Bankstown City Council’s exciting new Arts Centre was jointly opened by NSW Premier Kristina Keneally, federal Member for Blaxland and Minister for Defence Materiel Jason Clare and Bankstown Mayor Tania Mihailuk on Thursday 17 February.

Community leaders and members of the arts community joined Premier Keneally, Member for Blaxland Jason Clare and Mayor Tania Mihailuk at the opening of this inspirational new cultural centre for the people of Bankstown.

Mayor Mihailuk said the new centre would be a great addition to the city’s cultural resources.

“It will also be a place where artists and communities collaborate to explore ideas and create contemporary community based art.”

First built as Bankstown Olympic Pool and then converted into the Bankstown Arts and Crafts Centre, the site has served the community since the 1930s. Work on converting the facility into a state of the art cultural facility began in November 2009.

The Arts Centre is accessed from Dale Parade via an elegant main foyer and function area which looks out on to the peaceful central grassed courtyard and to the two other buildings that make up the complex.

The centre houses a 120-seat theatre, five multipurpose studio spaces – which can be used for art classes, small scale exhibitions, meetings and artist residencies – and two performing arts spaces.

Performance and studio spaces are available for hire, with the major tenants of the building including Bankstown Theatrical Society, Bankstown Arts Society, Bankstown & District Lapidary Club, Bankstown Youth Development Service and Urban Theatre Projects.

“Bankstown is a vibrant, thriving community and our new Arts Centre will announce to the rest of Sydney that Bankstown is a cultural force to be reckoned with,” Mayor Mihailuk said.

INSIDE THIS EDITION
• Underpass update
• Library News
• Bike around Bankstown
• Our heritage
• New home for Meals on Wheels
For more information about Bankstown Council’s services, visit our Customer Service Centre on the Upper Ground Floor of Bankstown Civic Tower from 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can phone Customer Service on 9707 9999 or visit our website at www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au

If you have any questions or comments about this magazine, please call Victoria Walker on 9707 9075.
Cities and towns across Queensland were left devastated earlier this year when unprecedented flooding affected much of the state. At the local level, residents and businesses have exhibited considerable generosity toward their Queensland neighbours. On behalf of our community, Bankstown City Council has also made a donation of $20,000 to the Queensland Premier’s Disaster Relief Appeal Fund.

This year our Australia Day celebrations began with a breakfast at Garrison Point prior to a special citizenship ceremony and the presentation of our Australia Day Awards. It was an honour to announce Dr Vinh Binh Lieu as our 2011 Citizen of the Year. Dr Vinh Binh Lieu has been actively contributing to our community since settling in Australia as a refugee over 30 years ago. More information on all of the award winners has been included in this edition of Community Link.

A few days later on Saturday 29 January, I joined more than 5,000 residents and visitors to welcome in the Lunar New Year in Saigon Place. At the festival I had the honour of launching the new ‘Saigon Place’ initiative, which will promote the rich Vietnamese and Asian influence in many of our eateries and fresh produce stores in the southern part of the plaza. The banners and gateway structure will announce to locals and visitors alike that they have arrived in Bankstown’s own Saigon Place.

The last few months have also seen great progress in our town centre improvement program, with works completed in Yagoona, Georges Hall and Padstow. Businesses and residents alike are enjoying the ambience of the revamped town centres. Design work on the Punchbowl town centre is well advanced with construction expected to start this financial year while concept design development work for Panania will begin this month.

Meanwhile, work in the CBD is continuing with streetscape works in the North and South Terrace precinct on schedule.

I was delighted to join federal and state politicians along with members of the local arts community at the opening of the new $5.8 million Bankstown Arts Centre on 17 February. The centre will be a significant cultural facility for our city and a place where community members can learn creative skills, increase their involvement in arts activities and collaborate with artists to explore ideas and create contemporary art.

The new Central Library and Knowledge Centre is a step closer with DA approval granted and tenders being called for demolition of parts of the existing structure. Construction of this state of the art knowledge and community centre is expected to commence in a few months.

The new $6.5 million four-lane underpass between North and South Terraces will soon be complete. This underpass will go a long way to easing traffic congestion around the CBD and will provide signalised intersections, pedestrian pathways and improved bicycle access for residents and business owners.

Seniors Week is celebrated this year from 20-27 March and I urge all our older residents to take advantage of some of the great activities planned in Bankstown.
More than 15,000 people braved the intense heat to celebrate Australia Day at Garrison Point.

