

Maitland Matters

A newsletter from Jenny Aitchison MP Your Local State Member for Maitland

Maitland takes Top Job in Junior Parliament



James Peters, Grace Ahrens & John Leao at YMCA NSW Junior Parliament

It was a pleasure for me to chair a session of the Junior Parliament in September, with the top job of Premier going to Maitland student John Leao, along with James Peters, Minister for Health, and Grace Ahrens, Minister for Juvenile Justice, also on the front bench of the Junior Parliament.

All three students participated in the debate on a Bill on juvenile recidivism. I was extremely impressed with the knowledge and maturity of our young representatives and I have had the pleasure of meeting up with them on a number of occasions since to discuss the Bill that they debated and other important issues for our youth.

Rail Line Update

Thank you to everyone who fought to save our rail line into Newcastle. I have submitted petitions with over 1,000 signatures, spoken in Parliament, joined many of you in protests and made representations on your behalf to the Minister and asked him many questions.

I continue to advocate for more stations in Maitland, mobility lifts at Victoria Street Station and better public transport to Newcastle and Sydney.

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Jenny writes...

My first six months has passed and it has been a whirlwind start for me beginning with the April storms just days after moving into my office, to representing my community in Parliament and meeting many wonderful, hardworking people along the way.

The feedback I have received from everyone has been very welcome and I have included an update on a number of the issues you have raised with me in this newsletter.

Special thanks to those who responded to my surveys and signed the rail line petition. The results of the Rutherford Stink survey are on page 2.

A highlight of my year has been my visits to our local schools. It is inspiring to see the dedication and wonderful work our teachers do to encourage our children to be the best they can be and prepare them for the future.

As we head towards the end of 2015 and a time that is a joyous one for many, I ask that we reflect on those less fortunate.

We have many caring and dedicated volunteers, support groups and charities who will be working hard to ensure that those who are doing it tough have the support they need.

I have had the pleasure of meeting many of you and I thank you for the vital work you do.

Health News

Parking for Dialysis Patients:

It was a great win for the community in July when dialysis patients attending Maitland Hospital were issued with swipe cards to gain access to parking during their regular visits to the hospital. During these difficult times for patients, parking costs are just an added burden they now don't have to endure. The previous token system was not working well and the new swipe card system has made the lives of dialysis patients a little less traumatic.



At the opening of the Maitland Blood Bank with Simon & Tanielle

New Lower Hunter Hospital:

On the progress of the new Lower Hunter Hospital, the news is not so positive. I have sought information and briefings from the Minister on a number of occasions, but the government has failed to give the community a date for when the hospital will open, or when construction will start.

For a community such as ours, growing by five new residents every day, this is just not good enough.

Vital services such as oncology and intensive care are not yet confirmed for the new hospital and the Government has still not ruled out a Private-Public Partnership for the business model.

It is vital that this hospital is not a replacement for the existing Maitland Hospital and that it has all vital services which are accessible to all.

Maitland Blood Service:

The new Maitland Blood Bank opened on 16 November at 39 St Andrews St, Maitland. Drop in and see the friendly team and give generously. Giving blood saves lives. For more information, you can call them on 13 14 95.

Survey Results

In August I sent a letter to Rutherford area residents asking for feedback on the odour that has plagued many people for so long.

Of over 200 responses, 153 people said they had noticed a smell with the majority being chemical or oil based from daily to once or twice a month lasting from 10 mins to 24 hours.

Many people reported various physical symptoms including nausea, headaches, stinging eyes, runny nose, skin rashes/eczema, dizziness, coughing and burning of the throat, breathing problems and asthma.

Around 45% of respondents had not reported the smell to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and 95% are not keeping written records. Please note the time and date of the stink and report this and any adverse health experiences to the EPA on 131 555. I will continue to ask the government questions on this issue.

Maitland Showground is home to a number of important events such as the RFS field day in August this year. It was great to meet some of our local heroes at this event.

Maitland Showground Grandstand

Prior to the election, the Government made a commitment of \$250,000 for the Hunter River Agricultural & Horticultural Association (HRAHA) to upgrade the Grandstand. The Association is one of the oldest agricultural associations in Australia. Its longevity is a testament to the many volunteers who have worked tirelessly for over 150 years.

