

Lake Macquarie Matters

The Future of Eraring Power Station



There's some good news for Origin Energy employees based at Eraring Power Station, with the facility no longer slated to close its doors next year.

The NSW Government recently announced that it had reached an agreement with Origin that will support its ongoing operation until August 2027, by underwriting some of its costs.

The additional two years will ensure the lights stay on across New South Wales, while we transition away from coal-fired power stations to low-cost, reliable, renewable energy sources. Importantly, the agreement gives a level of certainty to Origin employees facing job insecurity, providing transition support with government training, re-skilling, and reemployment programs.

Greetings

Domestic violence is a scourge on our society. Recently there have been several shocking incidents of domestic violence and knife crime in our communities. Sadly, in Australia, nearly one in four women and one in eight men experience violence at the hands of a family member or partner.



The NSW Parliament is taking action. Along with a suite of legislative reforms, the government has also announced a \$230m four-year package to fund further support services for victim-survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence, with Coercive Control laws effective from 1 July.

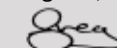
We finally have exciting progress with Transport for NSW undertaking community consultation on the design plan for the Speers Point roundabout. Things are starting to happen.

Energy transition is a big issue in Lake Macquarie. In great news for hundreds of local jobs, Eraring Power Station will continue to operate until at least August 2027.

On the housing front, recent planning changes should see more housing delivered in our area, particularly around transport hubs.

As always, I am so grateful for our community, and I look forward to working towards greater outcomes for Lake Macquarie.

Regards,



Christine Speer

Since 1955 New South Wales has turned to the State Emergency Service (SES) in times of need and we all rest easier knowing help is at hand.

Lake Macquarie City Local Commander, Christine Speer, joined the SES 42-years ago and served on the front line during some of our most devastating emergencies.

Her outstanding service was recognised at the Lake Macquarie and Hunter Coast Cluster Awards, where she was awarded lifetime membership, and presented with her 40-year-service clasp. I thank Christine for her hard work and community service.

Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre

Samantha Phillips and Robyn Charlton are two of the amazing people at the Centre.

This not-for-profit organisation works to provide dignity, autonomy and power to people experiencing financial hardship.

I was pleased to hear that the Centre secured two NSW Government grants. \$6,000 to fund their Pamper Care Project, which provides free groceries and other essentials to anyone in need, and \$40,000 for solar panels, which will reduce their running costs.



Heaven Can Wait Sailing Regatta

The Heaven Can Wait – Charity Sailing Regatta has done it again! This year raising a record \$80,000 for Cancer Council NSW and \$5,000 for Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie.

Now in its 18th year, the regatta is the brainchild of local resident, keen sailor and cancer survivor, Shaun Lewicki. I was pleased to join the event's organisers for the 2024 cheque presentation at the Royal Motor Yacht Club Toronto.



New Hope for Organ Recipients

In March, NSW Parliament passed my *Human Tissue Amendment (Ante-mortem Interventions) Bill 2023*, which improves outcomes for organ donation recipients.

More lives will be saved through organ donation than ever before.

I was thrilled my Bill received bipartisan support, it's a wonderful example of the Parliament working together for the benefit of our State.

With appropriate consents and safeguards, doctors across NSW will be able to administer simple ante-mortem interventions, and undertake medical imaging and other testing procedures, prior to an organ donor's death to determine, maintain or improve the viability of tissue and organs for donation.

There are approximately 1800 Australians on the waitlist for an organ transplant. The passing of my Bill means there will be more healthy organs available to those in desperate need.



Housing Shortage Transforming our Transport Hubs

NSW desperately needs more housing, and building homes close to transport and jobs makes sense. The Transport Oriented Development (TOD) planning changes encourage the use of residential and commercial land near transport connections, without requiring further clearing of natural bushland.



Five hubs, Morisset, Booragul, Teralba, Cockle Creek and Cardiff are included under the proposed TOD program. The changes will increase density around train stations allowing for apartment buildings of up to 24m (6 storeys), with no minimum lot size or width.

