



THIS IS LUGARNO

Q1 2026 (March)

What is the Lugarno Progress Association?

The Lugarno Progress Association (LPA) was founded in 1922. It is an incorporated not-for-profit community group run by volunteers.



Lugarno is a strong community with over 5900 residents, who are proud of the natural beauty of our peninsular suburb and its rich history and indigenous heritage. The main objective of the LPA is to act in the best interests of the ratepayers and residents of Lugarno, consistent with its motto *“Lugarno, naturally beautiful”*. It advocates on behalf of Lugarno residents to preserve or improve for its residents, the amenity and environment of the suburb.

The association relies on information and support from the residents of Lugarno to decide annual advocacy and focus areas. The monthly LPA meetings provide an opportunity for locals to unite and vocalise any resident concerns and to also listen to interesting guest speakers on varying topics. Throughout the year, volunteers organise community events to encourage connection and community spirit. Any new ideas for event and suburb improvements are welcome in our meetings or via email.

You are welcome to attend any of our community events or our monthly meetings (the 1st Monday of every month from 7pm for a 730pm start at church hall of Lugarno Anglican church, except January or December or public holidays). Only members have voting rights. So join today to support our volunteer work and stay informed for \$15 (min) for 1 year, or \$30 (min) for 3 years. Head to our website lugarnoprogress.au to join as a member (or ask for a paper application form).

“Help keep Lugarno beautiful by joining the Lugarno Progress Association and getting involved.”

RIVERWOOD POLICE STATION: 02 9717 5399
GEORGES RIVER COUNCIL: 02 9330 6400

DON'T FORGET...

- Do you own a historically significant item that you would be prepared to donate or lend to the LPA so that we can digitise and index it into our Lugarno Historical archives collection? Do your neighbours know of this project?
- We are seeking the help of a volunteer with marketing and social media skills.

Upcoming events - Save the Date

- **Saturday 14th March 2026: Glenlee community meeting from 2pm.** Gather at Lugarno Uniting church (opp Chivers Hill shops) to discuss the proposed DA.
- **Sunday 26th March 2026: Music Concert in Evatt Park from 2pm.** Bring your chairs and listen to live performances by 2 professional bands (The D'Lights, and Paul & Noel Mason and band) plus the Lugarno Public School choir, and the music ensemble of Georges River College Peakhurst campus. Food vendors include gelato, coffee, snacks & hot dogs, or you can BYO picnic with your family & friends.
- **Sunday 26th July 2026: National Tree Day in Gannons Park from 10am.** Council are organising the planting of natives, plus there's a BBQ & refreshments.

Details coming soon....

Subject to support from the community and volunteer help, the LPA can repeat some prior events such as our Thai Social Dinner, Tour-guided Historical Bushwalk, Young Local Leaders and Kids Market and a CFU & Bushfire Education Community Seminar.

Please email us on contact@lugarnoprogress.au if any of these events personally interest you and you wish to help us organise it for Lugarno residents in 2026.

This newsletter is currently published quarterly by volunteers. To contribute to our articles or news, or offer ideas or photos, please send before mid-May to meet the next edition deadline. Our advertising rates are very reasonable. We offer 1/8th of a page for \$30 (for 2 quarterly editions). To book potential advertising please email us. Bookings will be made in order of receipt. We also welcome donations to assist with future printing costs. Volunteers needed for letterbox drops.



LPA 2026 Executive Committee:

In the community AGM held on 2nd February 2026, plus subsequent committee meetings, the following positions were elected:

President:	Linda Simon
Vice President:	Sharon Graham
Secretary:	Katja Heath
Assistant Secretary	Vacant
Treasurer:	Tim Roff
Assistant Treasurer:	Jasmine Theophile
General Committee:	Keith Robb
	Linda Henderson
	(and one vacant position left)

Volunteer Appreciation

We would like to give a huge thank you to Tim Roff who has volunteered to assist the LPA as our new Treasurer.

We welcome Katja Heath who has volunteered to take over from Linda Simon as Secretary in 2026.

We appreciate the ongoing efforts of Peter Gayton who manages membership renewals and Luis Castro who assists with equipment management during meetings and at key events.

