

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

COVERING DULWICH HILL, ENMORE, LEWISHAM,
SYDENHAM, TEMPE, & PARTS OF NEWTOWN,

MARRICKVILLE, PETERSHAM, ST PETERS, STANMORE
CAMPERDOWN & HURLSTONE PARK



OUR NEXT MEETING

MUSEUM OF SYDNEY ON THE SITE OF OLD GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Saturday May 27 10.30 am

Meet at MOS on the corner of Bridge & Phillip Streets at 10.15 for 10.30 entry. Admission \$4.50, \$4 concession (latecomers may have to pay full admission of \$6 as above figure is for a group). Tour is self-guided. Opening hours are 10 to 5.

The foundation plate for *The House That Phillip Built* was laid by Governor Phillip in May 1788 and the house was built by James Bloodworth and his convict band. Nine governors lived there before its demolition in 1846. The museum, evoking a sense of place focusses on the first 60 years of settlement with archeology *in situ*, artefacts found during excavations such as plates, bottles and tools, recreations of colonial life, stories of the indigenous people (the Eora) and a collector's chest.



Old Government House (1840s)

Members may recall coverage of this museum in the December and February newsletters. The plaza was officially opened on Australia Day and Premier Bob Carr will cut the ribbon on the museum later this month, so there is nothing like getting in early to see this important link with Australia's colonial heritage and exciting new addition to Sydney's cultural scene.

ENMORE POST OFFICE

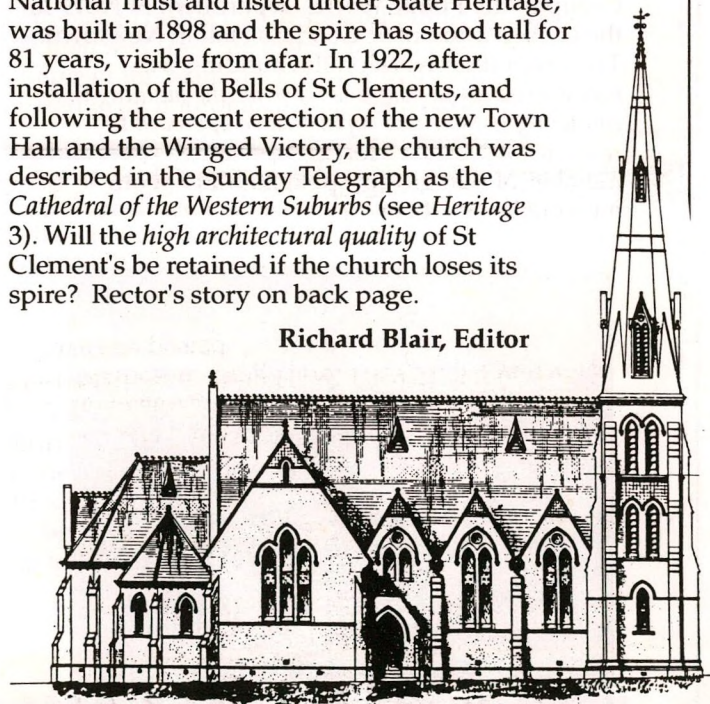
This year marks the centenary of this charming heritage listed Queen Anne style brick and sandstone building on the corner of Enmore and Stanmore Roads. Australia Post has celebrated the occasion by closing the post office with the probable view to selling the building. On April 7 the beautiful original cast metal lettering set on sandstone was removed. The legality of this action is in question and Marrickville Council has been approached with the view to having the metal letters restored and a conservation plan drawn up.

CLEMENCY FOR A SPIRE!

If you've lived around Marrickville for long you would have seen the St Clement's Anglican Church spire countless times, but alas, maybe for not much longer. There is a rich irony that the lofty spire on St Clement's is facing possible removal when the new Parish Centre attached to this church was recently the proud recipient of the inaugural Marrickville Medal. Trevor Howells, chairman of the award jury, noted that the new Centre stood out like *a beacon on a moonless night* and is *a contemporary building sensitive in its relationship to an adjacent building of high architectural quality*.

St Clement's Church, which is classified by the National Trust and listed under State Heritage, was built in 1898 and the spire has stood tall for 81 years, visible from afar. In 1922, after installation of the Bells of St Clements, and following the recent erection of the new Town Hall and the Winged Victory, the church was described in the Sunday Telegraph as the *Cathedral of the Western Suburbs* (see Heritage 3). Will the *high architectural quality* of St Clement's be retained if the church loses its spire? Rector's story on back page.