This will add to the huge growth seen in recent years, and while I support an increase of housing supply, we can't continue expanding our community without investment in infrastructure and services. I have called for commitments on road and train station upgrades (including multi-story carparks) and improvements to health services in southern Lake Macquarie in my recent budget submissions to the Treasurer.

Finally, we also need more affordable housing in Lake Macquarie. The present TOD proposals only require 2% of the development to be used for affordable housing and I continue to push the Government to increase this requirement.

\$300k For Lake Macquarie

Community Building Partnership 2023 grant recipients have been announced. \$300k has been allocated to local clubs and organisations. Congratulations for your hard work in applying for these grants.

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| ✓ Lake Macquarie BMX Club \$20,056 | ✓ Cooranbong Valley Comm Pre School \$46,430 |
| ✓ Macquarie United SJRLFC \$10,299 | ✓ Macquarie Shores Swimming Club \$5,000 |
| ✓ Hunter Mountain Bike Assoc \$38,000 | ✓ Western Lake Mac Concert Band \$6,000 |
| ✓ Bolton Point Pre School \$24,800 | ✓ Rathmines Catalina Memorial Park Assoc \$10,000 |
| ✓ Arcadia Vale PS P&C \$34,858 | ✓ Morisset Scouts \$27,085 |
| ✓ Mandalong RFSA \$28,900 | ✓ Cooranbong RFSA \$14,600 |
| ✓ Survivor's R Us Inc \$14,400 | |
| ✓ Sunnyfield \$6,572 | |
| ✓ Carey Bay Pre School \$13,000 | |

Freedom for Port of Newcastle



We're a step closer to getting a deepwater container terminal at the Port of Newcastle (PoN) which, once established, would future proof our region.

A new container terminal would expand the opportunities available to our farmers and primary producers by providing them with a more efficient alternative for transporting goods overseas, rather than having to ship from Port Botany or interstate.

The new container terminal will be amongst the most efficient in the world and create thousands of jobs throughout the greater Newcastle, Hunter and north-western NSW regions.

PoN has made the one-off \$13 Million

compensation payment to the Government, which was a requirement under the Port of Newcastle Extinguishment of Liability Act 2022 (NSW).

I was pleased to have been able to get this legislation across the line by working with both sides of Parliament and PoN. It proves we can correct unjust restrictions placed on our industries and it is a proud moment to see this Bill finally come to fruition.

Local Doctor Honoured

Sometimes we believe we know a person and hear tales of someone's life in their eulogy.

With Dr David Durrheim, I had the pleasure of hearing his incredible life story, detailing what has driven him to help thousands of people, including his life saving work with children throughout his medical career.

The topic of eulogy was mentioned by David's son, Jonty, during the ceremony at Lake Macquarie City Council. It was a reference to another amazing twist in David's life when he suffered a heart attack in 2014 while walking and was clinically dead. Luckily, he was found on the track and through CPR and amazing follow up medical care, he was brought back to life.

His near-death experience drove David to keep helping others. Most locals would recognise his face and distinctive accent as the informed voice of Hunter Health during the Covid-19 pandemic.



His life of amazing service to our community was recognised by being awarded Freeman of the City. Congratulations to Dr David Durrheim and his wife Jenny.

Parliament Recap

From Macquarie Street

Already in 2024, the Government has passed several reforms in Parliament to address domestic and family violence, and knife crime including:

- ▶ Amending the Bail Act 2013 making it harder for a person accused of 'serious domestic violence' or coercive control offences to get bail and, if bailed, require alleged offenders to be electronically monitored.
- ▶ Requirements for a bail authority to consider certain behaviours that could be recognised as 'red flags' for domestic abuse and in the case of offences against an intimate partner, the views of any victims or family member of a victim.
- ▶ Allowing a decision to grant bail be stayed, pending review, in the case of serious domestic violence offences, coercive control and certain sexual assault offences.
- ▶ Simplified the authorisation process for the prosecution of domestic violence offences relating to the installation, use and maintenance of monitoring devices.
- ▶ Introduced a trial of powers to allow police to stop and scan persons, using a handheld metal scanner, in designated areas without a warrant.
- ▶ Increased the maximum penalty for selling a knife to a child under 16.