In the morning, we honoured our Citizens of the Year - an inspirational doctor, an active youth role model, a dedicated St John Ambulance volunteer and a local football advocate.

Mayor Tania Mihailuk said she was honoured to recognise all the fine people who had been nominated for the awards.

“Our city is fortunate to be home to many unsung heroes who volunteer their time and energy toward improving the lives of others,” Mayor Mihailuk said.

“The Bankstown Australia Day Awards program provides a platform to acknowledge our outstanding citizens and thank them for their contribution to community life.”
Aussie Day offsets

In 2011, we’re planting 1,000 native trees to offset the emissions generated by the rides, fireworks, stage shows, travel, food and waste that form part of the celebrations at Council’s annual Australia Day celebration at Garrison Point.

For the third year environmental charity Greenfleet, working on behalf of Council, will offset the emissions generated by the 15,000 people who attended this national celebration.

This action will be the equivalent of removing 268 tonnes of CO₂-e from the atmosphere.

Through our Environmental Action Plan, we’re targeting a 20 per cent reduction in CO₂-e emissions by 2020 and ensuring Bankstown becomes a low carbon community.

Citizen of the Year is Dr Vinh Binh Lieu who came to Australia as a refugee in 1979 and has actively contributed to the Bankstown community. Working as a GP in the Bankstown CBD, he is a well known and respected community member. Founder and president of the Vietnamese-Australian Medical Association and the Australasian Dragon Business Association, he is a strong advocate for continued improvement of infrastructure and facilities within the Bankstown CBD and for the participation of local businesses and shopkeepers in community activities.

Young Citizen of the Year is Beverly Hills Girls High student Kirandeep Kaur.

School vice-captain and vice-president of the student representative council, Kirandeep believes in giving everyone a fair go. A keen public speaker, she is also involved in fundraising for the Panania Soccer Club. Kirandeep has been nominated for several awards for community work, winning the 2009 Zonta Young Women in Public Affairs Award.

The Individual Community Service winner is Betty Stirton OAM. A lifelong member of St John Ambulance first aid services, Betty has multiple service medal awards, has been a member of the St John Ambulance Historical Society since its formation in 2001 and represents NSW at the national conference each year. In 1963 Betty was admitted to the Order of St John becoming a dame of that order in 1983.

The Sports Award went to Lawrence Simpson who has worked tirelessly for the Bankstown District Amateur Football Association for 35 years. An active coach with Crest Soccer Club for over 18 years, Laurie has coached various premiership teams from across all levels and ages, assisted with the development of the youth league of the Bankstown Association and organised child protection and sports rage awareness seminars for club members.

Citizen of the Year Dr Vinh Binh Lieu said he was very honoured to be Bankstown’s Citizen of the Year.

“When I came here 35 years ago as a refugee, Australia gave me an opportunity to start a new life and it is now my turn to give something back to the community that opened up its heart to me,” Dr Lieu said.

“I am very proud to be an Australian and to live in Bankstown.”

In the afternoon, thousands of revellers enjoyed the fantastic food, fun and entertainment.

Mayor Tania Mihailuk said Australia Day is an opportunity for the community to come together and celebrate everything that’s great about our country.

“The mix of live performances, amusement rides, Australiana displays, food stalls and kids’ activities ensured a great day was had by all who attended,” Mayor Mihailuk said.

“On behalf of Bankstown City Council I would like to thank all our residents who turned up for our great Australia Day event.”
On Saturday 29 January Bankstown’s CBD came to life with the colours, traditions and sounds of Asia as more than 5,000 revellers enjoyed Council’s fifth annual Lunar New Year festival in ‘Saigon Place’.

Mayor Tania Mihailuk said the 2011 Bankstown Lunar New Year Festival was a great success.

“This year’s festivities were an extra special celebration as we unveiled the new branded banners and the gateway to Saigon Place at the festival,” Mayor Mihailuk said.

“The introduction of Saigon Place recognises the unique character of the Vietnamese community right here in the heart of Bankstown. The banners will announce to locals and visitors alike that they have arrived in Bankstown’s own Saigon Place.

“Haymarket has China Town and now Bankstown celebrates our rich Asian heritage in Saigon Place. The launch of the Saigon Place initiative at Lunar New Year follows the major upgrade of Bankstown City Plaza and will mark a new beginning for the area.