I am working closely with the Association to help them bring this renovation to life. The Showground is host to many events in our community, and repairs to the grandstand will help them to continue to run the major events which provide much needed economic benefits to our community.

The promised money is in the budget but it's not enough. If you can help, please contact the Showground on 4933 5052 or go to <http://www.maitlandshowground.com.au/grandstand-renovation-appeal>.



Community Building Partnership (CBP) Grants

The CBP Grants program is a Labor initiative that helps local not-for-profit community groups build essential community infrastructure. CBP applications are currently in the assessment stage with \$752,437 worth of applications being received for the \$200,000 Maitland was allocated.

An additional \$100,000 is available to disadvantaged electorates but sadly this year, despite my representation to the Premier, Maitland was not granted the additional funding.

I was impressed with the calibre of the many projects submitted with successful recipients to be announced soon.

If you are a member of a local group, and have not made contact with me or my office please make contact so that we can pass on any information of future grants to you.

Nominate the 2016 Woman of the Year

Nominations are now open for the 2016 NSW Women of the Year Awards. The Awards recognise and celebrate the outstanding contribution women across NSW make to industry, community and society.

Nominees can be for one of the five state wide awards and/or a local Maitland Award.

Contact my office to nominate a special woman in our community for these awards.



My Jobs Roundtable brought together the Business Chamber, Jobs Network Providers, Community Services, Unions and Training Providers to discuss issues for solving the problem of unemployment.

Jobs Wanted

In October I held an employment roundtable with employer and community groups including Maitland Business Chamber, TAFE, Youth Express and Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Skills and Small Business David Harris MP.

With the unemployment rate reaching nearly 12% (the second highest in NSW), and the youth unemployment rate rising to around 21% (the very highest in NSW), I want to see more done to reduce these figures.

There are many reasons for unemployment, and only some are in Government's control. The Government can play a part in reducing these figures by ensuring that infrastructure projects like the railway roundabout, the new Lower Hunter Hospital, the grandstand at Number 1 Sportsground and repairs to the Town Hall are not delayed. Big infrastructure projects, create short term jobs during construction and in the case of the Lower Hunter Hospital long term employment in our region.

A major concern coming out of the roundtable I hosted was the Government's failure to support workers and industry by sending jobs offshore in their procurement contracts. Every dollar spent in NSW stays here and provides jobs.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a crime. No one should be at risk of domestic violence. The State and Federal Government have both recently announced funding, with the Federal Government reinstating \$100 million of the \$300 million it previously cut from domestic violence services. However this still leaves a funding shortfall for many services.

The State Government recently released a \$100 million package of measures including Domestic Violence High Risk Offender Teams, Suspect Target Management Plans, the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme, and some money for specialist refuges and homelessness services.

However there are still systemic problems in the way domestic violence is handled in the Family Court, applying for AVOs, breaches and other issues. I have asked questions in the Parliament and have met with the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence to try and address these issues.

If you are experiencing violence or are homeless, please call Carrie's Place Domestic Violence and Homelessness Services on 4934 2585.



Celebrating 100 years of Women in Policing in July



Collecting signatures in support of our rail line



The Government has taken up Labor's pharmacists delivery of vaccine policy



I was honoured to conduct my first tree planting for Telarah Public School's 125th Anniversary



Recognising some of our local heroes from SES, RFS, Police and NSW Fire Brigades after the April Storms with Shadow Emergency Services Minister Guy Zangari, MP. It was great to have the chance to say thank you for all they did!



At the opening of the e
Lord Mayor Nuatale N
Hon Scot MacDonald





At the opening of Maiwel's "The Hub" in High Street. Great talent on display from artists to singers and lots of fun.



Supporting Daffodil Day - I am a strong advocate for Cancer services in our community



2015 is the Centenary of ANZAC. I have participated in many memorial services to honour our fallen.



