

ACT Neighbourhood Watch INC. (Association)

As 2008 rolls on relentlessly, NHW in the ACT continues to work hard on a number of strategic and logistical processes. These will enable ACT NHW to develop a better and more socially inclusive business plan which will hopefully, amongst other important outcomes, deal with its current lack of corporate sponsorship.

ACT NHW has good levels of on the ground people resources and financial support in its 50 plus active NHW areas but we tend to struggle a little at the territory wide level simply because it is predominantly administrative.

Our strategic or business plan is therefore crucial to our promotional portfolio and so the Board members under the leadership of our President, Ursula Macdermott, have been busy consulting about the place and testing some of the amendments that are paramount to achieving any genuine long term principle or major sponsorship. We will report on the initiation and impact of these changes in ensuing reports.

Meanwhile, in the last few months we have planted NHW into the South of Tuggeranong for the first time in the 24 year history of NHW in the ACT. Tuggeranong is the southern most city centre and district in the territory and the new suburbs south of the town centre line are now beginning to initiate NHW groups. In June we launched Calwell NHW with thanks to Crime Prevention's Superintendent Matt Varley, Sergeant Tim Murphy, the Tuggeranong OIC and ACT Policing's Suburban Policing Strategy Coordinating officers from that district. A special thanks to the good people of Tuggeranong who are presently stepping up to facilitate active NHW groups to come on line in at least 6 new suburbs by the end of the year.

Also in June we successfully rejuvenated one of our longest active groups in central Canberra as well as commencing an annex for NHW and Crime Prevention community education and promotion of safety and security messages in the northernmost ACT village of Hall.

The following is an ACT Policing report on a recent successful event initiative by Gungahlin NHW.

Gungahlin Joint Emergency Services Centre Open Day

The Canberra community was given a rare chance to see the inside of a police station recently – without the usual prerequisite of a brush with the law.

The Gungahlin Joint Emergency Services Centre opened its doors on Saturday April 19, with vehicles and equipment on show from ACT Policing, Neighbourhood Watch, Safety House, ACT Fire Brigade, ACT Rural Fire Brigade and ACT Ambulance Service.

The day was initiated by Gungahlin Neighbourhood Watch and featured NHW and Safety House displays. A/Sgt Anna Swain of Crime Prevention said this sort of joint ACT Policing and NHW event helped build on the already-strong relationship between the organisations.

“Having a day where the community can see police, NHW and Safety House working together is a great way to get our shared safety messages out there to Canberrans,” she said. “It also highlights the positive working relationship we share”.

To the delight of children, Constable Kenny Koala paid a special visit and members of the Specialist Response and Security (SRS) team demonstrated the latest in tactical gear.



The Police and Citizens Youth Club was also on site with information on its programs, and police volunteers helped raise almost \$1000 for the upcoming "Picking up the Peaces" Kokoda charity trek by Canberra's emergency services personnel. More information on the trek can be found at www.kokodachallenge.com.

With an estimated 600 visitors on the day, Sgt Bob Muir, OIC Gungahlin praised the efforts of all involved in making the day a success, including the dedication of Neighbourhood Watch in ensuring the event went off without a hitch. “Open days such as this are fun for families, but they also help demystify police and emergency services for the community which can help build a stronger relationship,” he said.

The AFP’s Recognition and Ceremonial team (and horses) were also there on the day, along with the Collision Investigation and Reconstruction Team and Mobile Traffic Operations.

Graeme Hush (Rev’d)
Deputy President / Secretary
ACT NHW Inc. (Association)