

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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

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



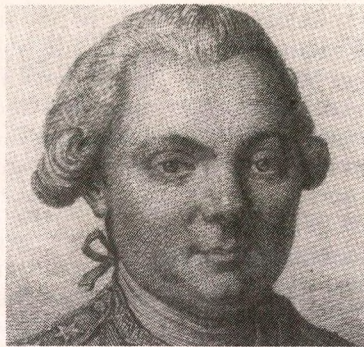
OUR NEXT MEETING

PERUSING LA PEROUSE SATURDAY MARCH 23, 9 AM

Meet at Petersham Town Hall 9 am for 9.15 am (sharp) coach departure. Anticipated return 4 pm in Petersham. Cost \$17, \$12 concession (coach & entrances). Bookings essential: Shirley 569 1768 (please advise if wishing to cancel).

... judge of my surprise on hearing from a sergeant who ran down almost breathless to the cabin where I was dressing, that a ship was seen off the harbours mouth! At first I only laughed ... and hearing him repeat his information, I flew upon deck ...when the cry 'another sail' struck upon my astonished ear. I ... plainly descried two ships of considerable size standing in the mouth of the bay.

So wrote Captain Watkin Tench in his *Narrative of the Expedition*. And the two ships he saw at dawn from the deck of the *Charlotte* just six



Lapérouse

days anchored in Botany Bay? *La Boussole* (compass) and *L'Astrolabe* (astrolabe) of the French scientific expedition of the Pacific, commissioned by Louis XVI and led by Jean-François de Galaup, Count of Lapérouse.

The First Fleet departed for Port Jackson; the French stayed on for six weeks before sailing towards New Caledonia ... and were never seen again! (As Louis XVI went to the guillotine on 21 January 1793, he enquired once more: *At least, is there any news of Monsieur de Lapérouse?*)

The marvellous **Laperouse Museum** housed in the Old Cable Station tells the story of the encounter and the subsequent search by prints, antique maps and early navigation instruments ... and solves the mystery of the ill-fated expedition. After **Bare Island Fort** and lunch, we will visit the **Pioneer Memorial Park** at **Botany Cemetery**, last resting place of colonial citizens including Thomas and Mary Reibey.

FORMER CRONULLA SITE

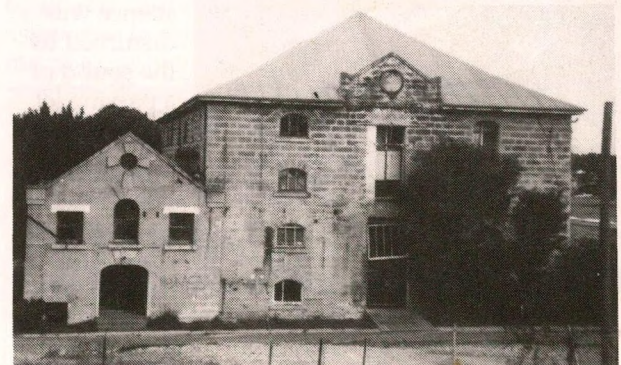
At the Marrickville Council meeting of 20 February, approval was given for the DA on the site (of the former Queen Anne style house *Cronulla*) next to Stanmore House, Enmore to erect two shops with two floors of dwellings above. The site with its approved DA has **since been sold**. Future opportunity to interpret and restore Stanmore House will be seriously compromised and limited.

CANTERBURY SUGAR WORKS

What a wonderful start to 1996 – first the virtual destruction of George Patterson House in early January and then a fire (in the early hours of 13/2/96) guts one of the oldest pre-goldrush factories in Sydney. The 1840 local sandstone Canterbury Sugar Works on the banks of Cooks River is on the Register of the National Estate.

ST CLEMENTS SPIRE APPEAL

On election day MHS had a stall at St Clements Anglican Church, Marrickville near their polling place where we actively promoted the appeal to restore the spire. \$163 was collected at our February meeting. Members still wishing to donate to this worthy appeal may refer to our February newsletter or ring Shirley 569 1768 for details.



1840 Canterbury Sugar Works, July 1995
(photo: Richard Blair)

The future of the building is uncertain, though much of the almost one metre thick walls stood up to the fire. Surely now (not overlooking the St Patricks Cathedral and Colchester Hall, Marrickville fires) it is imperative for the State Government to further ensure the protection of heritage-listed items.

