of the Environmental Events Program please contact Rebecca Petit, Environment Officer, on 9433 3216.

**Council's Community Weed Control Program** provides financial assistance for landowners to use a licensed weed control contractor. There are 20 weeds listed on the program. For information please contact Julie Graham, Land Management Officer, on 9433 3211.

Council officers recently attended the Tackling Weeds on Private Land South East Regional Forum. Educational materials and a presentation, highlighting weed



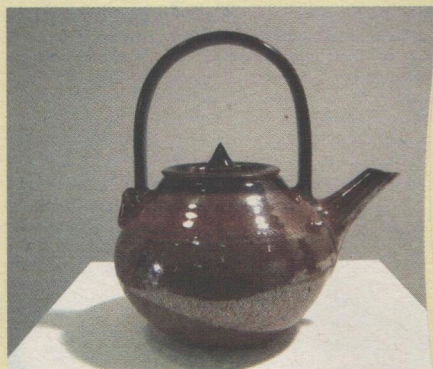
Patersons Curse is a targeted weed.

distribution across the Shire, were displayed – it was particularly well received by the forum's attendees.

Stephen Young of the Department of Primary Industries said: 'It is encouraging to see long-term weed management plans and goals in place. By developing a Council Weed Action Plan and providing educational material, training and workshops for staff and the community, Nillumbik is a Council leading by example.'

## Donations preserve culture

**The Nillumbik Art Collection has recently been boosted with donations of ceramic pots. Thanks to the Trembath family and Gwen Ford, pots by Leon Saper and Chris Sanders have been added to Council's collection of local ceramics.**



Teapot by Leon Saper has recently been donated to the Nillumbik Art Collection.

Councillor Bronnie Hattam, Chair of the Art Acquisition Advisory Committee, explains: 'The committee is keen to acquire good examples of the key potters in the Shire and has set aside a nominal amount to do so, but the recent donations have given the committee another idea – to seek assistance from the community and to appeal to their generosity.'

This is a timely request as it has been noted ceramic pots of considerable historical interest to Council have been turning up at markets and second hand shops. Council would prefer to see such works given recognition and a position of importance in the Nillumbik Art Collection.

The preservation of our ceramics culture is crucial if our unique heritage is to be acknowledged and valued by future generations.

Of these potters, Council would like to hold good examples of pots by artists such as Heja Chong, Geoffrey Davidson, the Halperns, Helen and Peter Laycock, Robert Mair, Gus McLaren, John Olsen, Reg Preston, Leon Saper and Alma Shanahan. The potters from other areas are also on the wanted list, with names like John Mills and Neil Douglas who worked with Arthur Boyd at the Murrumbidgee Pottery in the 1950s.

If it is time for a spring clean, please consider donating a work or two!

Council is interested in hearing from anyone who may have pots of interest. Please contact Tony Trembath, Visual Arts Project Officer, Monday to Wednesday on 9433 3131 or by email at [Tony.Trembath@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:Tony.Trembath@nillumbik.vic.gov.au).

# Health and wellbeing

## May is Small Business Month

To celebrate the diversity of small businesses in Nillumbik, a range of business seminars, workshops and networking events will be on offer for people at different stages of business development.

For new businesses, the **Going into business** seminar, part of the state government's Under New Management program, provides invaluable assistance with planning a new venture. The three-hour seminar will be held on 8 May and costs \$30 per participant (this includes a voucher for a free session with a small business consultant). Call 9719 7506 to register. The Australian Tax Office will present a one day workshop on 11 May. The morning session covers **basic tax information** for small business and includes topics such as income tax and deductions, activity statements and GST.



Business people networking at the March Connecting Nillumbik meeting at Montsalvat.

The afternoon session provides an overview of **recordkeeping for small business**. The cost to participate is \$10 and bookings can be made through the ATO on 1300 661 104.

The Under New Management **seminar series** commences on 16 May and includes four, two-hour seminars covering marketing, financial controls, time management and basic business planning. The cost for each seminar is \$10 and bookings can be made on 9719 7506.

A special **business breakfast** on 23 May will provide an interpretation of the federal government budget and outline its implications for small businesses. Marshall Ward and Associates will be hosting this breakfast and will be providing a leading economist and their key analyst Keat Choo. Bookings can be made by calling Julie on 9437 2688.

