

## 2005 MASSBUG YEAR IN REVIEW

Marrickville-South Sydney Bicycle Group is a volunteer not for profit group of local residents promoting cycling and improving the local environment. MASSBUG is affiliated with Bicycle NSW.



### MAKING IT EASIER TO CYCLE

#### Marrickville Bike Plan

Separating cars from bikes on roads, educating motorists and building secure parking all help to make cycling safer and easier. This year we worked closely with Marrickville Council, Kendall Banfield and the consultants engaged to develop the Marrickville Bike Plan. Members provided advice in community workshops and undertook technical surveys of the routes. The technical surveys found danger points that needed redesign, maintenance, signage and general road improvements. This work will continue in 2006.

MASSBUG would like to congratulate Marrickville Council on their commitment to the Bike Plan and their initiatives in improving the environment for local residents.

#### Hazard Reporting

MASSBUG acted as a coordinating point for local problems, collecting information about danger spots, maintenance problems and other surprises like restricted access to roads. Local issues are collated from reports at our monthly meeting and emails and phone calls from local residents. We refer the problems to the council staff, RTA or other relevant services. This year, we reported an average of five hazards a month.

#### Police Relationships

Police have an important role in educating motorists and cyclists, as well as acting when problems occur. We have arranged to meet with local police to discuss how we can help increase awareness of cyclist's issues.

#### Cooks River to Iron Cove GreenWay

MASSBUG and local community groups have promoted the vision for a Cooks River to Iron Cove GreenWay to provide a

recognisable environmental, cultural and non-motorised transport corridor linking the sub-catchments of two of Sydney's most important waterways.

Ashfield, Canterbury, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils agreed 'in principle' to support the GreenWay vision. Since then a number of environmental projects have been completed under the GreenWay umbrella, including the Hawthorn Canal Cycling project, and the Metropolitan Greenspace project funding for investigating a cycleway link under Parramatta Road. \$50,000 has been allocated by Marrickville Council for design of the GreenWay cycleway. See the web site for more information [www.greenway.org.au](http://www.greenway.org.au).



**A bike bus is a group of cyclists which follow a set route and time each morning and afternoon. It creates a safe way for cyclists to get to and from work. During 2005 a bike bus was established between Marrickville and the city via Newtown.**

### ENCOURAGING CYCLISTS

More cyclists on the road make it safer to cycle and walk, and a cleaner environment as cars and parking problems are reduced. An important objective of the group is to encourage cycling. This means helping people buy bikes, gain confidence riding, and providing information about routes and maps. We do this by:

- Creating opportunities for people new to cycling to practice with experienced cyclists on organised rides and Bike Buses

- Provide information about routes to common destinations
- Publishing an annual rides calendar designed for new or inexperienced cyclists. This year we led about 50 people on rides (about half joining more than one ride)
- Writing to local candidates in the State election asking about their commitment to improving resources for cyclists

### Information

MASSBUG provides information for all local residents about cycling. We receive regular inquiries about maps, hazards, where to buy bikes and maintenance.

Information activities include:

- Information stalls at Newtown and Marrickville community festivals
- Presentations to other community meetings
- Website – regular news updates, on average, there are 500 visits a month to the site. This is twice the number for the same period last year.
- Meetings and rides – people come along to ask questions and learn from others
- Email list – a list any individual can subscribe to free where information is shared, advice and opinion given. There is a separate list for people wanting only emails about events.
- Submissions were made to the Marrickville Council, Business Plan, Social Plan and budget.
- Media – we get regular coverage in the local newspapers, Marrickville Council publications, Australian Cyclist magazine and local newsletters. Other media using our services included 2SER, UTS student journalists, Sydney Morning Herald and the Telegraph.

### MANAGING MASSBUG

An important part of a healthy community group is how we work with each other and manage the business of the group. Like any volunteer group, members come and go as their commitments in life change. This year we have maintained our level of membership and have a core group of very active members. The skills and activities of the group are diverse, each is

highly valued (but we always need more help). There are lots of opportunities for members to focus on areas they enjoy and share their skills with others. Activities for this year included:

- Drafting of a charter to explain our purpose and principles
- Monitoring the strategic plan to keep us on track during the year
- Reviewing meeting structure to keep it relevant to members and ensuring the work is shared at meetings
- Updating and maintaining the website
- Raising our profile in the community by meeting with other groups
- Increasing memberships



The highlight on the rides calendar was the annual 'chocolate ride', taking cyclists through the manufacturing area of Marrickville to try gelato, Greek cakes, hand made chocolates, excellent coffee and sweets. Look out for the 2006 calendar.

### Contact for further information

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**Congratulations to MASSBUG member Bruce Ashley, for his Marrickville Council, 2005 Citizen of the Year award. Bruce at Newtown Festival, MASSBUG stall.**

Thank you to all our members for your support and especially to those who helped with meetings, rides and projects in 2005