Green Bans anniversary looks to the future

One of the surviving protesters of the movement, Joe Owens, said he was shocked at the lack of action the current government had undertaken to revive what was achieved by Green Bans.

"The Labor party nowadays, you never hear anyone talk about the Green Bans," Mr Owens said.

"It’s a bitter disappointment that the Labor government, under Gillard, hasn’t done more to change the laws again."

Mr Bonetto said the artistic project celebrating the history of Green Bans was designed to propel the memory of the movement and its message.

As part of the event, the organising aim to continue the memory of Green Bans beyond the walks and galleries by distributing a map of the movement’s history.

Mr Bonetto said the map is an "ongoing facility for people of the community to come and experience the history of the green bans movement."

Ms Holder said: "We will be asking for people and community to give feedback about what should be protected."

"The art project will stop but we want people to still do the walk."

Residents walk through history

By Nicholas Jordan

Residents and history buffs walked along Sydney streets last weekend to celebrate the anniversary of the historic Green Bans movement.

The artists and original members of the 70’s movement, who collaborated to create a nostalgic tour of the movement’s important sites, spent last Saturday emphasizing the importance of the Green Bans movement to Sydney’s past and its future.

Jack Munday, who led the NSW Builders’ Labourers Federation (BLF) to prevent affordable housing and heritage sites from being developed, said Green Bans history must be remembered because of its political significance.

"It’s important that we keep alive these real human stories of what could have been a disaster if it weren’t for the action," he said.

Jo Holder from Cross Arts, who co-organised the event, said the BLF’s struggle in the 70’s had a huge social and political impact.

"It influenced the introduction of the Heritage Act and the Environmental Protection Act and a new court—the Land and Environment Court," she said.

"Most important, it entrenched in law that communities have a say.

"Last decade we have seen an erosion of these principles. Erosion of community consultation... these have to be constantly defended." 

Deigo Bonetto from Bigfaggpress, who helped set up the historic walks, said the Green Bans movement was crucial in integrating community consultation into the government planning process.

Mr Bonetto said the empowerment of community consultation that came out of the movement has lost its significance today.

"The way community consultation is taken in development applications is tokenistic."

Green Ban Arts Walk