And finally, the regular **Nillumbik HomeBiz Network** meeting falls on 16 May. Come and meet other like-minded business people in a friendly and informal atmosphere. The night includes a member profile segment, a guest speaker and networking over drinks and nibbles.

For more information on any of these programs go to [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au) > Business and Tourism or call Julie French on 9433 3315.

## Nillumbik Sports Club Forum 2006

To celebrate the outstanding achievements and contributions made by local sports and recreation organisations, Nillumbik Shire Council would like to invite you to the 4th Annual Sports Club Forum.

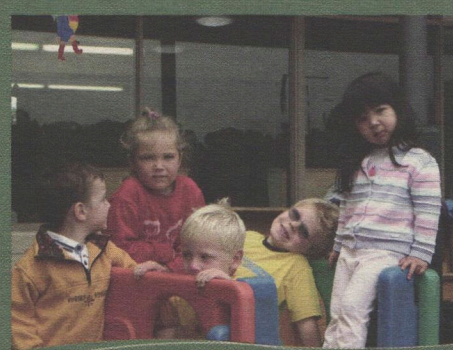
Olympic Gold Medallist and local resident Lauren Burns OAM will be our special guest. Lauren will talk about what it takes to be successful. Lauren transforms her stories and experiences into life skills which are inspirational and captivating. Presentation of the Sports Awards will then be carried out by the Mayor, with Lauren's assistance.

When: Thursday 1 June 2006  
7.30pm-9.30pm

Where: Eltham Community  
& Reception Centre,  
801 Main Road, Eltham

For details visit [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au) or contact Sharon Frosi on 9433 3161 to secure your place.

Light supper and refreshments are provided and bookings are essential.



The newly renovated and extended Centre is a great place to make new friends.

## Happy children

There are happy three- and four-year-old children and parents in Diamond Creek with the opening of the renovated and extended Occasional and Long Day Care Centre.

The Centre was officially opened on Saturday 8 April by Nillumbik Shire Mayor, Councillor Greg Johnson, who said on the day: 'This facility is one of the best child service facilities in Nillumbik and puts us in the wonderful position of being able to respond to community needs and expectations of quality child care services in Diamond Creek.

'The extension and renovation works have increased the size of the Centre so it now allows for the care of 56 children, doubling the original number catered for. I congratulate everyone involved in this project and wish the Centre happy and fun times.'

For further information contact Judith Lambert, Director, on 9438 2719.



Simone Pilens shows the Minister for Community Services, Ms Sherryl Garbutt, how easy it is to RECHARGE in Nillumbik.

# RECHARGE your life

The RECHARGE scheme is about encouraging local businesses to provide a power point so people can recharge their electric scooter/wheelchair. Of course, it's also about giving people who use scooters or wheelchairs the confidence and freedom to participate in and around the community without worrying if they have enough charge in their battery to get home.

Due to the success of the pilot program in Eltham, this initiative was recently launched by Council and the Minister for Community Services, Ms Sherryl Garbutt.

Council thanks our business sector for bringing this project to life and supporting the diverse needs of our community. Where it was necessary for a power point to be installed, this work was completed free of charge, courtesy of CRZ electrical services. Many traders have also made their business

more physically accessible to benefit customers who use a mobility device or who may be navigating a pram.

All participating businesses have a RECHARGE sticker on their shop window to indicate they have a power point available for people to recharge their electric scooter or wheelchair.

There are now RECHARGE points available in and around Eltham, Hurstbridge and Diamond Creek. As a result of this success, the RECHARGE scheme is being expanded statewide. Council, in partnership with Mobility Aids Australia, will be providing scooter information sessions for residents.

If you would like to find out more, please contact Angela Lampard, MetroAccess Officer, on 0438 009 672 or email [Angela.Lampard@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:Angela.Lampard@nillumbik.vic.gov.au).

## Septic tank workshops

**Recent publicity about the health of the Yarra and the launch of the Yarra Action Plan by the State Government in January has sparked concerns from the public about health risks associated with failing septic tanks.**

There are currently approximately 6000 properties in Nillumbik which are serviced by septic systems. When working well, these systems are an effective and safe way to treat and discharge household wastewater. However, failing systems can pose public health threats through the spread of pathogens and infectious diseases. Untreated wastewater also impacts on the environment through increased nutrient loads and changes to acidity/alkalinity in soil that are toxic to indigenous plants and which can stimulate weed growth.

