



Echidna Magic Mt.Gravatt Outlook

Media and Information Awareness Package





Echidna Magic



THE ECHIDNA MAGIC PROJECT

First Contact has gained bipartisan support at all levels of Government for the Echidna Magic project at the Mount Gravatt Outlook.



(right) Hon. Judy Spence MP - State Member for Mt. Gravatt.

Water Grant Presentation



In a meeting with the First Contact Board of Directors, above, Mr. Ross Vasta, Federal Member for Bonner, presented Water Grants Funding for the Mt. Gravatt Project. He was joined by Local Brisbane City Council Councillors, Cr. Kerry Rea for Holland Park and Cr. Adrian Schrinner, Councillor for Chandler. Also present was Julie Attwood MP, Greater Brisbane Community Forum Chairperson State Member for Mt. Ommaney.

Southern Star,
Wednesday May 2, 2007

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» HQ

» CARSGUIDE

» GIVEAWAY

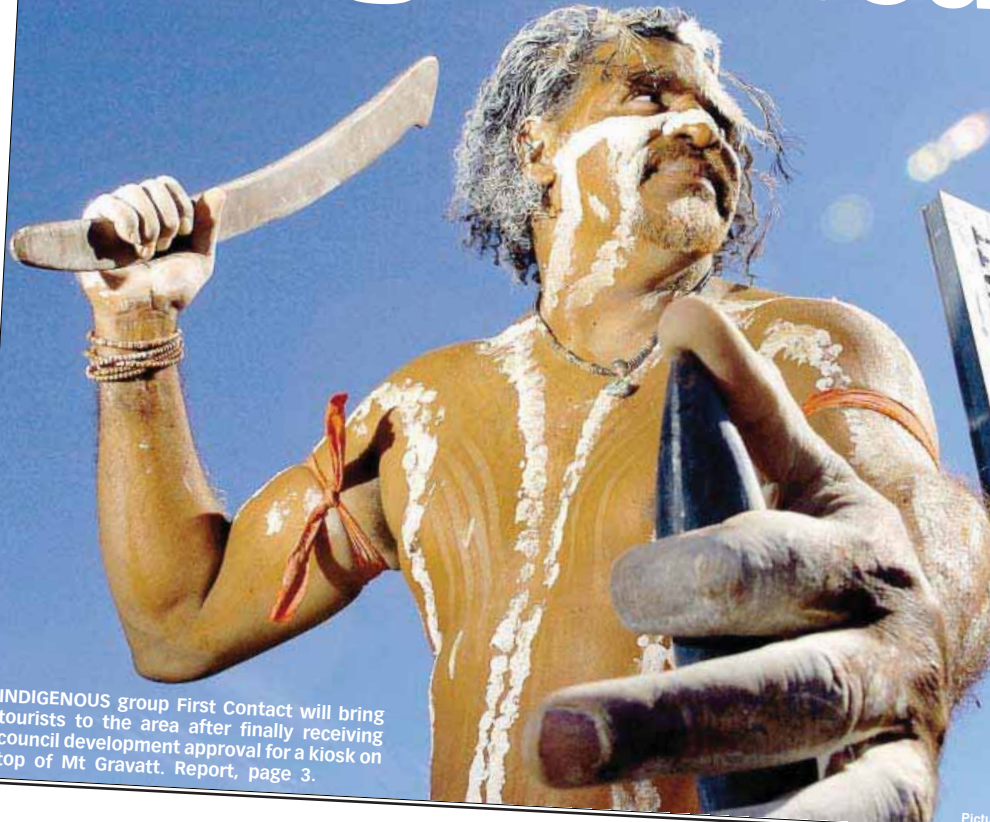
**ALL THE GOSS
ON THE STARS**
PAGE 81

**FAMILY SUVS
FACE OFF**
INSIDE

**HELPING IN AN
EMERGENCY**
PAGE 78



Living the dream



INDIGENOUS group First Contact will bring tourists to the area after finally receiving council development approval for a kiosk on top of Mt Gravatt. Report, page 3.

Picture: Dale Haberfield

Southern Star,
Wednesday May 2, 2007

■ NEWS >>



■ Top of the world . . . Robbie and Trish Williams have set their sights big to attract people from throughout Australia.