“Bankstown’s Lunar New Year celebration is one of the best in Sydney and this year there was a fantastic range of performances, interactive workshops and Asian cultural experiences for all to enjoy.”

The festivities began with a traditional Lion Dance and fire cracker ceremony to bring luck and prosperity to all participants, with the God and Goddess of Fortune also blessing the crowds by handing out red envelopes filled with gold chocolate coins.

Other festival highlights included flower making and food carving demonstrations and card and cake making classes, while the crowds were kept entertained with performances by the Sydney Korean Seniors Performance Group, Platinum Indian Bollywood Dancers and Csaba & Gina – world salsa finalists.

“On behalf of Council, I would like to thank our sponsors who helped make this event possible and thank the residents who came to this fantastic day of culture, fun and entertainment,” Mayor Mihailuk added.
Health centre on way up

Construction has started on the new Bankstown Women’s and Children’s Health Centre at Jacobs Street, Bankstown.

The new health centre – which will include a children’s immunisation clinic, a women’s health centre and an occasional childcare centre – will provide women and children with free access to a range of medical practitioners and counsellors. Mayor Tania Mihailuk said the new centre will be a one-stop health shop for women and children.

“The health and wellbeing of our community are high priorities for Council and this new facility will provide vital services for our community,” Mayor Mihailuk said.

“By combining these three important community health facilities, we can ensure residents have easy access to women’s and children’s health and counselling services.”

Work on the $1.5 million centre began in late November, with completion scheduled for late June.

This project is part of Bankstown City Council’s CBD Renewal Program, which is upgrading public infrastructure in the CBD to accommodate future growth and development over the next 20 years.

Underpass update

The new Bankstown Underpass, a key transport corridor to support the predicted growth of CBD residents and businesses, will soon be completed and open for traffic and pedestrians.

Work began on the new $6.5 million underpass between North and South Terraces in November 2010.

An integral component of council’s public domain, transport and traffic improvement plans for the CBD, the new four-lane underpass will go a long way to easing traffic congestion around the CBD and also provide signalised intersections, pedestrian pathways and improved bicycle access.

Council would like to thank all our residents and business owners for their patience during the construction of the underpass.

Bankstown gets NSW Par 3 Championships

Sefton Golf Course is hosting the NSW Par 3 Championships on Saturday 12 March, teeing off at 8am. Spectators are most welcome and we invite you all to enjoy some of the facilities our club has to offer.

To find out more about this great Sydney golf course, call 9743 9436.
Planning your future

Council wants to thank all the residents who joined in the community engagement activities associated with the Bankstown Community Plan.

We received 500 written responses, had over 1,250 face-to-face discussions and logged over 2,500 website hits. Out of this we captured your 10 year vision for the future which will guide council in its planning and management of the local government area.

You have told us your vision for the future of our city is a city proud of its history and confident in its future with a diverse population that lives and works in harmony.

It will be a city with excellent services and facilities, lively neighbourhoods and activities for people of all ages.

And it will be a modern, active community with quality transport infrastructure, clean waterways, pristine bushland and great community spaces and parks.

Our Community Plan will ensure that the people of Bankstown will enjoy the benefits of growth in a sustainable, prosperous community.

Seniors Week 20-27 March

It’s on again – a full week of activity and entertainment for all Bankstown seniors!

Book at our Customer Service Centre for these events – the Seniors Spectacular at Bankstown Sports on Sunday 20 March, the popular coach tours to the beautiful Central Coast, morning at the movies and sporting events. Remember to secure your place by booking for the free Gardening Expo and library events such as the computer classes.

And there’s much, much more.

For a full list of what’s on during Seniors Week or to book, go to www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au or call 9707 9999.

The 2011 edition of the Bankstown Community Information Directory was launched at our Australia Day celebrations at Garrison Point on 26 January.

This directory contains over 1,000 entries covering emergency contact information, recreational, leisure and sporting facilities, community programs and council services including our pools and libraries.

You can get your copy at any of our libraries or our Customer Service Centre or you can read the latest continually updated real time version online at www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au. The online version is provided through Local Information Network for Community Services, a community information directory provided by a partnership of more than 30 local councils, state government departments and community organisations.
Storytime’s back
Storytime fun continues in 2011 with kids 2-5 years of age invited to take part in the amazing world of reading. Storytime sessions begin at 11am at all our five libraries:
- Bankstown Central every Thursday February-November
- Chester Hill on Tuesday 15 March
- Padstow on Tuesday 15 and 29 March and Thursday 10 and 24 March
- Greenacre every Wednesday February-November
- Panania on Thursday 17 and 31 March and Tuesday 8 and 22 March.
These are very popular sessions and you must book from 9.30am on the session day. Call Bankstown Library Service 9707 9708, Chester Hill 9707 9740, Padstow 9707 9747, Greenacre 9707 9744 and Panania 9707 9737.