Richard Blair, Editor



St Clement's Church

HERITAGE 1 TO 7 INDEX

The index to issues 1 to 7 of the MHS Journal *Heritage* is now available for a nominal fee of two dollars (extra if posted). The index was compiled by Lynn Beauregard; cover design and layout by Mark Matheson. Ring Harold 569 5183 if you wish to have one posted.

HERITAGE WEEK APRIL 2 - 9

If you were in any doubt that the notion of *Heritage* is still only a buzzword, you would have been dissuaded by picking up a newspaper and seeing the many notices of *What's On* during **Heritage Week**. Trying to dovetail the activities of MHS, Council's Heritage Promotions and the National Trust took some juggling, but here were some of our highlights!

On Sunday the 2nd, Jennifer Hill, conservation architect showed what is planned for restoration, in stages, of the Old Marrickville Town Hall for its reincarnation as the **Jessie Street Library**.

On Wednesday the 5th the Museum of Contemporary Art was the venue for the second annual **Sydney Electricity National Trust Heritage Awards**. In the community group category MHS entered with its publications for 1994 - the newsletters and *Heritage 8*, the journal. We were not successful, however congratulations go to Professor Joan Kerr (former MHS speaker) and her husband, Dr James Kerr who won the major award for their role in the conservation movement in Australia. Who will ever forget Joan Kerr as she spoke so fervently from the pulpit of St. Stephen's, Newtown on E T Blacket and his masterpiece?

The government category went to the Heritage Group of the Public Works Department of NSW for the conservation of St George's Hall in Newtown. The restoration work on the building was recognised as *an adaptive reuse for the building in an eminently useable and sophisticated approach to conservation*. Anne Morris, sandstone expert and a member of that group, spoke to MHS at our meeting last October.



*St George's Hall, King Street, Newtown
(in early times)*

On Thursday the 6th several MHS members viewed the range of historic material comprising the **Ray Sowden Series** donated to Marrickville Library by the Sowden family in 1994. The collection is a valuable researcher's tool and members were impressed with the scope of material and dedication obviously involved in acquiring it. Access can be arranged through Local

Studies Librarian Cheryl Flynn on 335 2170. Our thanks to Cheryl for organising this visit.

Saturday the 8th was a busy day and local activities included a heritage discussion in Newtown Square of King Street and Enmore Road urban design study issues, a tour of the **Mastertouch Piano Roll Company** in Petersham and a **Newtown Heritage Walk** conducted by Bruce Baskerville whilst MHS stalwart Geoff Ostling led two identical walks around the **Petersham North Heritage Precinct** (see separate report).

That evening about 30 members attended Marrickville Town Hall for the inaugural presentation of the **Marrickville Medal**. Trevor Howells, senior lecturer in conservation architecture and chairman of the award jury said *these awards are about excellence in the conservation of, or additions to, old buildings or in new buildings set in an historic context*. The 1995 Medal went to a new building, St Clement's Parish Centre (architect Peter Armstrong) in Marrickville Road adjoining the 1898 church. Trevor described it as *a fine example of how new, good quality buildings can make a very important contribution to the cultural heritage of Marrickville*.

Two commendations were made, firstly for the restoration of Petersham Park Bandstand where the original fabric was retained, missing brackets reconstructed and the original colour scheme re-established; secondly to *Beauchamp Villa*, private home of MHS members Tony and Judy Deguara, who did all their own restoration work and demonstrated extraordinary commitment, energy and respect for the original. (Coincidentally sketches, by Tony Deguara, of both these structures appear on the MHS application brochure). Other finalists were *Catherine House*, a new addition to the Salvation Army's hostel in Frazer Street, Marrickville; conversion of federation warehouse to *Brianna Apartments* in Camperdown; and restoration of *Gates House* in Petersham by Peter Graves.

On Sunday the 9th Council Archivist Rhona Clement and Local Studies Librarian Cheryl Flynn led about 40 people on a walking tour of the **Abergeldie Estate** in Dulwich Hill. Formerly the site of an imposing Italianate two storey mansion owned by Sir Hugh Dixon and demolished in the late 1920s, the Estate provides a wonderful example of housing styles and trends of the 1920s and 1930s. Marrickville Council has a Development Control Plan for the Estate which is a Heritage Conservation Area.

On Tuesday the 11th some MHS members went to the marvellous MacLaurin Hall at Sydney University for the inaugural **National Trust Lecture** delivered by Justice Michael Kirby. He said that worldwide there was a revival of concern about *the right to conserve, develop and share the culture which we have inherited... In NSW stronger planning controls and more sympathetic laws were still needed... The State was fortunate to have as Premier and as Leader of the Opposition two politicians who each have a deep and sincere commitment to the broad objectives of the National Trust and its members*.