DH115748

Landmark earns nod

INDIGENOUS group First Contact has finally received development approval for a kiosk on the top of Mt Gravatt.

After almost two years of negotiations, Brisbane City Council has given First Contact the go-ahead for the Echidna Magic kiosk at the lookout site.

First Contact chair Robbie Williams said building would begin this year.

He said the development would include a cafe, playground and public amenities.

“There is going to be a huge employment and training opportunity for young people,” Mr Williams said.

He said he hoped the kiosk would also be a space where people could go to learn about indigenous language and culture.

“It’s going to attract people from all over Queensland and around the nation,” he said.

Robertson indigenous performer and cultural educator Adrian Burragubba said the approval was a win. “We need to have some landmarks here and show Indigenous achievements here,” he said.

Southern Star

News Articles



Office: 3114 5600
Classifieds: 13 88 22

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Vol 25 No 29
Rec. and max. price 50c

» VIBE

**BEATING
WINTER BLUES**

PAGE 68

» BUSINESS

**ON THE
MOVE**

PAGE 30

» GIVEAWAY

**BUMPER EKKA
PRIZE PACK**

PAGE 74



Opals of the Orient

Picture perfect... Dr Yuru Chen is bringing a little bit of the orient to Redeemer College at Rochedale this weekend with an exhibition of "picture stones" from China that closely resemble Australian opals. Story, page 5. AA95422
Picture: Adam Armstrong

First step to kiosk

By **TORNY JENSEN**
and **ANGELA RANKE**

FIRST Contact Corporation will go ahead with plans to build a kiosk at the Mt Gravatt Lookout despite not yet having received development approval.

The group has been granted a provisional lease agreement by Brisbane City Council which will come into force when, or if, devel-

opment approval for Echidna Magic Kiosk is passed by council officers.

First Contact Corporation chairman Robbie Williams said he was certain the development application would be approved.

"The first stage of the process has started and I'm feeling pretty confident that work will begin in September," Mr Williams said.

He said the Queensland colonial

cottage-style kiosk would be constructed where the playground area is now, with views to the south and east.

A new play area with an enclosure and shade cloth would replace the old playground. Earlier this year, First Contact received \$48,445 under the Federal Government's water grant scheme.

Mr Williams said the funds would go towards a water-

management program, including planting local native vegetation and developing an environment centre.

He said the kiosk would have social and economic benefits for Mt Gravatt with an expected 12 hospitality positions to be created in the process.

"We've got a lot of students in the Mt Gravatt area so the kiosk will create employment

opportunities for them," he said. Councillor Kerry Rea (Holland Park) said the idea of developing commercial activity on the mountain was originally initiated by council in response to the lack of security at the lookout.

"The best form of security is people," she said.

"We want to bring people back to the mountain."

■ More stories, page 4

Southern Star,
Wednesday July 19, 2006

Kiosk to improve security

By **TORNY JENSEN**

A PROPOSED kiosk at the Mt Gravatt Lookout would have a 24-hour security presence.

First Contact Corporation general manager Trish Williams said around-the-clock security would be used on site to deter hooning and vandalism.

"I think that once the presence is up here that anti-social behaviour will be curbed," Ms Williams said.

First Contact chairman Robbie Williams said bad behaviour had stemmed from a lack of facilities on the mountain.

"At the moment, there is nothing up there. No toilets or drinking taps, nothing," he said.

"Young people go up there and get up to mischief.

"We want to make the area a safe place for all people in the community to visit."

Brisbane South police district Inspector Brian Connors said the majority of complaints received about the mountain were traffic related, particularly hooning.

"It is an area that we do patrol regularly as a matter of course," he said.