At Chester Hill you get double the storytime, with Evening Storytime 6.30-7.30pm on 25 March, 29 April and 27 May. Bookings are essential - call 9707 9740 from 9am on the morning of the storytime.

Console games challenge
Our libraries want young people 12-18 to form challenge teams to compete in the console games at Bankstown on 25 March and 12 April, Padstow on 13 April, Panania on 27 April and Chester Hill on 18 May. You could win a great prize! To book, call 9707 9731.

Computers for beginners at Panania Library
Panania Library Technology Centre will be holding introduction to email beginners’ classes from 11am-12 noon on Friday 25 March, 29 April and 27 May. A booking fee of $3 covers the cost of workbooks. To find out more, call 9707 9737.

Computer savvy seniors
We want all our older residents to be computer-savvy and we’ll be continuing our Computer Savvy Seniors classes in 2011. The classes cover the absolute basics – using the mouse, shutting down safely and printing – and also the internet, getting to websites and using email. The classes are held at Bankstown Library Technology Centre from 9.30am-12.30pm on Tuesday 29 March, 19 April and 31 May. A booking fee of $3 covers the cost of workbooks. To find out more, call 9707 9713.

Social knit in
Come and have a yarn at Bankstown Library’s knitting club from 10am-12 noon on 14 March, 11 April and 9 May. You’ll get to meet local Wrap With Love volunteers and enjoy the social and practical aspects of knitting, develop fine-motor skills, hand-eye coordination and math and reading skills. Plus you’ll have some fun and meet new friends with a common interest. Bring your own supplies – we’ll supply the refreshments. To find out more, call 9707 9719.

Baby RhymeTime
Babies 6-24 months and their parents can enjoy reading, rhymes and educational play at our libraries during April. Friday 1 April Padstow and Bankstown, Wednesday 6 April Panania, Friday 7 April Greenacre, Wednesday 27 April Chester Hill and Friday 29 April Bankstown.

Homework help at home!!
So much homework, so little time! Our libraries are here to help you with a feast of information online, online tutoring 4-8pm in school term, loads of books PLUS help from our librarians. If you’re busy with school and TAFE assignments, join the library or go to http://www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au/Library/default.aspx.

Let’s talk English
Free English conversation classes on Thursdays at the ground floor meeting room at Bankstown Library from 1-3pm this March. Keep 10, 17 and 24 March free to practise your English and meet new people in a friendly environment. Refreshments provided. To find out more, call 9707 9730.

Books to home
If you’re confined to your home due to frailty or illness and are missing out on all your library services, we come to you. Bankstown’s Home Library Service delivers books, magazines, talking books, DVDs and CDs right to your door! It’s easy to join the Home Library Service – just call us on 9707 9733 and we’ll deliver your order!

Free bus to library
Love to visit the library but have limited mobility? Call the Bus to Library service 9707 9733, we’ll join you up immediately and the bus will come and collect you and take you to the library. Check out our new books in large print or in talking book format, CDs, DVDs and magazines, have morning tea and chat to your fellow library lovers. The bus then takes you home.

Family history big success
Our Family History workshops are so good we’re teaching librarians from other local government areas how to go about it. Our 2010 series of Family History Workshops revived interest in the history of the local area and families, so we’ll be repeating these workshops in 2011. Check out our website and council pages for the next course.

eBooks 24/7
Our libraries have a great collection of eBooks on a variety of subjects and topics. To access eBooks, all you need is a current Bankstown Library membership card number and then just go to http://www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au/eBooks/default.aspx and find your book! To find out more, call 9707 9708.
Recreation Expo!

On Saturday 12 March, grab the kids and head for the 2011 Bankstown Recreation Expo at Bass Hill.

The expo runs from 2-6pm and there’s plenty of great activities and entertainment for the whole family – you can try everything from the giant slide and jumping castle to belly dancing and baton twirling or maybe something slower paced and skilled like lawn bowling.

Fitness classes, nutrition advice, golf and fly casting, Easter craft and a reptile show are other fascinating activities showcased in this great Recreation Expo.