Richard Blair

OUR LAST MEETING

THE RISE AND RISE OF MARY REIBEY AS TOLD BY NANCE IRVINE

On Saturday 22 April historian and author Nance Irvine, OAM addressed about 60 members and friends about the woman on the twenty dollar note, Mary Reibey (as in *maybe* and you're in **big** trouble with Nance if you pronounce it in any other way!). Nance related the story of Molly Haydock (born 1777) in her early teens disguising herself as a boy named James Borrow and in 1791 stealing a thoroughbred horse which Nance likened to stealing a Porsche today. For this *heinous* crime she/he was transported to the new colony but before boarding, her true identity was discovered during the delousing procedure. Arriving in 1792, she married Thomas Reibey in 1794, settled in the Hawkesbury and together they acquired considerable land, started up businesses and had seven children. Becoming a widow in 1811 Mary went on to become our first successful business-woman through importing, banking and property development. She built houses in Tasmania, the city of Sydney and elsewhere before settling at Reibey House in Newtown and building what later became known as Stanmore House in Enmore.

Nance's story was a twofold one; the second concerned tracking down the facts (including being presented in London with a box of the trial papers resulting in Mary's conviction) and discovering long lost Reibey letters, many found in attics. This resulted in meeting a host of Reibey/Haydock descendants and writing two books *Mary Reibey, Molly Incognita* (1982) and *Dear Cousin, The Reibey Letters* (1992) just re-published by Hale & Iremonger. One of Nance's problems was to separate fact from fiction and she stressed the importance of always checking the source. Many thanks to Nance (who is a new member of MHS) for her very interesting and often amusing presentation. Thanks also to Richard Blair for organising the talk just days before Nance flew to England in search of more Reibey letters!

Betty Langshaw

IRVINE ON REIBEY FOOTNOTES

- During Nance's April 22 talk she enjoined her audience to picture the scene at Port Jackson when Mary arrived in 1792. Sprightly MHS member Les Fairbairn sitting in the front row nodded, whereupon Nance asked *Les were you there?*
- At the recent booklaunch of *Dear Cousin* a presenter remarked that such was the importance of Mary Reibey that perhaps she should have been depicted on the hundred dollar note. Quick as a flash Nance said *no, she'd never be seen, she's better off on the twenty!*
- When questioned about Mary's religion, Nance said that Mary attended St Peters Anglican Church and that her grandson Archdeacon Thomas Reibey (later Premier of Tasmania) preached there. MHS member Laurel Horton stated the church has records of Mary paying pew rents and other fees.
- *Dear Cousin* can be purchased through the Society for \$13 (\$4 less than the retail price). *Mary Reibey - Molly Incognita* can also be obtained for \$12.

Richard Blair

PETERSHAM NORTH HERITAGE WALK AEROPLANES & PONIES

The first gusts of autumn wind failed to cool the enthusiasm of the 60 members and visitors who, ably led by Geoff Ostling, enjoyed an interesting and informative walk on Saturday, 8 April (the walk was repeated for another 20 after lunch). Armed with detailed sheets on the history of the area we set off from Petersham Town Hall, our first stop being an unexpected invitation from the owner of an 1870s house in Crystal Street, whose unusually painted walls and ceilings are being restored. Down Terminus Street to the delightful old postmaster's home which now houses an amazing treasure trove of antiques, pictures and memorabilia. Then on to the exterior location of the ABC GP series (not a doctor in sight!) and from here we tried to visualise the Petersham Racecourse grandstand which in the 1840s stood opposite. Hence *ponies!*

Morning tea was taken at the former United States Consul's house (1884) where Geoff conveyed the vast extent of WC Wentworth's estate. Member Peter Maclaren invited us to inspect his semi, charmingly restored to its original state (see *Heritage 7*) after which we paused to admire the fine 1902 Petersham Park rotunda. Across the park to the former Lewisham Hospital and the site of the 1946 plane crash which resulted in three fatalities. We then savoured the tranquillity of the 1920s Chapel of the Maternal Heart of Mary and were treated to an impromptu a cappella Easter chant.