A high response rate to a recent survey of properties in Eltham South, Diamond Creek, North Warrandyte and Research highlighted there is a strong interest in domestic wastewater issues and a need for more information regarding the maintenance of these systems by property owners.

Council is currently undertaking an education campaign regarding the operation and maintenance of these systems. Feedback was provided to residents in surveyed areas and Council has also developed and improved informative materials available from the Public Health Services Unit and on the Public Health and Wellbeing pages on [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au).

In addition, Council has a series of workshops planned to provide residents with the necessary information to manage their system effectively. These interactive workshops will cover everything from what you can put down your sink to how to safely inspect your septic tank.

If you are on a property serviced by a septic tank, these workshops are for you!

### Septic tank workshops

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday 13 July	7pm	Eltham Community & Reception Centre, 801 Main Road, Eltham (Melway 21 J6)
Monday 24 July	7pm	North Warrandyte Family Centre, 184 Research-Warrandyte Road, North Warrandyte (Melway 23 E9)
Wednesday 2 August	7pm	Banksia Room, Living & Learning Nillumbik, Pantan Hill Centre, 18 Bishops Road, Pantan Hill (Melway 263 K9)

For more information regarding septic systems or domestic wastewater management, or to RSVP to one of the workshops, please contact the Public Health Services Unit on 9433 3340.

# Governance and community engagement



## What will Edendale be like in the future?

Almost everyone agrees that Edendale Farm Community Environment Centre has huge potential, but an environment centre can take many forms. Council's goal for Edendale is that it will be a community environment centre that increases community awareness of environmental sustainability and is a focus for local environmental programs.

As part of the development of a masterplan for Edendale, we need to have an agreed understanding about how to implement this goal and how we are going to get there.

### To do this Council needs you!

We wish to obtain your views about the future development of Edendale including issues such as:

- the types, intensity and locations of uses
- size, nature and locations of facilities.

A diverse range of views and ideas will enhance the final masterplan.

Over the coming weeks you will find notices in local papers inviting you to take part in facilitated workshops which will aim to develop an agreed vision for Edendale. This will give mums, dads, young people, older people, community groups, teachers, volunteers, local businesses, and many more, a unique opportunity to have a say about the goals for this major environmental facility and how they will be achieved.

Once these key questions have been answered, a detailed site masterplan will be prepared in the second half of the year so we can all see what it is likely to look like. There will also be a chance to provide further input before the final masterplan is adopted by Council.

For further details please contact Rachel Haynes, Manager Environment & Strategic Planning (and Project Manager), on 9433 3213, email her via [Rachel.Haynes@nillumibik.vic.gov.au](mailto:Rachel.Haynes@nillumibik.vic.gov.au) or visit Council's website [www.nillumibik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumibik.vic.gov.au) for updates.



Diamond Creek  
twenty20

## Update on Diamond Creek Plan

We thank residents for the large number of submissions and comments received about the Issues and Options Report for Diamond Creek released late last year. Topics covered included the future of the Main Hurstbridge Road – whether it should be duplicated or not, the options for a new indoor sports facility and a wide range of ideas for the future character of the town.

Council is now working on a plan which will combine a structure plan and leisure facilities plan, responding to the submissions received. The combined plan will be released in draft form in May for further consultation. We want to know whether the plan fits with your ideas for the future of Diamond Creek, as this plan will guide improvements and planning decisions in the township for the next fifteen years.

The draft plan will be released in May with a fanfare, including notices in local papers, a bulletin mailed to Diamond Creek residents and letters to people who have already been involved in the process.

For further information contact Peter Mollison, Senior Strategic Planner, on 9433 3209.

# Great survey response

Thank you so much to everyone who took the time to attend one of our recent series of nine community workshops, and thank you also to the 2000-plus people who returned the survey sent out with the February edition of *Nillumbik News*. A further 50 people also filled in the online version of the survey.

This large response from the community enables us to have a clear picture of your priorities on how your rates are spent.

We are very pleased by the response rate with about 10% of the surveys being sent back to us. We are still collating the information, so keep a look out in future editions of the *Nillumbik News* for an analysis and more details of what information was obtained.