Or you can enter the skateboard or photographic competitions and win fantastic prizes.

For a full list of events and updates, go to www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au, call 9707 9641 or head for Carysfield Reserve, off Johnston Road, Bass Hill.

Earth Hour 2011

Show your commitment to our Earth by turning off your lights for one hour at 8.30pm on Saturday 26 March. Earth Hour brings climate change issues to our attention and the attention of others and by switching off our lights for just one hour it shows our world leaders we really care about climate change and our planet’s future.

Since the first Earth Hour in 2007, Bankstown City Council has shown its commitment by switching off all non-essential lighting in all its offices, depots and libraries. Register your commitment to Earth Hour at www.earthhour.org or find out what else you can do about climate change and reduce your carbon footprint at www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au.

Sport A Month

In March, Come and Try Hockey free of charge with our Sport A Month program. Come along to The Crest Hockey Complex, Mount Street, Georges Hall on any Saturday in March 2-5pm and join in the fun! To book, call Bankstown Sports Hockey Club on 0424 546 075.

Have a go at lawn bowling in April and baton twirling in May. Download Sport A Month brochures at www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au or call 9707 9999 to find out more.

There’s something for everyone in Active Bankstown – make sure you don’t miss out!
Bankstown SustainABLE Garden Competition

We want to thank all the keen gardeners and community groups who entered our 2010 Sustainable Garden Competition and congratulate them for their dedication to sustainable gardening. Pictured above are Mayor Tania Mihailuk and second prizewinners in the Best School, Community Group or Childcare Centre Garden category – St Mary’s Primary, Georges Hall.

The winners were:

- Best Small Garden – Mr & Mrs Kalocsai, Chester Hill
- Best Medium/Large Garden – Vito DeMarinis, Condell Park
- Best School, Community Group or Childcare Centre Garden – Birrong Boys High School.

If you think you have what it takes to be a winner in 2011, get your garden gloves on. Entries for this year’s contest open on 1 September, with judging scheduled for the second half of September.

Bankstown Bites!

It’s on again – the fabulous Bankstown Bites Food Festival will bring life, colour and fantastic food to the streets of Bankstown on Saturday 30 July!

Discover for yourself the flavours of our city, Bankstown Fusion Cuisine, by taking one of the many guided food tours we conduct at festival time. You’ll experience a culinary world tour for your tastebuds.

This year, the festival features Sweet Things – the most delicious desserts and sweet treats to tempt kids and adults alike. With a mix of gourmet foodstalls, cooking demonstrations, celebrity chefs and food activities for the kids, Bankstown Bites is on every foodie’s calendar. Get a group of your friends together and come and sample the great food and entertainment at Bankstown Bites.

To find out more about Bankstown Bites, go to www.bankstownbites.com.au. Bankstown Bites – it’s all about the food!

Drains are for rain

Picnic Point kerbing has been given a colourful makeover to help reduce the impact of stormwater pollution on the Georges River.

Messages including “Drains to Yeramba Lagoon” and “Don’t litter – drains to river” have been spray-painted alongside 60 drains as a reminder to think about what gets washed away with stormwater.

Urban stormwater drains are directly connected to natural waterways – what goes down the drain flows into our creeks and rivers, often without being treated first. Pollutants such as plastics, fertilisers, garden clippings, detergents and vehicle grease and oils will lead to habitat degradation, plant and animal death, oxygen depletion, algal blooms and weed growth.

Most stormwater pollution comes from homes and roads, especially gardens and driveways – so remember to Keep the Drain just for Rain!

The spray-painted messages are part of the Mid Georges River Sustainability Initiative, a joint Bankstown-Sutherland councils and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service program which is funded through the NSW Environmental Trust.
The registered Austswim classes will operate out of our Revesby, Birrong and Wran Leisure Centres, ensuring there’s a program and location to suit all families.

We’ve spent $3.15 million upgrading our leisure centres and that’s money well invested to provide our residents with top quality year round swimming facilities.

And we’re getting public recognition for our pools with Birrong Aquatic Centre ranked the third best swimming spot in NSW last December in the Daily Telegraph’s Top 10 Swimming Spots feature.

To find out more about Swim School, call 9707 9999 or go to www.leisure.bankstown.nsw.gov.au.

Midnight Basketball’s on again!

Midnight Basketball is on again and we need volunteers to help us run the first tournament in term 2 this May.

