

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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

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



OUR NEXT MEETING -

**FRED DALY -
THE POLITICIAN WHO LAUGHED
SATURDAY NOVEMBER 26, 10.30 AM
PETERSHAM PARK ROTUNDA**



At the end of 1975 Jim Killen (former federal Liberal MP) telegraphed Fred Daly (ex Labour Member for Grayndler) best wishes on his retirement:

.....Parliament will certainly be dull without you. I will always recall with immense pleasure twenty years of vigorous conflict. If you arrive in heaven before me plead vigorously on my behalf. I fear I will need your intervention. Regards.

Fred replied:

Many thanks for your telegram. Expect to resume career in heaven as Leader of the House and in political terms expect to have numbers to elevate you to archangel without any left wing. Sorry for delay in replying but no staff means have to think for myself. Cheerio.

This depicted both the friendly rivalry of past political foes and their sense of humour, rather lacking in today's political arena.

At our final meeting for the year we are to be honoured with the presence of Frederick Michael Daly, AO, born in 1913 at Currabubula, who served in the Australian Parliament for 32 years from 1943 to 1975. He served under 10 prime ministers, was Opposition Whip, later Minister for Administrative Services and Leader of the House in the Whitlam Government.

Fred has written 3 books and visitors to Canberra, where he lives, can take the Fred Daly Mystery Bus Tour, a witty and sometimes biting critique of our political capital. Come along on the 26th to the rotunda and meet the 'politician who laughed'.

SOCIETY CHRISTMAS PICNIC

After the stimulating political insights laced with the odd anecdote from Fred, we will be entertained by the Fort Street High School Band which will play for us between noon and 1pm. We will then get to the really serious part of the day, our annual Christmas picnic. Bring a picnic lunch and drinks. All this at the restored rotunda near Station Street, Petersham. We trust there will be a good roll up of old and new members on this festive occasion.



POT LUCK CHRISTMAS DINNER SATURDAY DECEMBER 10, 7PM

Our sixth annual member's dinner where we ask you to bring a plate of food and BYO drinks, will be held at the home of Lesley and Ed Jones in Petersham. A leg of ham and fruit punch will be provided. Drinks can be partaken from 7 and the smorgasbord will commence about 8. For details phone Angela on 564 6370 between 8 & 10 weeknights or at the weekend and advise her what (food) you will bring.

ST STEPHEN'S RESTORATION - WHAT IS NOW TO BE DONE?

(Tamsyn concludes her review of progress at St Stephen's).

The spire. This has not yet been touched. It needs complete repointing, the replacement of many seriously decayed stones and the repair or replacement of nearly all the decorative carving, including the large floral finial which should surmount the spire but which became so dangerous that it had to be removed. The cost of recarving and replacing the finial alone is about \$10,000 so this part of the project may have to wait for years.

The walls. Many areas need repointing. The water that seeps in through the mortar causes damage to the interior surfaces, which is particularly apparent on the east wall of the chancel. The damage is intensified where there are carved mouldings, particularly around the doorways where the details of the beautiful 19th century workmanship are rapidly being lost forever.

The windows. In many places the carved tracery needs repointing and repair. Damaged tracery puts an extra strain on the glass and lead of the windows. In the process of scrubbing the western wall, John Diesendorf examined and photographed three fine stained glass windows not usually accessible and discovered many small breaks caused by failure of the windows' lead skeleton.

The drainage. The whole system of roof and ground drainage is inadequate and needs careful engineering and replacement.

St Stephen's, Newtown has been granted \$50,000 Heritage Assistance which the parish must meet with \$35,000, but complete restoration of the church would require much more.

Tamsyn Taylor



OTHER 1994/95 NSW HERITAGE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM LOCALLY APPROVED PROJECTS

Marrickville Uniting Church - repairs to the historic 1880 Jackson pipe organ (\$97,500)

Petersham Anglican Church - prepare conservation plan & work on All Saints Church (\$15,000)

Petersham Baptist parish - conservation study of church, hall & manse at Lewisham (\$3,700)

Marrickville Council - development control plans for heritage retail areas in Petersham, Dulwich Hill & Stanmore (\$7,000); brochure on architectural & social history of migrant settlement (\$4,000); further restoration work to Marrickville Town Hall (\$15,000).

WANTED - ORAL HISTORIANS

Some of our members will recall the February 1992 meeting where Rosemary Block, State Library Project Officer, spoke about oral history, which is a picture of the past in people's own words. Such recollections are generally recorded on tape.

In preparation for **Heritage 9**, Geoff Ostling is keen to hear from anyone with a story to tell whether it be their version of the plane crash in Petersham, the day World War 2 ended, memories of now demolished buildings or say working as a tram conductor on the old 'toast racks'. More recent events and younger interviewees are just as important in oral history terms.