Richard Blair, Editor

1946 LEWISHAM HOSPITAL PLANE CRASH – FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY

In the Chapel of the Maternal Heart of Mary courtyard of the former Lewisham Hospital, 22 people gathered at 9.30 am on Wednesday 31 January. It was exactly 50 years since a Royal Navy Firefly plane crashed into the kitchen of Ward 26 killing three people – the RN Observer, Petty Officer Butterworth and two young kitchen staff, Iris Thompson and Jack Smith. The pilot, Sub-Lieutenant Ratcliffe had parachuted from the out-of-control plane to safety (details of the crash in the February newsletter).

The three sisters of Iris Thompson came to the ceremony – Joyce Smith, Lorna Aldridge and Bev O'Brien. Also present were three people with vivid memories of the event – Dr Eleanor Nixon, part of an operating team in a nearby theatre, Sister Maree Loadsman, a nun from the Little Company of Mary (the Blue Nuns), who had to control her own feelings to comfort distressed patients, and Ada Boes, who saw the spiralling plane whilst cycling towards the hospital. She encountered the pilot who was walking towards the scene, most concerned for his Observer and what he was going to find.

Richard Blair, who arranged the ceremony, and Harold Welsh read newspaper reports of the crash. From *No One Dies Alone* on the history of the Little Company of Mary, Shirley Hilyard read the hospital diary entry for 31/1/46. Much praise was given to the Blue Nuns by the Papal Nuncio for devotion to their calling. Christina Rossetti's poem *Remember* with its beautiful sentiments was read by Gwenda Welsh whilst Sister Juliette Karooz, LCM, offered a

prayer for the souls of the deceased and consolation for the living. Observance of one minute's silence was disturbed by the sound of a passing jet plane.

Three posies which seemed to symbolise those killed had been placed on the steps – red



Lewisham plane crash aftermath
(photo provided by Dr Eleanor Nixon, second from left)

roses for the young Lancastrian, soft red bottlebrush for the two young Australians, and rosemary for all remembrances. The flowers were given to Iris's sisters. We thank the St Vincent de Paul Society for allowing us to have the ceremony on their site and Richard Blair for enabling us to remember. A letter has gone to Marrickville Council advocating a commemorative plaque be placed near the crash site.

Mary Tait

OUR LAST MEETING

DR KEN CABLE ON THE SYDENHAM VILLAGE AREA

Like a rescue archaeologist, Dr Ken Cable, Emeritus Professor of Modern History at the University of Sydney and former President of the Royal Australian Historical Society was one of those commissioned by the Federal Airports Corporation to undertake an historical and architectural study of those specific parts of Sydenham slated for demolition.

As guest speaker at our meeting on 24 February, Dr Cable gave us a riveting summary of his findings, skilfully interweaving historical records, oral history and topography to produce a startling insight into the social development of Sydenham. Suddenly, *Sydenham* made sense. We had a vision of gentlemen's Arcadian villas stretching lazily along the Cooks River Road, surrounding and sustaining the *old English* parish church of St Peters, but gradually giving way to urban development.

Dr Cable revealed how new industry and the advent of trains and trams impacted upon the growth of this suburb, which being an island between railway and highway, developed a unique character and sense of community.

Goodbye Sydenham!

David Cass

NEWINGTON NUPTIALS

Long time member Betty Langshaw will marry Alexander Healey at 5 pm on Saturday 30 March. Alex, who is Administrator at Newington College, was once a member of the Marrickville Historical Society (the forerunner to our Society). College Chaplain Peter Swain will conduct the ceremony at the Newington College Chapel. Betty's parents Joyce and Fred Ellis are delighted. The Society's best wishes go to Betty and Alex for a happy life together.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CHANGE

Our thanks go to Avril Chiswell who has resigned from the executive committee for personal reasons. We welcome Robert Hutchinson who has agreed to fill the vacancy.

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HERITAGE 9 – A REFLECTION

In almost half a century of writing, reviewing and researching Australian history, much of it in the local field, I have only now been invited to review a Society's journal in the columns of its newsletter. For me, this is an historic first. The Marrickville Heritage Society's 1995 Journal *Heritage 9* has set a standard that its own future work and that of other Societies will find hard to emulate. This is a very accomplished production and one not easy to assess in a critical spirit.