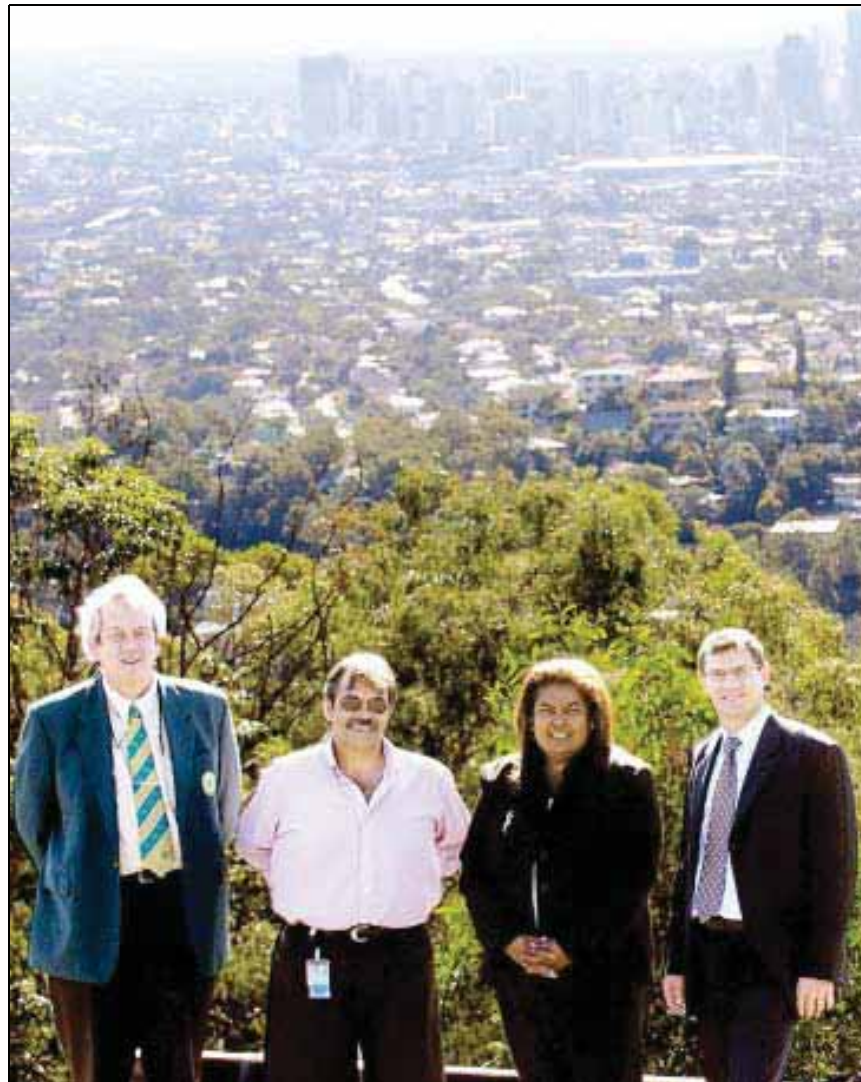
Insp Connors said while he welcomed the lookout development, police would continue to maintain a presence in the area.

"We will continue with the same patrols," he said.

Mr Williams said First Contact was also negotiating with Brisbane City Council to operate a bus shuttle service to and from the lookout during popular times of the year, such as Riverfire.

"Hopefully this will help with the congestion," Mr Williams said.

■ **Tell us what you think. Text 0429 847 869 or email letters@south-star.com.au**



AA95592

■ High hopes . . . First Contact directors Michael Sunderland, Robbie Williams, Trish Williams and Clinton Mohr atop Mt Gravatt Lookout, the site of the proposed kiosk.

Picture: Adam Armstrong

Southern Star,
Wednesday July 19, 2006

Southern Star,
Wednesday May 30, 2007

■ BUSINESS >>

Project's high aims

THE proposed development of a Mt Gravatt lookout kiosk may include an aquaponics research project.

Geoff Wilson, president of Green Roofs for Healthy Australian Cities, said he and the Echidna Magic kiosk developer, First Contact, had been in talks with Central Queensland University (CQU) about the project's possibility.

Mr Wilson said CQU had found inspiration in Southside Chamber of Commerce, which had been working on

a rooftop microfarm.

"The aim was to take restaurant food wastes from Mt Gravatt Central and convert them into organic hydroponic nutrients via worm farming," Mr Wilson said.

"The plant food thus produced would grow salad vegetables for purchase by the same restaurants."