Midnight Basketball encourages community participation, combines sport and recreation with life skills workshops, and aims to help young people 12-18 make positive and healthy choices.

To find out more about the eight-week tournament, become a volunteer or to register your child, call 9707 9019.

Swimming made easy

This April, Council will take over the management of Bankstown’s Swim Schools.

Swim School teaches our kids water safety and how to swim and this is vital given a 2010 Royal Life Saving Society report which estimated 20 per cent of Australian kids don’t know how to swim or lack the skills to keep themselves afloat in the water.

Skills Course or choose from one of two Short 6km rides for beginners and families or choose from one of two Long 12km rides for intermediate and advanced cyclists.

The cycle skills course, led by accredited AusCycle coaches, will provide beginners with confidence-building skills.

There’s limited free bike and helmet hire, so get in early.

Bike around Bankstown 2010 was awarded Parks and Leisure Australia’s Best Event in NSW.

To find out more about Bike around Bankstown and cycling in our area, call 9707 9999.

Bike around Bankstown!

Bring your bikes and helmets and join us for a bike ride around Bankstown on Saturday 7 May. Register at www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au under Leisure, Active Bankstown.

Bike around Bankstown, a community bike ride and cycle skills course, is free.

The event begins at Garrison Point Car Park, Georges Hall at 8am and runs till 1pm. Join any one of the following rides – the Beginners Cycle Skills Course or choose from one of two Short 6km rides for beginners and families or choose from one of two Long 12km rides for intermediate and advanced cyclists.

The cycle skills course, led by accredited AusCycle coaches, will provide beginners with confidence-building skills.

There’s limited free bike and helmet hire, so get in early.

Bike around Bankstown 2010 was awarded Parks and Leisure Australia’s Best Event in NSW.

To find out more about Bike around Bankstown and cycling in our area, call 9707 9999.
Youth Week

Youth Week is a celebration of the talents and abilities of all our young people between the ages of 12 and 25.

Bankstown City Council is hosting some great events for Youth Week from 1-10 April and we want all our local young people to join in all the fun and let their voices be heard on issues of concern. The 2011 Youth Week theme is Own It and thousands of local young people will get to join in events such as a soccer and skate comp, amazing race, games nights and much more!

To find out more about Youth Week 2011, call 9707 9605 or go to www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au.

Bin your bags

When you’re throwing out plastic bags, make sure you put them in the red rubbish bin. If you put them in the yellow bin they get tangled in the sorting machinery causing costly breakdowns and fires.

To find out more about your waste and recycling services, call 9707 9777 or go to www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au.

Free mulch and native plants

Passionate and beginner gardeners should take advantage of our great free mulch and native plant giveaway on Saturday 2 April at the Council Waste Management Facility, Bransgrove Road, Panania. Gates open at 9am and close at 1pm, so get in early and get your waterwise plants and trailerload of mulch this autumn! You must be a Bankstown resident and you must provide proof of address at the gate.

Our heritage

Bankstown was an early colonial settlement and we are fortunate to have several architectural remnants of that time still standing today as well as some excellent examples of later architecture.

Heritage preservation plays a large part in conserving our heritage for present and future generations to enjoy.

Heritage is evidence of our history. Conserving our heritage helps us understand our past and contributes to the lives of future generations – it gives us a sense of continuity and belonging to the place where we live.

There are three different levels of Heritage protection – National, State and Local – and Bankstown is fortunate enough to have a few fine examples of these in our local government area.

If you look around Bankstown, you’ll see many plaques on Heritage significant sites. When you take a tour of the area and look at these sites, you’ll learn quite a bit about our city.

Wander around our city and check out the plaques on the heritage significant former Chullora Pottery site, Bankstown Railway Station or the Bankstown Council Chambers.

Bankstown has 40 Heritage sites dating from 1900-1929, five from the 1930-1949 period and three from 1950-2001, with Bankstown Aerodrome included in these sites.

To find out more about your local heritage, go to the local studies section of Bankstown Library or www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au.
New home for **Meals on Wheels**

The Meals on Wheels service moved into its new permanent home at Greenacre Citizens’ Centre on 2 February.

Council provided $153,000 to relocate this vital community service from the Town Hall basement it has called home since 1966 to its new Greenacre premises.

The modification to the Greenacre site included installation of a cool room/freezer room, relocation of ovens and benches into a newly created kitchen and relocation of office space from Civic Tower.

The service provides meals to 360 clients and is supported by 185 volunteers many of whom have notched up more than 15 years’ service.