There are a great many local and regional Societies in New South Wales; the Royal Australian Historical Society numbers more than 250 affiliates. Nearly all do some publishing and most produce a journal. They do so alongside their other activities – lectures, tours, discussions, heritage concerns, sometimes even archives or a museum. A Society which does not become involved in such a range is falling behind. No-one could accuse MHS of neglecting anything within these boundaries. But Marrickville's approach is somewhat different. *Heritage 9* is not simply a series of research articles; it presents a cross-section of everything that it does. Its contents are comprehensive.

Mary Reibey is not only a leading local (as well as colonial) figure but her house (in Enmore) is now a matter of current concern. So Nance Irvine begins the Journal with an account of Mary's life, followed by Elisha Long's article on Stanmore House. In the process, documentary history is served by the text of Mary's last extant letter and heritage conservation by the form in which Long's work is cast.

Oral and personal history is the staple of any Society's work. Here it is presented in Caroline Plim's record of Joyce Allen's memories, by Margaret Phillips' narrative of her 80 years in Marrickville and by Hilda York's recollections of the flight of Ross and Keith Smith. Every Society conducts tours. They are an important, and often profitable aspect of its work. In the middle of *Heritage 9* are (thoughtfully) two copies of a tear-out map of Cooks River with comments and illustrations. Nor do Societies neglect artefacts. Marrickville Library has an *illuminated address* presented to Lilian Fowler, Australia's first woman mayor and a Jack Lang ally. Rod Byatt, himself a calligrapher, describes this wondrous document and its creator.

But history is, after all, a story about the past. Here it is the turn of Scouting. A long article on the Petersham Troop is both intimate and broadly based, reminding readers of the extraordinary success of a movement which, begun in 1907-08, had become immensely popular by the 1920s. From a movement to a man, to the individual in history. Peter Swain tells of Hardy Wilson, architect, heritage pioneer, historian and mystic, and of his association with Newington College. The scout and the seer: both were of general significance yet both had intensely local applications.

Finally, we are brought back to the present and its problems in Mark Matheson's short piece on St Clements church spire. But editor and designer Matheson has been with us all along the way. He has produced a remarkable journal which is a pictorial delight.

Dr Ken Cable (former President, RAHS & Emeritus History Professor at Sydney University)

HERITAGE WEEK 28 APRIL – 5 MAY

Heritage Week is designed to draw attention to Australia's natural, built and cultural heritage and this year's theme is *Interiors*. Local activities will include the Marrickville Medal Award presentation on Friday 3 May and a heritage interiors tour of *Enmore Road and environs* on Saturday 4 May. The MHS April newsletter will have further information about local events.

OBITUARY – BETTY BLATTMAN OAM

We record the death on 30 January 1996 of Betty Blattman of Petersham, a long time member of MHS. At the mass of Thanksgiving for her life celebrated at St Thomas' Lewisham we learned that a very significant part of her life (33 years) was as secretary to the Director of Security with ASIO. Betty was awarded the ASIO Medal and in 1979 the Order of Australia. Betty (along with her brother John) was one of our esteemed *runners* who deliver this Newsletter. Our condolences to John Blattman.

WANTED – HONORARY AUDITOR

The Society has always been fortunate to have an Honorary Auditor from amongst the membership, most recently, Brad Robinson who regrets he will be unable to continue. Thanks to Brad for his assistance in this role since 1992. Would any member, or member's friend, prepared to fill the position, please contact the president John Zinsmeister 550 6447 as soon as possible.

Harold Welsh, Treasurer

AUTUMN TRIVIA

1. In 1885 Dagmar Berne became the first female medical student at Sydney University? She died in 1900. On the 1931 St Peters map reproduced in the February newsletter are two streets, probably named after her. Dagmar Street has disappeared and only a portion of Berne Street remains. Why and when were these streets were so named? Did Dagmar Berne have a local connection?
2. Why was Ricketty Street so called?

(Ring Richard 557 3823)

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY MARCH 23 9 AM

La Perouse Museum & Bare Island Fort and Pioneer Memorial Park, Botany Cemetery. (by coach).

Details on front page

SATURDAY APRIL 27

Petersham Town Hall

Dr George Gibbons & Chrys Meader on the history of bricks and brickmakers of the Marrickville area.

SATURDAY MAY 25

A walk on the North Side – Historian Shirley Doolan's tour around historic North Sydney.