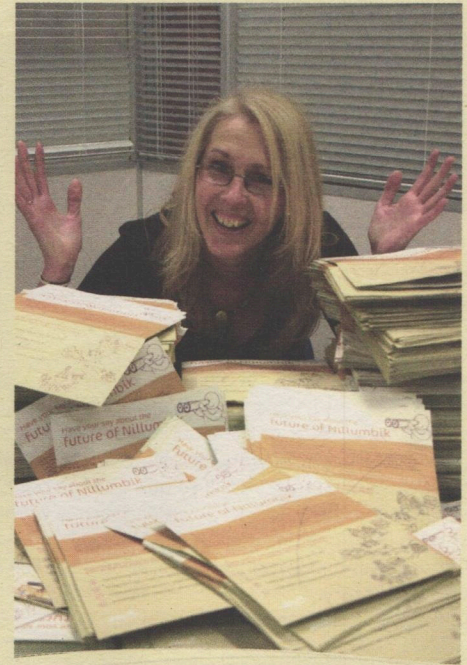
At the nine community workshops we talked to 100 people from across the Shire about what they considered to be

the key priorities for Nillumbik over the next three to four years.

A range of issues was identified at both the workshops, and through an initial scan of the surveys – the most common themes being:

- protecting and maintaining our beautiful natural environment, the Green Wedge
- traffic management, lack of public transport and pedestrian/road safety
- protecting the character and historical aspects of our different townships
- continuing concerns about Nillumbik's heavy reliance on residential rates and as a result – how high they are.

Further details about what was said at the workshops can be found on Council's website [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au) > Community have their say about the future of Nillumbik, found under the News section on the home page.



We were overwhelmed at your response - now Jacky Close, Social Planning Coordinator, will analyse the results to let us know what the priorities are for Nillumbik.

## Nillumbik's operations confirmed as lean and mean

Victorian Grants Commission comparative data for Victorian Councils for the 2004-2005 financial year confirms Nillumbik is a low spending Council and operates on a tight budget. Nillumbik Shire Mayor, Councillor Greg Johnson, says a recent analysis of this data on a per resident basis (rather than just per property) demonstrates Council's efficiency.

'Nillumbik has the same population as the average Victorian council, with just

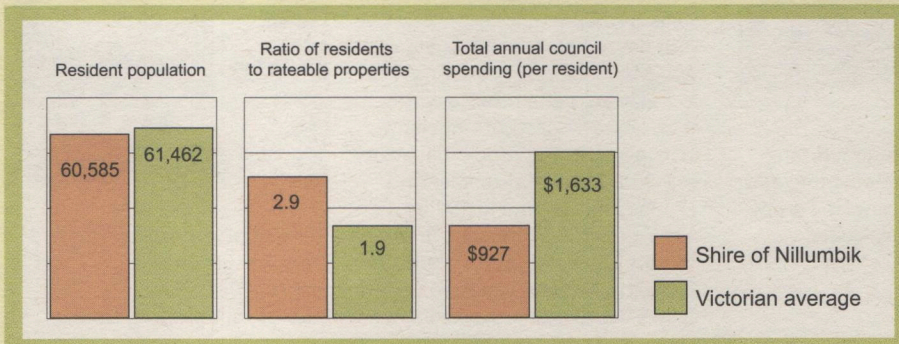
over 60,000 residents. However, Nillumbik has the smallest rate base relative to its population in the whole of Victoria with 2.9 residents per rateable property compared with the state average of 1.9 residents. This latest data also shows Nillumbik is 40% below the state average on spending and staffing levels on a per resident basis,' said Cr Johnson.

Victorian Grants Commission data shows that Nillumbik spent \$927 per resident in

2004-2005 while the average Victorian council spent \$1,633.

'Our services and facility needs are primarily driven by our resident population, not by the number of rateable properties. Residents determine our expenditure needs but our revenue is limited by the number of rateable properties,' said Cr Johnson.

'Nillumbik will continue to be heavily reliant on residential rates for our income. Nillumbik does not have many other revenue sources (e.g. commercial/ industrial properties, parking meters and fines). We are 90% rural, yet we cannot access government grants for rural services. We also score highly on health and wellbeing indicators which reduces our access to grants for social needs, said Cr Johnson.