We thank all the outgoing committee members who have volunteered so much of their time - **Caroline Hart, Kul Anaimugan, Sue Emmett and Lorraine Williamson, and also thank Kathy Wilson** who undertook so many of those behind the scenes jobs. We know that they will continue to support the LPA whenever they can.

Clean Up Australian Day

Article by LPA Member Ross Simon

On Sunday, the 1st March, the LPA conducted a cleanup of the foreshore adjoining Salt Pan Creek as part of the Clean Up Australia campaign. 16 members of our community gave up their time to work tirelessly to protect the natural beauty of our glorious suburb.

Much rubbish was collected and it is a reminder to everyone that we must be vigilant to ensure that rubbish does not enter our waterways through our drainage systems.

We collected over 20 full bags plus lots of large random items that didn't belong there on Lugarno's foreshore.

A huge shout out to local kayakers for stepping up and helping to pick up lots of plastics scattered along the foreshore.



GET YOUR **GLOVES ON** 2026

GIVE BACK TO THE PLACE WE CALL HOME
SUNDAY 1 MARCH

REGISTER NOW

CleanUp

What is happening with Glenlee?

Article by LPA President Linda Simon

Glenlee, the 2.4 hectare historical site at 80 Boronia Parade Lugarno, was sold in 2024 to developers Romanous Construction. Late last year, the LPA was contacted by Hill PDA, a consulting firm acting for these new owners. Together with representatives of the Friends of Glenlee committee, we met with them to hear about the proposed development for Glenlee. This was an informal meeting, not a formal consultation.

One of the owners and a representative from the company, spoke of the plans to build a number of houses on the site. As part of the DA process they have to provide reports on the biodiversity of the site, the Aboriginal heritage and geotechnical issues. Glenlee remains covered by a local heritage order.

Early this year, Hill PDA provided the LPA and residents living near the site with details of further meetings. This included a briefing for the committee members on 23 February and a community meeting on 25 February. There was a large turn-up on 25th at Grandviews, giving residents a chance to ask questions.

The next steps for the community are to respond to a survey and/or make a submission. LPA will also make one on behalf of members. The proposed development is for 8 houses including renovating the existing historical house, but there are still many questions about how the 100 year old trees will be preserved, and the overall heritage of the site retained. This development plan may be better than the 31 houses in the previous DA, but it will not protect the beauty and heritage of Glenlee, especially into the future.

Given that the foreshore is on Crown Land, Friends of Glenlee will continue to advocate for this to be accessible to the public. Ensuring there are many submissions raising concerns is important. Your submission doesn't need to be long, just a couple of lines.

The DA is expected to be lodged possibly as early as this month. To find out more from the consultants and to make a submission, go to:

<https://engage.hillpda.com.au/80-boronia-parade>

Friends of Glenlee (with the support of LPA) will be holding a community meeting about Glenlee on Saturday 14th March 2026 from 2pm at Lugarno Uniting Church hall. Do turn up to have your say.

Lugarno's History: Old Shop on Forest Rd

Extract written for the LPA by local historian Glenyss Barnham (as part of the LPA historical bushwalk project)

This old shop is the site of the first service station in Lugarno. It was run by August Zoeller and his son, Emil. They opened it in 1929, hoping to capitalise on the traffic going to and from the ferry.

Sadly, when the Great Depression hit, traffic declined, and the business closed. Then it became a private (non-commercial) residence until 1945.

After the war, August's daughter, Madeline, and her mother, reopened the shop as a general store, providing a vital service for the community who had previously had to travel out of Lugarno for groceries, cigarettes and other everyday commodities. It became a gathering place for the neighbourhood, a place to catch up on the latest local news, and in 1949 it also became the post office.

Today it remains a part of Lugarno's history and the Bushells tea sign (still visible on the side of the building) is particularly significant. These signs are iconic 'ghost signs' represent the historic marketing campaigns of the early 20th centuries. Bushells and other companies kept sign writers in full-time work painting their signs on walls all over the country.



Photos courtesy of Leo Rutishauser

St George Junior Baseball Club

Article by SGJBC President Scott Whale

St George Junior Baseball Club plays out of H.V Evatt Park on the two baseball diamonds at the western end of the ground. The objectives of the club are to enjoy the sport of baseball, learn the skills of the game to perform at our best and promote the sport of baseball in a positive manner. With teams across the wide range of divisions, we've been able to cater for players of differing abilities.