There's positive news for residents of Land Lease communities, with changes to limit a landlord's ability to increase rent and utility charges.

These changes come from a statutory review in 2021, and the first phase of reforms have now passed through Parliament. They include providing greater certainty around site fee increases and introducing a price cap for electricity charges in communities with embedded electricity networks.

Between question time and Bill debates, I welcomed Lake Macquarie locals to Parliament. I met students from Heritage College and hosted local charities Survivor's R Us and Southlake's Incorporated, who both had productive meetings with Housing Minister Rose Jackson, and Minister for Women, Jodie Harrison.



Generosity overflows for The Backpack Venture



Over the past few months, my staff have been busy collecting donations and were overwhelmed with the support for this fantastic cause. Colleen and Stuart from The Backpack Venture visited to collect your donations and were thrilled with Lake Macquarie's generosity.

I am proud to support The Backpack Venture and my office will remain a drop-off location for donations.

Please ensure you visit during office hours (8am-4pm, Mon-Fri) as there is no security for items left outside.

Vale Kelly Joy Hoare

Many people across the Lake Macquarie Community would be familiar with former Charlton MP, Kelly Hoare. In addition to her role as a parliamentarian, Kelly was an active member of our community. She was President of the Toronto Tidy Towns Committee, the Toronto Chamber of Commerce and supported many local organisations. Kelly also worked for me as a relief electorate officer and in community engagement until her retirement. Her passing was unexpected, and I extend my deepest sympathies to her family.

Contact

Need Help? My staff and I can assist with issues related to any NSW Government portfolio.

We also offer:

- ▶ JP services
- ▶ Congratulatory messages for significant birthdays and anniversaries
- ▶ Friendly advice to assist you in finding a resolution to your issue

If you would like to subscribe to my monthly E-Newsletter, please email your contact details to my office lakemacquarie@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Address: 126A Cary St, Toronto, NSW 2283

Hours: Mon-Fri, 8am-4pm

Phone: 4959 3200

Website: www.gregpiper1.com

Movement on Speers Point Standstill

Speers Point Roundabout is one step closer to the much-needed upgrade we have all been waiting for, with the proposed plan recently undergoing a community consultation process.

The roundabout is a crucial link in our road network and a pinch point for commuters affecting traffic 7 days a week. Numerous complaints of standstill traffic, near-misses and congestion have flooded my office over recent years and to finally have movement on this project is exciting and long overdue.

Lake Macquarie is a key gateway region, linking Sydney, Newcastle and the Hunter, thanks to our road and rail connections. We've all noticed the pressure being placed on our community as



Lake Macquarie rapidly develops into a modern bustling city. It is imperative our roads and supporting infrastructure are upgraded to support this rapid growth.

Progress on this long-awaited project is a welcome relief to residents who lose valuable hours travelling on these roads every day. I will continue to advocate for the community on our need for investment from the Labor Government to future-proof our beautiful city with improved infrastructure.

Ready to Dive into Summer!

I am excited for the next phase of the Toronto Foreshore Revitalisation. I joined Minister for the Hunter, the Honourable Yasmin Catley, and Lake Macquarie City Mayor, Kay Fraser, to discuss the plans and hear about the new facilities proposed for the site.

This stage of the revitalisation, delivered by Lake Macquarie City Council, aims to create an inclusive, fully enclosed space with improved accessibility features. It is funded by a \$1 million grant from the NSW Government's Places to Swim program.



Expected to be completed by late June 2024, the upgrades include:

- ▶ a jetty extension
- ▶ an accessibility ramp with handrails
- ▶ replacement of existing jetty decking
- ▶ netting around the perimeter to prevent the entry of large marine fauna.

This initiative not only enhances recreational opportunities but also ensures that Toronto Baths is a welcoming space for everyone in the community. Access to the baths will be closed during construction.

Greg Piper Independent Member for the State Electorate of Lake Macquarie