# Calendar of events

The following activities are some events run by or supported by Council, including those provided from members of Nillumbik traders' groups and the Nillumbik Tourism Association. For detailed information pick up a free copy of the Calendar of events brochure from your local community information stand or visit [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au) > What's On. Go to the website to list

Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 May 2006  
11am-5pm

## Artists Open Studios

Studios scattered throughout Nillumbik will open their doors providing a rare opportunity for the public to talk with, and see, artists at work. Thirty artists in 20 studios cover many disciplines including painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, textiles and photography. Most of the work on display is for sale or you may wish to commission a special work. Bookings are also available for workshops at many studios. For a free full colour 48-page booklet call 1300 660 072 or visit the website below to download a copy of the booklet.

Various locations throughout the Shire.

Contact: Nillumbik Tourism Association 1300 660 072

Cost: free entry

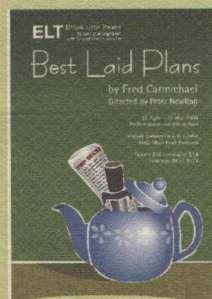
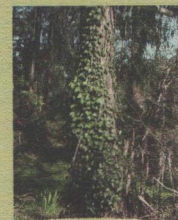
Web: [www.artistsopenstudios.com.au](http://www.artistsopenstudios.com.au)



Saturday 6 May  
10am-3pm

## Weed identification and tour

Join this tour to learn which weeds are threats in Nillumbik and how they can spread. A tour of several properties will demonstrate some great practical examples of how weeds can be controlled. Free indigenous plant to every participant. Lunch provided. Places are limited so bookings are essential. Edendale Farm Community Environment Centre, Gastons Road, Eltham  
Contact: Megan Andrews 9433 3210  
Cost: free



Thursday 27 April to Saturday 13 May  
8pm

## Eltham Little Theatre Productions

*The Best Laid Plans*, by Fred Carmichael, directed by Peter Newling.

Ada Westbrook, an elderly writer of spy thrillers, is on holidays. A real spy enters her house and dies there. On the body are secret plans which every government wants and tries to get. When his identical twin brother turns up, yet more complications add to the fun. Performances are on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, with a matinee on Sunday 7 May at 2pm.

Eltham Performing Arts Centre, Main Road, Research

Contact: The Ticketmaster 9437 1574

Cost: adults \$16, concession \$14

Web: [www.elthamlittletheatre.org.au](http://www.elthamlittletheatre.org.au)

Friday 5 May  
8pm

## Eltham World Harmonies presents Tongue N Groove

Tongue N Groove is a fusion of lounge, dub and electronic music featuring the driving organic elements of the didgeridoo, live percussion, trumpet, bass and guitar. This is music to relax to and music to dance to. Featuring five of Melbourne's finest musicians, Tongue N Groove have translated their first album *Keep Going* into a live stage show, with successful gigs in Australia and rave reviews in Europe for their tour in 2004. Delicious cakes and refreshments available.

St Margaret's Hall, Pitt Street, Eltham

Contact: Rosie 9437 2617

Cost: adults \$12, concession \$9, children free



Wednesday 7 June to Tuesday 27 June  
Opening times vary – same as Eltham Library – closed Monday

## India – My Connection

Solo exhibition by Rae Saleeba.

This first exhibition is inspired by a recent trip to India. Being amongst Tibetan and Indian communities

engendered in Rae a sense of connection and a love of the people, colours and diversity of these countries.

Eltham Library Community Gallery, Panther Place, Eltham

Contact: Tony Trembath 9433 3131 (Mon-Weds business hours)

Email: [artsinfo@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:artsinfo@nillumbik.vic.gov.au)

Thursday 8 June and continuing  
Wellers of Kangaroo Ground presents  
their Live and Up Close series

See live gigs by some of Australia's most talented performers. The intimate setting means seats are limited.

Wellers of Kangaroo Ground, Pitmans Corner, 150 Eltham-Yarra Glen Road, Kangaroo Ground.

Contact: Stephanie 9712 0266

Web: [www.wellers.com.au](http://www.wellers.com.au)



From Saturday 17 June  
9.30am-4.30pm

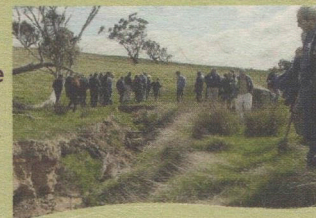
## Four-day, whole farm planning course

WACMAC Landcare is offering this four-day accredited course which covers many aspects of farm land management. The course will be held over four Saturdays commencing 17 June and continuing 15 July, 19

August, and 16 September. Bookings are essential as places are limited. Arthurs Creek Hall, 906 Arthurs Creek Road, Arthurs Creek

Contact: WACMAC Landcare Coordinator 9217 2087

Cost: \$188.40 includes a colour aerial photo of your property, course notes, three days tuition and field tours.