Geoff is equally keen to recruit interviewers, either with experience or a keen interest. Phone Geoff on 568 3029.

Richard Blair

OUR LAST MEETING -

SYDNEY'S HERITAGE IN SANDSTONE

On Saturday October 22, the Society was addressed by Anne Morris and George Proudman from the Public Works Department Heritage Group.

Only in the 1960s did downtown Sydney lose its sandstone character, with the Cahill Expressway hiding the low sandstone buildings around Circular Quay and high-rise buildings changing the landscape. Stoneworkers arrived with the First Fleet. In the early 19th century Francis Greenway developed the masons' skills and the improvement can be traced in buildings at various stages of the period.

After the goldrushes with the displacement of masons trained and experienced on the rebuilding of Westminster Parliament, a new generation of masons arrived. As Federation approached, Australian motifs were often carved in a spirit of great confidence and optimism, as at the old Technological Museum in Harris Street, Ultimo.

The immigrant masons trained the apprentices who worked through the early part of the twentieth century, but then the craft dwindled until George Proudman reintroduced "banker" work (that is, the carving of blocks on a bench).

The Public Works Department now has a major stonework program coordinated by Anne Morris. The Chief Secretary's building has recently been finished, but there are another 500 to 600 buildings in NSW that are significant for their sandstone. To treat them as is really needed might cost the State \$5 million a year for some 20 years.

Many thanks to Anne and George for a most informative and illuminating presentation.

George Gibbons

RACHMANINOV LIVE AT DENIS CONDON'S



Many experiences can be entertaining, informative or memorable but few can be all three. On Friday, October 14, twenty nine members and friends of the MHS had such an experience. Our host was Denis Condon at whose Newtown home we gathered to hear a night of Russian music on his (non-foot propelled) reproducing pianos.

These pianos are similar to pianolas in that they use rolls to reproduce a sound. Pianola rolls 'tell' a piano which note to play and when to play it. However, reproducing piano rolls also control volume, which significantly improves the quality of the sound produced. The soul of both the music and the pianist is captured because these rolls recorded how pianists such as Vera Timanoff, Frederick Lamond (both pupils of Liszt), Percy Grainger, Vladimir Horowitz and Rachmaninov actually played and interpreted music composed by Tchaikovsky, Glinka, Rubinstein and Prokofiev.

Several kinds of reproducing pianos were demonstrated: a set of 'fingers', controlled by a roll, that was wheeled up to a grand; a baby grand which looked no different to a piano except that it had a drawer below the keyboard into which the roll was inserted; and a third kind (the Welte Mignon) which had a keyboard only for tuning purposes and the appearance of an Art Deco sideboard! The power came by electricity which controlled bellows, themselves enchanting to watch.

After 2 hours of music, an inspection of the 'roll room' and a very pleasant supper, we walked into the outside world. But still, in my mind, I could see the keys being depressed on the keyboard - the ghostly touch of long dead composers and pianists.

Angela Phippen

The *Condon Collection* is a range of CDs available for sale both locally and abroad - an ideal Christmas present. This evening was organised by Richard Blair, a member of one of Denis' high school choirs which made a recording of Australian Christmas carols.

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ANSWERS TO 1794 TRIVIA QUIZ

1) **Thomas Paine** who became an American revolutionary writing in 1794 *The Age of Reason* whilst imprisoned by the French. 2) **Nicholas Divine** who died in Petersham in 1830 (not at Parramatta in 1737 as stated in the question, an error by the editor whose face has egg [fresh farm] on it). Owning 120 acres was significant as most settlers were only given 30 acres. 3) **William Blake**, English poet, painter, engraver and mystic in whose work *Songs of Experience* are the famous words *Tyger! Tyger! burning bright*. 4) **Mrs Ann Radcliffe**, English romantic novelist wrote the gothic novel *The Mysteries of Udolpho* later satirised by Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey*.

RAHS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Interesting papers, financial grants and certificates of achievement were all presented at the Royal Australian Historical Society's Annual Conference in Ultimo on October 8-9 at the Hotel Lawson. Our Society was represented by the President and 4 members of the Committee as well as 10 members attending on their own behalf or in other capacities.

Knowing Places, Understanding Spaces was the official theme of the conference. Twelve speakers presented papers with topics ranging from fences to the Sydney of Kenneth Slessor. One of the most interesting was Shirley Fitzgerald, City of Sydney Historian on Pyrmont and Ultimo, particularly as the casino will have a big impact on this often forgotten part of Sydney. Chris Pratten gave a colourful talk on the importance of identifying and recording heritage places with examples from Ashfield.