Mr Wilson said the chamber had received \$212,000 funding from the Rural Industries Development Corporation and was hoping more funding would come from other groups.

"The CQU project will try to make the idea work - while at the same time training two PhD students," he said.

"The aim will be to showcase successful aquaponics technology and green-roof technology that will not only make the kiosk more efficient and attractive as a tourist and learning destination, but also be a beacon for shopping malls to rent rooftop space for urban agriculture."

■ **Phone Mr Wilson on 3411 4524.**



XC

■ Synergies . . . Southside Chamber of Commerce's Michael Sunderland, First Contact's Robbie Williams and aquaponics expert Geoff Wilson have joined forces for a new project.

aspect

high hopes

The lookout at the top of Mt Gravatt is set to be transformed into a destination as captivating as its panorama across the city. **Laura Stead** talks to the man with the view from the top.

NOTHING worth having comes easily but it's been a much harder battle than expected for Robbie Williams who has fought to revive the under-utilised summit of Mt Gravatt for the past 10 years.

With the frenetic demeanor of a man on a mission, Robbie was finally successful last month in having a development application approved for a kiosk at the Mt Gravatt lookout.

"It's been abused," says Robbie, who also runs the First Contact Indigenous community hub on Logan Rd, of the under-appreciated site. "Security is a major issue up there."

Reports of hoons, bashings and vandalism at the site have not been uncommon, most notably last year's bashing of Jason Gray, the then-26-year-old triple transplant patient and cystic fibrosis sufferer who was wrestled out of his modified Mitsubishi Lancer and repeatedly bashed in the head by a drunken 15-year-old.

"The violence and all that has to stop," Robbie says.

Aside from regular disturbances, the lookout has been criticised for its poor access during peak periods such as fireworks displays. Cars have been left backed up along the one-lane-each-way road caused by anxious revellers vying for a view from the top.

There's a playground and car park area at the summit but Mt Gravatt lookout goes nowhere near the facilities offered at Mt Coot-tha across the river.

All that will change, however, if Robbie's planned Echidna

Magic Kiosk comes to fruition following its recent Brisbane City Council go-ahead.

The plans detail a multi-purpose, colonial-style community facility with scope to include an animal hospital, cafe, information centre and meeting space, landscaped gardens using locally indigenous plant species, rainwater tanks and a refurbished play area, all estimated to wrap up at about \$12.5 million.

"When we started developing it, it was a \$13 million monstrosity that wouldn't generate any income," Robbie says.

Ten years later and after so much political hoop-jumping Robbie jokes he could have emerged with a degree in town planning, countless community interests have been consulted in the process of making the kiosk facility somewhere for everyone.

"We will promote the local community and indigenous arts and crafts, but also the wildlife group (the South East Queensland Wildlife Rescue Volunteer Carers) will be an educational opportunity," Robbie says.

"Over the past 10 years when we initially started talking about it, developers, government departments, consultants, community groups have all raised issues about why it shouldn't happen but not why it should.

"But this will generate employment, more interest, trade for local businesses and we will look at security.

"It'll be in a safe environment, a gathering place for young and old. We don't want it just to be a place for people to go and eat – we want it to be educational too.

"By all means it'll make money but it'll give young people opportunity."

Robbie says consultation with local and state government representatives has furthered plans for security measures and additional funding.

"We've already approached the Attorney-General for a number plate identification and security system, and that looks very promising.

"Ross (Vasta, Federal Member for Bonner) has been a big help and support. He can see it's going to generate employment (and) look after the older people too.

"Judy (Spence, State Member for Mt Gravatt) is been terrific – she's securing \$100,000 for the kitchen ... even (Brisbane City Councillor) Graham Quirk has been a really good support lately."

Looking over the plans to revitalise an icon of the area he was born and raised in, Robbie says the project is a way to leave his mark on a community that's so close to his heart.

"The mountain should be for everybody," he says. "When we achieve this I can say I did something and the rest of the community can benefit from it.

"We jumped a lot of hoops the past 10 years but for the outcome we're trying to achieve, I'd do it all again."



IF YOU BUILD IT Robbie Williams has big plans for the Mt Gravatt lookout. Check out his vision below.