Over the summer competition, we had 11 junior teams ranging from our little ones playing T-Ball all the way to our older kids in the Senior League competition. We have kids of all abilities playing the game allowing the club to have some Division 1 teams along with division 2 & 3 teams.

We had great success across the competition with several teams to play in the finals. Saturday the 21st February will be the last round with finals running for 3 weeks after that. Finals kick off on Sunday the 22nd February.

As well as the kids, St George Junior Baseball Club has 3 adult teams playing in the Cronulla Sutherland Minor League Baseball Association competition. We had teams in Divisions 1, 5 & 8 this summer with all teams in their final series. Special mention to the Division 8 team for finishing minor premiers.

Our teams aren't just for the men, we have a lot of girls playing in the junior ranks and women in our minor league teams. Everyone's welcome. Winter registrations are open now and we're always sending out information on competitions and events through our Facebook page.

St George Junior Baseball Club is a great place to play competitive sports with your mates. We're the local club and love to support our local businesses. Our major sponsor is Grandviews so you will see our colours up there enjoying their facilities.

For anyone curious and needing more information, please feel free to contact the Club President via our website:

stgeorgejuniorbaseball.com.au



History Behind Lugarno's Weeping Willows

Article by LPA Secretary Katja Heath

Did you know that the weeping willows growing next to the duck pond (Webbs Dam) at Evatt Park and in other parts of Lugarno are highly likely to be descendants of the trees that once shaded Napoleon's tomb on the island of St Helena?

The claim sounds improbable, but it rests on a well-documented nineteenth-century practice. Cuttings from the willows growing near Napoleon Bonaparte's grave on St Helena were widely distributed across the British Empire. Australia was one of the destinations where these slips took root. The result is that suburban trees in southern Sydney may be linked, botanically and symbolically, to one of the most famous graves in modern European history.



Salix Babylonica

Trees as Monuments...

Before debates about statues and imperial commemoration became prominent, trees were already functioning as memorials. Unlike stone monuments, trees do not fix memory in a single form. They grow, decay, reproduce and spread. Their commemorative function lies less in permanence than in continuity.

Deliberate commemorative planting has a long history. In sixteenth-century England, trees were planted to mark royal visits. After 1815, "Waterloo oaks" were planted across Britain to commemorate the defeat of Napoleon. By the nineteenth century, tree planting had become a recognised way of marking political events and historical figures. Napoleon's willows belong to this tradition.

Weeping Willows & St Helena's Tomb...

Napoleon died in exile on St Helena in May 1821. He was buried in a valley where several weeping willows (*Salix babylonica*) grew near a spring. Contemporary accounts describe visitors quickly treating these trees as relics. Branches and leaves were taken as souvenirs. Within decades, the willows became objects of pilgrimage.

Ships travelling between Britain and Australia frequently stopped at St Helena for provisioning. Passengers were aware of the tomb's location, and cuttings were taken, sometimes discreetly, sometimes openly. By the late nineteenth century, there was a small trade in "Napoleon willow" plants, some genuine, others likely opportunistic substitutions. Weeping willows are easily propagated from cuttings. A slip placed in moist soil will readily establish itself. This biological characteristic made them ideal carriers of commemorative meaning. A branch removed in St Helena could become a mature tree in Australia within a few decades. By the mid-nineteenth century, Australian newspapers were already reporting on local willows claimed to descend from those at Napoleon's grave. These trees were planted in private gardens, public reserves, and civic spaces. Some were treated as historical curiosities; others were framed as meaningful imperial relics. It is within this broader pattern that the willows in Lugarno can be understood.

A Colonial Memory in Botanical Willow Form...

The appeal of Napoleon's willows in Australia was not purely botanical. They allowed settlers to maintain symbolic connections with European history. A cutting taken from St Helena condensed a major geopolitical narrative, revolution, empire, exile, defeat, into a domestic garden or suburban park.