## In brief...



Above: Painter Guy Stuart's installation at the Shire offices foyer.  
At right: sculpture from Deborah Halpern.

### Lobby exhibitions

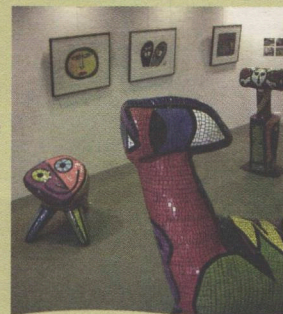
A new and exciting project at the Council offices has been running since last May. It's an exhibition program which celebrates the Nillumbik Art Collection and the artists whose work has been collected by the Shire. The exhibitions are held in the offices' side foyer, and each run for eight weeks.

Generally a work is selected from the Nillumbik Art Collection and exhibited against current work by the same artist. The program has been generously supported with considerable goodwill by the artists and their galleries. While this approach serves to introduce the public and

Council staff to the treasures of the collection, the main purpose is to provide a context and opportunity to see the artist's current work, underline the importance of our growing regional collection and the value of supporting our artists.

Informal floor talks commenced recently enabling open discussion about the works on exhibition and current issues that may have hit the arts press. It has been interesting to see how prolonged contact with works on exhibition has allowed appreciation and understanding to grow for both visitors and Council staff. This demonstrates the value of exhibiting our collection in a range of contexts. Public artist talks are planned for 2007 to complement the educative success of the exhibitions and further inform residents and visitors to the Shire about why we have a Nillumbik Art Collection.

Exhibitions to date have included the exuberant sculptural menagerie of Deborah Halpern, printmaker Marco Luccio's skeletal cityscapes, the surreal outback-inspired sculptures of George Turcu and painter Guy Stuart's distinctive abstract response to working from landscape.



Contact Tony Trembath, Visual Arts Project Officer, 9433 3131, or go to What's On on the home page of [www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au](http://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au) for current exhibition information or email [artsinfo@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:artsinfo@nillumbik.vic.gov.au).

### Building in hilly Nillumbik

One of the most common traps when building a house appears when, in the planning stage of the process, little consideration is given to the natural ground fall on the building site. This is fairly common in hilly Nillumbik.

Even when earthworks have been pre-planned and there is a site plan indicating the extent and location of the works, and a building permit has been obtained by Council, things can still get complicated. One problem can be a change of mind. If, at the time of the excavation, the appealing prospect of a larger flattened area is acted upon and the excavation is enlarged – the consequence may have the potential of a legal challenge from adjoining owners for possible damage to their properties and perhaps the expense of having to build retaining walls.

Some words of advice:

- Pre-plan your site works and stick to the plan and permit conditions!

- As a general rule, any excavations closer to a common boundary (horizontal distance) than its own depth (vertical height) will require a retaining wall and a building permit prior to excavating.
- A retaining wall, of any height, located anywhere on the land and associated with other building or with protection to adjoining property needs a building permit.
- Keep in mind any excavations located on the boundary will destabilise an existing fence.
- Know there are legal requirements under building legislation to provide protection works to adjoining properties – whether the property is vacant or not.
- Know there is a prescribed procedure under building legislation to notify adjoining owners of protection works that may affect their property.

If you are planning earthworks in Nillumbik, please discuss your plans with your building surveyor. Nillumbik Environmental Building Surveyors (NEBS), can assist with queries on any building matters, including earthworks. Contact NEBS on 9433 3243 or visit the web page at [www.nillumbuk.vic.gov.au/building](http://www.nillumbuk.vic.gov.au/building).

## From the Mayor...

I am heartened by the February Community Cabinet visit to Nillumbik and the reception we received from the Premier and his Ministers. Here are some highlights from our presentation.