With Natasha Lloyd-Jones of the Mercury, and the Hon Milton Morris, former Member for Maitland at a meeting on the future of the Maitland Mercury



Expanded Newcastle Airport with Helmes, Kate Washington MP, the MLC, and Jodie Harrison MP



At the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Conference in Sydney - I am the NSW Representative on the Steering Committee



NRMA and SES Community Thank You BBQ in Maitland park



Representing you in Parliament

Even in the tumult of Parliament, my commitment is to ensure the Government knows your views and acts on them. I continue to put Maitland first. Read some of my speeches at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/hansard or watch them on my You Tube Channel (#WeAreMaitland).

Working with Our Community

I am passionate about working with the marvellous community groups in our region. I am now the Patron of the MRAG Volunteers, Rutherford Girl Guides, U3A Maitland, Maitland Branch of the Northern NSW Federation of Justices of the Peace, the Maitland & District Genealogical Society and the Maitland District Cricket Umpires Association.

Please contact me so I can get to know you and find ways to help your group.

Connect with me

Please visit my website at www.jennyaitchison.com.au or join me on social media where you will find details of community events, my work in parliament and the #WeAreMaitland campaign on FB/Twitter/YouTube.

Sign up for my regular E-News

You can sign up to receive my regular e-newsletters by calling my office during office hours on 4933-1617 or sending an email to maitland@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

Here to help you

Questions ???

Members of Parliament can ask up to nine Questions on Notice per sitting week on behalf of their communities, which must be answered by the relevant Minister within 35 days.

If there are questions you would like asked please email or post them to my office.

Writing to Ministers

If you have an issue with the State Government or a State Government department, please write me a letter or e-mail and I will make a representation to the relevant Minister and keep you advised of the progress and outcome from the Minister.

Need help with NSW Government issues?

As your local State Member I can help with the following issues:

- Community Health & Dental
- Public Hospitals
- Education
- Land & Water Management
- Industrial Relations
- Primary Industries
- Public Housing
- Main Roads
- Public Works
- Emergency Services
- National Parks
- Transport
- Attorney-General
- Ageing & Disability
- Community Services
- Police
- Fair Trading
- Multiculturalism
- Medical Research

Maitland City Council

Maitland City Council deals with Local Roads, Rubbish Collection, Rates, Sporting Fields Parks, Footpaths, Street Lighting, Residential & Commercial Development Council By-Laws, Animal Control, Signage.

If you have Council issues it's best to call them directly on 4934 9700. They will give you an event number, which you should record for your reference. You can attach the name of your local Councillor to the issue and they will advise them of the outcome.



Apply for a NSW Seniors Card

Are you 60 or older and working less than 20 hours a week? Have you applied for your NSW Seniors Card? Go to www.seniorscard.nsw.gov.au or telephone 13 77 88.

Become a Justice of the Peace

Do you want to become a Justice of the Peace? There is a new online form for applications to become a NSW Justice of the Peace at www.jp.nsw.gov.au under the menu item 'Becoming a JP'. For enquiries about the new application process, please contact:
JP infoline: (02) 8688 7487 (9-5 M-F)
Email: jp@agd.nsw.gov.au
Web: www.jp.nsw.gov.au



JP Services Available

Please contact my office for JP services, Monday to Friday 9am-5pm.



Congratulatory Messages

My office can organise Congratulatory messages for 50th, 60th, 65th, 70th Wedding Anniversaries and for 80th, 90th & 100th birthdays from the Governor, Prime Minister, Premier and Federal MPs. The Queen and Governor-General will also send special messages for 60th Wedding Anniversaries and 100th birthdays.

To ensure messages arrive in time for the special celebration, three weeks advance notice is needed for processing. For more details please call my office.



Victoria Street Lifts promised (again)

In October, the Transport Ministry promised the Government would 'investigate' lifts at Victoria Street Station. This was first promised in October 2011, and in April 2014 by Robyn Parker & then Transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian. Third time lucky?

TAFE Cuts

Join the Campaign

When more than one in five young people can't get a job, the Government has a responsibility to ensure access to high quality, low cost TAFE education. Under Baird Government we have seen fee increases, course cuts and more. Join the campaign by going to: http://act.nswlabor.org.au/protect_our_tafe



Applications for Rural Category C Funding Closing Soon

Applications for Rural Category C Funding of up to \$15,000 close on 15 December 2015. Some people have been successful in gaining assistance. Local Lands Services have people to help with applications. Call or email my office for more details.

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December 2015



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