Shop in Padstow winner

One lucky resident has won a $3,000 travel voucher as part of our Padstow Shop and Win promotion. Customers who spent $10 or more at Padstow businesses were eligible to enter the competition.

Frances, who lives with her husband and two young children in Padstow, was selected in a draw from more than 1,000 entries.

She bought a meal from The Wild Rooster, one of 130 Padstow Town Centre businesses which participated in the competition.

Mayor Tania Mihailuk said the Padstow Shop and Win competition was part of council’s commitment to supporting local business.

“Council has spent over $2 million to revitalise Padstow Town Centre, part of our Town Centre Improvement program, which is aimed at improving the infrastructure and amenity of town centres across the Bankstown local government area,” Mayor Mihailuk said.

“I would like to congratulate the winner and encourage residents to continue shopping and supporting their local town centres.”

In December, council also ran a Yagoona Shop and Save campaign which gave residents discounts and other offers from participating businesses.

Better business

This February, the Bankstown Business Advisory Service celebrated its second anniversary of helping local businesses grow.

The Business Advisory Service is a one stop shop for business operators who want assistance and information on owning, operating and growing a business.

Contact the Business Advisory Service for a list of events or workshops to be held in the Bankstown area or check out our website – go to the business page section: Business News and Events. While you’re there, keep an eye out for the exciting new business mentoring program we’re developing.

The Business Advisory Service office, ground floor, Civic Tower, 66 Rickard Road, Bankstown, is open Monday to Friday.

To find out more about doing better business in Bankstown, call 9707 9228 or email: business@bankstown.nsw.gov.au.
Harmony Day

Monday 21 March is also the UN’s International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. On Harmony Day, we celebrate our diversity, what makes each Australian unique and share what we have in common. Everyone Belongs is the theme for this year’s celebrations. To find out more about Harmony Day activities, call 9707 9863.

On Neighbour Day

Sunday 27 March say gidday to your neighbours – find out if they’re OK, maybe invite them over for a cup of tea or snack or even organise a street party to keep in contact. Neighbour Day began in 2003, after neighbours discovered the body of an elderly Melbourne woman who’d been dead for two years. Make sure this doesn’t happen in your neighbourhood and make some new friends. To find out more about Neighbour Day activities in Bankstown, call 9707 9464 or go to www.neighbourday.org

Operation Bounce Back

This March-April is a national campaign to prevent car theft and increase car-security awareness. If your vehicle was made before 1998, we want to help you keep safe, so during Operation Bounce Back, the first lucky 150 residents to call the number below will receive vouchers for free car immobilisers installed by a locally approved mechanic. For a free prevent car theft info kit or to register for a car immobiliser, call 9707 9471.

National Youth Week

National Youth Week 1-10 April is on again with some great events for 12-25s and a chance for our young locals to share ideas and have their voices heard on issues of concern. This year’s theme is Own It and throughout the week thousands of young people will get involved in events across Bankstown including a soccer and skate comp, amazing race, games nights plus much more! To find out more call 9707 9605 or go to www.bankstown.nsw.gov.au

U Turns for Youth

A program to deter at risk young people from stealing cars or stealing goods left in cars, U Turns provides vocational education options in the automotive mechanics industry. We’re recruiting for the first Introduction to Automotive Mechanics course at Padstow TAFE in April. To find out more, call 9707 9019.

Bankstown Seniors

Conducts regular meetings for all local aged care workers, senior group leaders, health workers and community workers. We also welcome seniors who want to find out more about groups and services. Our next meeting, where we’ll discuss Tenancy Rights and Women’s Health, is 10am-12 noon Tuesday 10 May at Greenacre Neighbourhood Centre. To find out more, call 9750 7982.

Disability Expo

11.30am-2pm Tuesday 17 May, YMCA, 184 The River Road, Revesby. Information stalls, free showbags, bongo drumming, airbrush tattooing, hand massage, gymnastics and much more. To find out more, call 9707 9464.

Stepping On

A free, exciting and friendly falls prevention program run by the South Western Sydney Local Health Network, teaches older residents how to reduce the risk of falling and how to maximise independence at home. To find out more, call 9767 7815.

Being Active, Staying Safe Program

We’re urging all bilingual people who work with older citizens to take advantage of another great free program and get fall prevention training. If your organisation has interested workers who’ll benefit from learning these new skills, call 9789 9433 for more information.