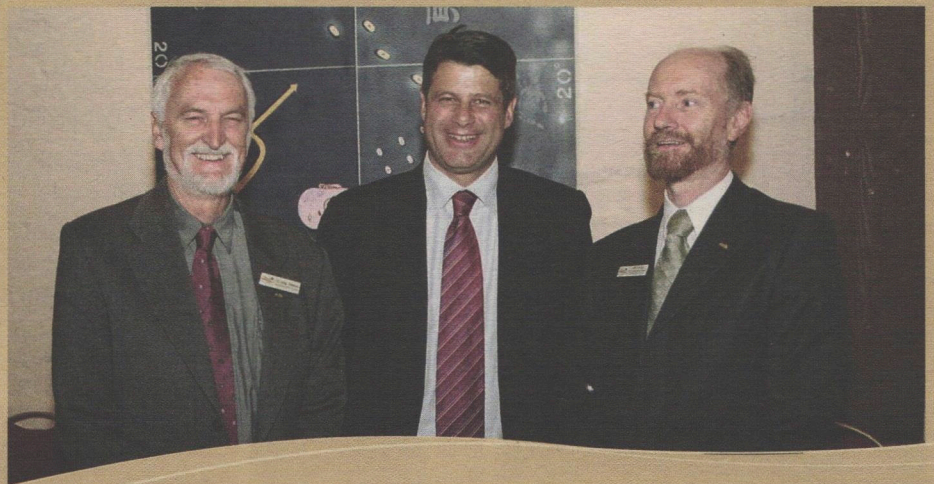
The Shire of Nillumbik is at the interface of urban and rural Victoria. It comprises both a beautiful natural and built environment, and a number of diverse and vibrant communities. As a designated Green Wedge Shire it acts as the lungs of Melbourne.

We at Nillumbik recognise we are, overall, very fortunate. On Department of Victorian Communities indicators of community strength we rate above the state average for 10 of the 15 indicators. In contrast to our community strength, however, as a Council, our financial position presents a different picture.

Our Shire, at 60,000 people, is half the size of the metropolitan average and about the average for Victoria. Our geographic size of 430 square kilometres is however among the largest for a metropolitan Council. A small population and large geographic area deny us economies of scale available to most metropolitan councils.

Expectations of urban standards of service and the rural nature of 90% of our Shire reflect in higher service delivery costs. This is then compounded by our ineligibility to apply for grants available to rural and regional Victoria.

The end result is a Council highly dependant on residential rates and with high average rates per assessment. Worse still, it implies Council is high spending and inefficient. The opposite is the case. Our total spend per capita is over 40% below the state average and among the lowest in the state.



Nillumbik Shire Mayor, Cr Greg Johnson (left) and Nillumbik CEO Bill Forrest (right), enjoyed highlighting the Shire to Victoria's Premier Steve Bracks.

This Council, on taking office in 2004, moved to improve Nillumbik's long term financial viability by:

- Being honest with our community about our situation.
- Undertaking extensive community

**'On a personal note, I was genuinely impressed by the sophistication of Nillumbik's planning, vision and strategies that were occurring.'**

**Steve Herbert MP, Member for Eltham**

consultation on our goals and how they should be resourced.

- Increasing our revenue-raising effort, so our revenue can more closely match the cost of service provision and asset maintenance.
- Tackling our infrastructure deficit.
- Tackling the multi-million dollar projects which have been relegated to the too hard basket until now.

We would also like to see:

- Better recognition of our Green Wedge and non-urban responsibilities in funding formulas and arrangements.
- Partnering opportunities for major facilities redevelopment.

Moving to planning and environment matters – we are developing and

implementing good local policy which will protect the Green Wedge for the benefit of all Victorians. We are also taking enormous care in considering planning permit applications for the urban fringe and Green Wedge areas to ensure all policy aims are met while allowing legitimate and sympathetic development to occur.

Achievement of the vision also requires a review of VCAT's role in interpreting existing state and local policies.

Transport is a major issue for Nillumbik, which has limited public transport. Peak rail services are crowded and infrequent. Bus services are poor – in frequency and hours of availability. A number of improvements to our roads, without building new roads, would reduce commuter congestion and encourage mode shift. Environmental

**'Cabinet told me they were encouraged by Council's partnership approach with the State Government to find solutions for local issues.'**

**Danielle Green MP, Member for Yan Yean**

sustainability, quality of life and traffic flows would be improved by an increased level of public transport in the interface municipalities, the Plenty Growth Corridor and improvements to the Hurstbridge and Epping lines.