Back through the park past the World War 1 Memorial Gates, removed from the original Petersham Town Hall before our last stop, the Italianate Petersham Railway station. Entering from the steps in Terminus Street and walking along the long disused platform, we viewed the recently restored overpass which members of MHS fought to save from mutilation (see *Heritage 8*). A welcome drink and delicious lunch at the White Cockatoo Hotel (formerly called the Carrington) concluded this most enjoyable outing. Our thanks to the home owners who kindly allowed us to trundle through their properties, to Shirley Hilyard for being chief nametaker and to Geoff for organising such an illuminating walk.

Shirley Doolan

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SATURDAY MAY 27 10.30 AM

Museum of Sydney on the site of the First Government House

Visit the newly opened museum
(see front page).

SATURDAY JUNE 24 10.30 AM

Annual General Meeting

We look forward to a good roll up at this most important meeting. Here's your chance to get more involved with running the Society by becoming a committee member. Champers and sandwiches to follow.

SATURDAY JULY 22

Francis Greenway in the country with Clive Lucas

Last July Clive led us on a tour of *Greenway in the city*. Join Clive for the sequel when we venture by coach to Windsor and Liverpool to complete the study of Macquarie's man Greenway and his elegant buildings.

CLASSICAL CONCERTS

The end of Autumn is being marked by no less than three concerts on the same afternoon, Sunday May 28. Firstly, at St James Church in the city at 4 pm (MHS member) Nigel Butterley's 60th Birthday concert (\$20, \$10 concession).

St Peters Anglican Church Cooks River invites you to their 4.30 pm concert with string group led by Brian Strong playing the Capriol Suite by Peter Warlock; Andrew Carras playing Saint Saens Clarinet Sonata and solo pieces for saxophone, accompanied by Beryl Potter (donation \$2 to St Peters Pipe Organ Restoration Appeal).

The Prescott Hall in Newington College at 3 pm is the venue for the second recital in the Prescott Series with a selection of favourite trios, duets and song from the Romantic masters featuring mezzo-soprano Narelle Tapping; Paul Wang, piano and Christopher Emerson, viola (\$15, \$8 concession, children accompanied by adult free).

MISSING HORSE TROUGHS

A once familiar sight in our streets was the horse trough, but according to *Marrickville People & Places* (p 32) there are only three troughs left in the Marrickville area at Camperdown Park (formerly in Glebe), John Street Plaza, Petersham (formerly outside the Newington Inn) and on the corner of Gordon and Trafalgar Streets, Petersham (donated by the Annis & George Bills Trust in the 1930s).

MHS member Stan Bales has advised of another which stood outside Petersham Scout Hall in New Canterbury Road until about 30 years ago. Member Ian Phillips recalls others outside

the former Masonic Hall near the corner of Livingstone and Marrickville Roads and at Enmore

Park near Leicester Street. Cheryl Flynn has a photo of what could have been a trough outside the Livingstone Hotel in Petersham. Enquiries by her with council park staff has failed to reveal the whereabouts of bygone troughs, but the question remains *what became of them?* Do members have other trough recollections? Ring Richard 557 3823.

ST CLEMENT'S CHURCH SPIRE

One of the major landmarks around Marrickville is the St Clement's church spire, completed in 1914 and almost 41 metres above street level. It was one of the first church spires in Sydney to be constructed on a steel framework, which is covered with timber, which in turn is covered with zinc tiles. Now the zinc has corroded and there is dry rot in the timber, so it all needs to be replaced. Heritage architect Paul Davies estimates the cost of spire restoration is about \$180,000.

The condition of the spire has deteriorated to the extent that it could become dangerous to the public and further temporary repairs are a waste of money. Paul Davies believes the church has only two options - a) complete restoration, or b) removal of the spire and capping the brick tower with an appropriate copper roof (and as the bells of St Clement's are in the brick tower, the bells would not be threatened by removal of the spire). The church has applied to the NSW Heritage Council for help, preferably for complete restoration of the spire or its removal on public safety grounds.

Rev Chris Clerke, Rector

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Virginia Kaiser, Marrickville; Pippa Preston, Newtown; Carol Phillips, Enmore; Nance Irvine, Glebe; Barbara Beasley, Petersham; Margaret & Hans Kettniss, Stanmore; Eddie & Aspasia Rossides, Enmore; Ian Kirk, Drummoyne; Marie & Charles Wickens, Petersham; Elva & David Blair, Gordon.

HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Membership is \$6 for seniors, pensioners or students, \$12 for individuals or senior couples, and \$18 for households. Subscriptions renewable each July. Members receive a monthly newsletter and the Society's annual journal *Heritage*.

Meetings on the fourth Saturday of each month.

Write to PO Box 415 Marrickville 2204
or ring Richard 557 3823

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