

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE CROWN CEMETERY DEVELOPMENT, VARROVILLE
(MACARTHUR MEMORIAL PARK)**

My name is Jorge Montano, a certified Professional Mechanical Engineer, and religious and civic Filipino community leader. Campbelltown has been home to me and my family for almost 33 years now. I am deeply involved in local community activities and have founded several community associations to help Filipino women and families in need. The Filipino and Friends Parish Association of Campbelltown Area which I organised more than 20 years ago have helped families where a loved one passed away. We extend grief and bereavement support through community prayers, organising funerals and cemetery services according to their capabilities.

Of the 5,600 Filipino residents in Campbelltown Local Government Unit, 82% are Catholics, the highest percentage in any LGU compared to the state average of 80%.

As a community, we are deeply religious and observe traditions and customs in honouring our dead in a spiritual way. We appreciate the celebration of the Filipino All Soul's Day in the cemeteries, and thus, cemeteries are very relevant to our community.

We also celebrate some religious devotions, such as the Feast of Santo Nino, the patron of many Filipinos, Filipino saint, San Pedro Calungsod, Good Friday observance of the passion and death of Jesus, the celebration of the twin hearts of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Jesus, and others. These celebrations if held in the cemetery is very relevant to our religious belief.

I have seen the proposed development plan of the Crown Cemetery for MacArthur Memorial Park at Varroville and I am impressed. We welcome the proposal for a Filipino section where we can keep generations of families together as a matter of culture and religious belief.

Notably, the location is very accessible to the local community in Campbelltown and MacArthur districts. I ask the members of the Commission if the Development Application is not approved, would it be fair for the communities to travel far from the area where they live to visit their loved ones? My family makes it weekly ritual to visit the graves of our loved ones at Leppington.

When we settle in Campbelltown almost 33 years ago, we found the area a good place to raise a family. Though it had 6 Catholic churches, the district did not have a cemetery where we can bury our departed loved ones. It is our culture to protect our families from costs and emotions, so, we bought burial plots at a cemetery at Leppington. During that time, it only costs \$650.00 per burial plot for single interment. If you want to bury 2 in one plot, you have to upgrade your contract and pay additional. We all know the law of supply and demand, and have seen the growing prices of burial plot at Leppington, rising at an average of 5% annually. Nowadays, the same burial plot cost at least \$7,000.

The supply of burial plots at Leppington is not infinite, and may not last for 20 years. During the last 6 months, we have recorded 20 Filipino residents that died in our area. Where do you want our communities to go? This is actually an ongoing problem for members of our community. While most of us have bought burial plot at Leppington, this is not true for our children now married and have families of their own. Simply the cost of burial plots at Leppington has gone up prohibitively.

We expect that burial plots at MacArthur Memorial Park Varroville, will be affordable to all, being a not for profit organisation - a cheaper alternative to privately owned operated profitable cemetery in Leppington. What more, it is very accessible from where most of us live.

The proposed parklands that will be developed in Varroville make it a community based modern cemetery that will provide recreational areas for the public to use. We welcome these recreational facilities for all communities per development proposal will be preserved. It truly is a modern cemetery that will be part of the history of Campbelltown.

Honourable members of the Commission, members of our community came to Australia as Engineers, Doctors, Nurses, Teachers, Technicians, Electricians, Mechanics, Dentists, Plumbers, Carers, fitters and even priests for our parishes, and hospitals and more. You see us in government service. You see us in all walks of life making a contribution to the community and will continue to make contribution and be responsible members of our communities. But today, may we please our request through this commission, to please provide the Filipino community and the greater Australian community of Campbelltown and MacArthur of an affordable and easily accessible cemetery in Campbelltown where we can lay our dearly departed loved ones to rest,

The Filipino community strongly supports the proposed development of Crown Cemeteries Varroville, the MacArthur Memorial Park.

I thank the members of the Commission for giving me this opportunity.

Thank you.

Jorge Montano

- Glenfield in the North.

Festivals^[edit]

- Festival of Fisher's Ghost: Held annually in the Campbelltown CBD every November. Campbelltown's biggest Festival and one of the longest running Festivals in Australia, dating back to 1956. Featuring 10 days of family fun with more than 30 events, including a grand parade of community groups a street fair, music gigs and fireworks.
- Ingleburn Alive! Festival: Held annually in Oxford Road in the Northern suburb of Ingleburn in March. Free entertainment, rides and family activities, usually followed by a firework display in Milton park.
- Riverfest, held annually in August in Koshigaya Park, to raise awareness of the city's local environment and cultural diversity.

| Campbelltown City - Total persons (Usual residence) | | 2016 | | 2011 | | Change | |
|---|--------|------|------------------|--------|-----|------------------|--------------|
| Ancestry | Number | % | Greater Sydney % | Number | % | Greater Sydney % | 2011 to 2016 |
| Indian | 8,588 | 5.5 | 4.0 | 5,468 | 3.7 | 2.9 | +3,120 |
| Filipino | 5,692 | 3.6 | 2.1 | 4,936 | 3.4 | 1.9 | +756 |
| Chinese | 4,894 | 3.1 | 10.1 | 3,338 | 2.3 | 8.2 | +1,556 |
| Samoan | 4,587 | 2.9 | 0.5 | 3,556 | 2.4 | 0.4 | +1,031 |
| Fijian | 2,081 | 1.3 | 0.5 | 1,478 | 1.0 | 0.5 | +603 |
| Spanish | 1,810 | 1.2 | 0.8 | 1,524 | 1.0 | 0.7 | +286 |
| Maori | 1,724 | 1.1 | 0.5 | 1,573 | 1.1 | 0.5 | +151 |
| Maltese | 1,662 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 1,707 | 1.2 | 1.2 | -45 |
| Vietnamese | 1,412 | 0.9 | 2.2 | 930 | 0.6 | 1.8 | +482 |
| Tongan | 1,271 | 0.8 | 0.3 | 1,010 | 0.7 | 0.3 | +261 |
| Lao | 1,245 | 0.8 | 0.2 | 1,105 | 0.8 | 0.1 | +140 |

| Campbelltown City - Total persons (Usual residence) | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|-----|---------------------|--------|-----|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Ancestry | 2016 | | | 2011 | | | Change 2011 to 2016 |
| | Number | % | Greater Sydney % | Number | % | Greater Sydney % | |
| Chilean | 1,073 | 0.7 | 0.3 | 1,004 | 0.7 | 0.3 | +69 |
| — Khmer (Cambodian) | 808 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 595 | 0.4 | 0.3 | +213 |
| Thai | 694 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 424 | 0.3 | 0.4 | +270 |
| — Indonesian | 650 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 450 | 0.3 | 0.4 | +200 |
| Korean | 254 | 0.2 | 1.3 | 149 | 0.1 | 1.1 | +105 |
| Argentinian | 236 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 220 | 0.2 | 0.1 | +16 |
| Japanese | 187 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 158 | 0.1 | 0.3 | +29 |
| — Timorese | 153 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 113 | 0.1 | 0.0 | +40 |
| — Papua New Guinean | 79 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 53 | 0.0 | 0.0 | +26 |
| — Taiwanese | 51 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 18 | 0.0 | 0.1 | +33 |
| — Singaporean | 28 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 18 | 0.0 | 0.0 | +10 |