Judith Matheson, a former President of MHS, was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for *contribution to the successful editorial management of the publications of the MHS*. Judith was nominated by MHS especially for producing a high quality newsletter for a period of 4 years. Her presenter passed the comment that *you don't have to be on your last legs* to receive an award!

The Minister for the Arts, Peter Collins, presented grants to successful applicant Societies under the Cultural Grants Program. Our Society received grants for 2 projects: publication of the index to **Heritage Journals 1-7** and an Aboriginal history of the Marrickville area, planned in co-operation with Marrickville Council.

The conference ended with a stimulating walking tour of Ultimo and the Haymarket conducted by architectural historian Peter Reynolds and theatre historian Kevin Cork. To mix with members from statewide Societies coupled with the diverse range of talks and activities made this a stimulating and enjoyable weekend.

Lindsay Smyth

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 13, FROM 10AM
ANNUAL NEWTOWN FESTIVAL
CAMPERDOWN MEMORIAL REST PARK

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 20, 5.30PM
NEW THEATRE - THEATRE PARTY
542 KING STREET, NEWTOWN \$11

The 1943 Archibald Prize was won by William Dobell whose painting of fellow artist Joshua Smith caused a scandal. Was it a portrait or a caricature? Alan Kelley's dramatic new play *Portrait of an Artist* deals with this scandal and the ensuing court case. Bookings: Shirley 569 1768

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 27, 11AM - 2PM
TEMPE HOUSE OPEN

Six local Heritage Societies join to inspect Tempe House built for Alexander Brodie Spark on Cooks River in 1836. This house, a great rarity in Australian Colonial architecture, was designed by John Verge. Parking and entrance at rear of house from Arncliffe St, Arncliffe. Grounds open 10 - 3. Why not bring a picnic lunch?

EDITORIAL

The Society arranges or is involved in a number of diverse activities. Whilst some of our activities are primarily social, high among the Society's priorities is to organise informative and educational talks and outings of heritage significance.

As a Heritage Society we can effectively act as a lobby group in the *preservation, restoration and conservation.....of buildings, monuments, relics and ruins of historic significance* (from the MHS Constitution). Hence our Classification & Heritage Watch Committee which meets again in November.

As individuals we can also participate by writing letters of support or protest. The retention of the Tram/Bus Depot War Memorial in Tempe is an issue where letters to the Public Transport Union and/or your local State member could be effective.

Should members become aware of *any* issues of heritage significance, do not hesitate in contacting your executive committee or writing to the MHS.

Richard Blair

TEMPE TRAM/BUS DEPOT WAR MEMORIAL UPDATE

A petition signed by 800 residents opposing the memorial's relocation was recently presented to the Member for Marrickville, Dr Andrew Refshauge who has tabled it in State Parliament. On October 13 he put questions (as yet unanswered) to Bruce Baird about ownership of the memorial and whether a heritage study had been conducted.

THE WOMAN ON THE \$20 NOTE

Cross dresser, horse thief, convict, nursemaid - hardly the credentials one would expect to be attributed to the woman pictured on the front of our new \$20 polymer note!



After running away from home and posing as a boy named James Borrow, Mary Haydock (born in 1777 in Lancashire) was transported to Botany Bay in 1792 for 'horse stealing'. At 17 she married Thomas Reibey, a naval officer who became a successful sea trader and businessman. He left Mary a widow with 7 children in 1811, but this was no barrier to her becoming Sydney's first successful businesswoman. She acquired property in The Rocks, Macquarie Place, at Airds (200 acres), Hunters Hill and Newtown. She let her Macquarie Place house in 1817 to the institution the Bank of New South Wales, now called Westpac.

Mary acted as merchant, supervised a wine and spirit enterprise, ran her farms, continued to manage the shipping business and acquired two more ships; she also undertook charity and church work and interested herself in literature, education, politics and town planning.

Mary built Reiby House and Stanmore House in the 1840s. Her Newtown property had a frontage of about 3 kilometres. She lived in Reiby House till her death in 1855. The house was demolished in the 1960s (to make way for flats behind Newtown RSL) but nearby Stanmore House still stands. Reiby Street, Reiby Lane and Reiby Hall continue to bear her name locally as does the Mary Reibey Gallery. Now Mary Reibey is part of our legal tender.

Richard Blair

(*Reibey* is the generally accepted spelling though *Reiby* was in vogue for a long time. In past centuries less attention was paid to such details. Pronunciation also varies between *reebee*, *rybee* and *raybee*. A detailed biography by Nancy Irvine *Mary Reibey - Molly Incognita* is recommended.)