At the same time, the willows were adaptable. Once planted, they ceased to be only relics of European memory and became part of Australian landscapes. They were incorporated into local stories and local commemorations. In 1914, for example, a willow was planted near the site of the Eureka Stockade in Ballarat following a visit by a French aviator. The symbolic link between Napoleon and the Eureka rebels was controversial, but the act demonstrates how flexible the meaning of these trees could become. They were not fixed to a single narrative.

In some cases, the wood from supposed Napoleon willows was used for craft and commercial production. In South Australia, willows linked to the St Helena story supplied material for baskets and household objects. The association with Napoleon added prestige, but the trees were also integrated into ordinary colonial economies.

**Saturday 20th June 2026 is Weed Whackers Day at
Murdock Crescent Reserve from 8am**

A Botanical Substitution...

There is, however, a significant complication in the story. Historical sources suggest that the tree Napoleon personally favoured during his exile was not the European weeping willow, but an Australian species: *Acacia longifolia*, known at the time as the "Botany Bay willow." This acacia had been introduced to St Helena in the early nineteenth century, and accounts indicate that Napoleon frequently sat beneath it. Shortly before his death, observers noted that a storm had uprooted the acacia under which he usually rested. Despite this, Napoleon was buried near weeping willows, which were already established at the site.

Over time, popular memory attached itself firmly to the willow rather than the acacia. The substitution is revealing. The weeping willow was already associated in European culture with mourning and Romantic melancholy. It provided a recognisable visual language for the fallen emperor. The acacia, with its bright yellow blossoms and Australian origin, did not align as easily with established European funerary symbolism. The preference for the willow reflects how collective memory tends to stabilise around familiar forms.



Did you know? Georges River Council Bushcare Team has been busy developing a new operating schedule, which now allows them to hold the monthly events on Saturdays. Previously they were mostly held on Fridays. The new schedule also retains the regular HV Evatt Bushcare group on Saturdays.

Lugarno's Willows in Context..

Whether the willows in Evatt Park are directly descended from those at Napoleon's tomb cannot be proven definitively without genetic analysis. Nineteenth-century trade in cuttings was poorly regulated, and attribution was often based on reputation rather than documentation. However, it is entirely plausible that the Lugarno trees belong to the network of willows propagated from St Helena stock during the nineteenth century. Even if their lineage passed through intermediary sites, such as botanical gardens or colonial estates, they remain part of a documented imperial horticultural circulation.

What matters is not only genetic authenticity, but historical participation. These trees are part of a commemorative practice in which plants functioned as portable monuments. They illustrate how imperial memory was embedded in everyday landscapes, not only in statues and public buildings, but in gardens, reserves and suburban parks. Unlike bronze monuments, tree memorials do not present themselves as overt political statements. They naturalise history. Over time, they become unremarkable features of the landscape. Their commemorative origin can easily be forgotten. Yet their presence points to a nineteenth-century belief that history could be materially transmitted through living matter.

A Different Kind of Monument...

Today, as communities reconsider the political meanings of imperial monuments, tree memorials invite a different type of reflection. They are not easily removed. Nor are they static. They grow, shed branches, and reproduce. Their form changes over time.

The willows of Lugarno are therefore not simply decorative trees beside a pond. They are participants in a global story of exile, empire, botanical exchange and colonial settlement. Their branches may no longer be consciously associated with Napoleon, but they remain part of a historical practice that linked suburban Australia to international political memory through horticulture. In that sense, they are monuments, not of stone, but of living wood.



Lugarno Gourmet Meats

Article by Murray Fleming (new owner of Lugarno Gourmet)

Saturday 24th January saw in excess of 250 Lugarno locals flock to the newly opened Lugarno Gourmet shop!

Lugarno Gourmet is a multifaceted shop combining a boutique full service butchery, plus organic fruits and vegetables and a fresh sliced delicatessen.

The team at Lugarno Gourmet organised a raffle valued at \$5,000 with the collaboration of some of their supplying farmers. One key supporter was Murray's father Paul Fleming, who is a Hunter Valley farmer and who generously donated a whole cow. Half of the cow was donated (fully butchered) to the local charity One Meal. Emma Williams accepted the gift on behalf of the charity and shared a few words to the crowd about the vital community work that this charity does each week to feed 80 locals. The meat donation will now allow another 300 meals to be cooked.