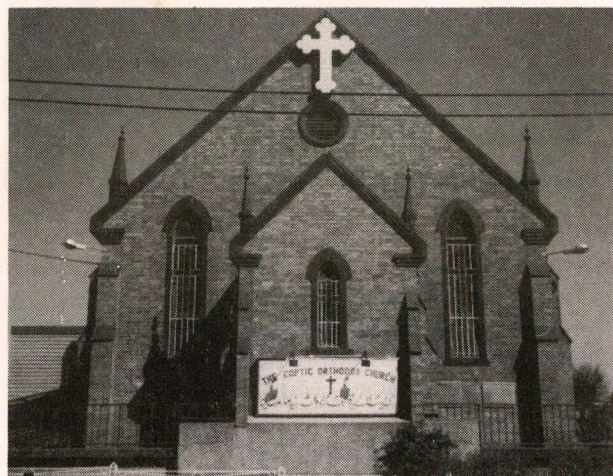
SATURDAY JUNE 22

Annual General Meeting

TEMPE PARK METHODIST CHURCH IN RAILWAY ROAD SYDENHAM – A BRIEF (EARLY) HISTORY

In a general survey of the early history of Tempe Park Methodist Church, there are three outstanding periods: (1) 1884-1902 when it was part of the wide Newtown Circuit; (2) 1902-14 when it was associated with the Stanmore Circuit; and (3) 1914-24 when it became the Principal Church of the Tempe Park Circuit with Tempe (Station Street) as the other church.

Until 1882 all the land between the *Tivoli* and *Marionette* estates, and extending from Cooks River to Unwins Bridge Road was known as Bardens Bullock Paddock. In that year the estate was subdivided, buildings went up rapidly and the population increased proportionally. But there was no place for religious worship. A few young men from Stanmore and Marrickville conducted services in the open air or in the home of William Toyer, notable brickmaker. The success of these services led the Newtown Circuit to form a Board of Trustees which decided to erect a brick church on the back of their allotment to measure 36 by 26 feet. The foundation stone was laid on 11 April 1884 and the church opened on 20 July 1884 at the cost of £527.



The former Coptic Orthodox (previously Tempe Park Methodist) Church, Railway Road Sydenham, December 1995 (photo: Richard Blair)

Congregations were very good from the beginning, but as the population increased, the building proved altogether inadequate and after a few months two classrooms for the Seniors and a large classroom for the Infants were added. This also proved too small for the needs of the people so in 1887 the adjoining allotment was purchased which extended the church twelve feet on the western end. In 1888 the Conference appointed Rev. Aaron Cooper as a single Minister to reside in the locality. Hitherto there had been no resident Minister.

In 1892 a married Minister was appointed. He had not been there very long when the Trustees purchased the adjoining property for a Parsonage. In 1896 four rooms were added and later the corner allotment adjoining the Parsonage was secured for church purposes. This gave a total frontage to Railway Road of 210 feet. Eventually a scheme was submitted showing a plan to build a new Church that would provide ample accommodation for both Church and School at an estimated cost of £1,100.

In 1902 the present church was built and continued to be used until it was sold to the Egyptian Coptic Church in 1969. The church has now been bought by the federal government. In 1970 a new small Tempe Methodist Church was built in Lymerton Street, Tempe which is now the Uniting Church. [source – *Tempe Park Methodist Church Fortieth Anniversary Souvenir* 1924 by Henry Tasker, father of Mrs Joyce Fairbairn]

Leslie Fairbairn (who comes from a pioneering family in the district and wrote the article *Tempe Wesleyanism* in *Heritage* 5)

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Tim & Catherine Bartlett, Frank Smith, Annie Cossins & Romano Crivici, Alexandra & Andrew Loveridge, all of Marrickville; Anne Catton, Mrs Mel Kuhl, both of Stanmore; Virginia Bowen, Newtown; Ken Brock, Glebe; Eileen Piper, Earlwood.

HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Membership is \$8 for concession & seniors, \$14 for individuals & joint concession, and \$20 for households & organisations. Subscriptions renewable in July. Members receive a monthly newsletter and the annual journal *Heritage*. Meetings/outings on the fourth Saturday of each month.

Write to PO Box 415 Marrickville 2204

INFOLINE Shirley 569 1768

NEWSLETTER Richard 557 3823

PRES. & HERITAGE WATCH John 550 6447

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