The raffle prizes were:

- 10 half lambs from the Mudgee farm of Murray's cousins
- 1 whole cow (one half to charity One Meal, the other half won by a local family of 6)
- 6 x premium Italian cakes

Whilst it took a whole year for Murray and his team to complete the renovation (whilst simultaneously trading the butcher shop) the end result is nothing short of spectacular and the quality of produce extremely high!





Membership of LPA Does Matter

Article by LPA Membership Officer Peter Gayton

Did you know that membership income in 2025 only covered 20% of the LPA's operating expenses?

Many potential and former members of the LPA say they are now too busy to attend meetings, so they won't join or renew. However being a member of the LPA lets you stay up-to-date with its activities, events and advocacy. If you can't attend a meeting in person, you can still dial in remotely on your computer, and even get copies of the minutes via email.

- The LPA presents our members' concerns and ideas to Council and both state and federal local representatives as we partner with them in our local area
- Preferential booking for limited capacity functions, e.g. local bushwalks
- Discounted rate to participate as stall holder in our kids' market and attend Christmas social event
- Quarterly newsletter – you're reading it now
- Regular news – emailed to members only – with details of meetings (eg minutes), guest speakers and upcoming events
- Joining like-minded people and exchanging ideas and experiences to Keep Lugarno Beautiful, and to improve the suburb
- Partnering with Lugarno Primary School for the benefit of students
- Public Liability Insurance and limited worker cover for LPA events
- Opportunities to utilise your skills in the Not-For-Profit sector

Unsure if your membership has expired? Head to our website and you can find out online by clicking on the Join section.

If your membership is expired and you would like to renew, complete the renewal on our [website](#).

Membership fees are \$15 for 1 year, or \$30 for 3 calendar years. This must be paid manually into our LPA bank account.

Reach out to Membership Officer, Peter Gayton, at peter.gayton@lugarnoprogress.au for account details or paper forms

Biyani House

Article by LPA Assistant Treasurer Jasmine Theophile

During our March LPA community meeting on Monday 2nd March, we had the pleasure to hear from the CEO of Biyani House, Lisa Annabel.

Biyani House in Revesby provides a safe place for women and children escaping domestic and family violence. They offer emergency accommodation, support and hope when its needed most. Women's Community Shelters play a critical role in our society. Head to biyanihouse.org.au to read more or donate.

Progress on our Stronger Communities Grant Project

In 2025 the LPA applied for and was granted \$9,000 as part of the Federal Government's Stronger Communities program. A core group of LPA volunteers are working with IT consultants, photographers and historians to develop 5 Lugarno bushwalks/history walks and publish them on the LPA website. It will highlight and educate on historically rich environmental locations and share maps and photos for these local walks, information on the project, and details of Lugarno's history and environment so that Lugarno walkers can more clearly recognise historical locations, people and significant stories of Lugarno' past.

**KEEP
WOMEN AND
CHILDREN
SAFE
AND OUT OF
THE NEWS
THIS IWD**

Support women and children escaping domestic violence this International Women's Day by donating at:

DONATE  bit.ly/BHIWD2026



Biyani House

Revesby Women's Shelter

www.biyanihouse.org.au





Music in Evatt Park

Join us for a delightful afternoon of fun, entertainment and community connection! Bring a picnic or enjoy our food vendors.
Special guests: The D'Lights, Georges River College Peakhurst Campus band, Lugarno Primary School choir and Noel & Paul Mason & band.

Sunday 29th March 2026

Supported by:



From 2pm

H.V. Evatt Park

1116 Forest Road Lugarno



Event will be postponed if wet weather. Check LPA Facebook and website for news updates.

www.lugarnoprogress.au

May we ask something of you? When you are done reading this publication, would you consider giving it to a neighbour or leaving it somewhere local where someone else might discover it? Thanks for sharing caring.

We are seeking sponsors to donate to the printing of our newsletters. To contribute to our articles or offer photos, please send before mid-May to meet the next edition deadline. Our advertising rates are very reasonable. We offer 1/8th of a page for \$30 (for 2 quarterly editions). To book potential advertising please email us. We also welcome donations to assist with future printing costs. Volunteers needed for letterbox drops.

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