

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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

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



## OUR NEXT MEETING

### MY FAVOURITE THINGS – ROBERT HUTCHINSON'S AUSTRALIANA

Saturday October 26 10.30 am  
Petersham Town Hall

#### Robert Hutchinson writes:

When I was a little boy, my sister called me a bowerbird (genus *Kidbrothercus collectus junkii*) for all the bits and pieces I collected and brought home; and I haven't stopped! After leaving home in the early 1960s, I would 'buy cheap pieces of furniture to add to the 'furnished' flatettes I rented, and the cheapest pieces then were cedar. How times have changed, although the odd bargain still turns up in the most unlikely places. Patience is a rewarding virtue.



From my collection (photo: Robert Hutchinson)

At our next meeting, I would like to share with you some of my favourite things, collected over 30 odd years. It shows that old bowerbirds don't stop collecting, they just move to bigger bowers.

## ALIGHT AT SPARKS

### COMMUNITY CONSULTATION ON DEVELOPMENT NEAR TEMPE HOUSE

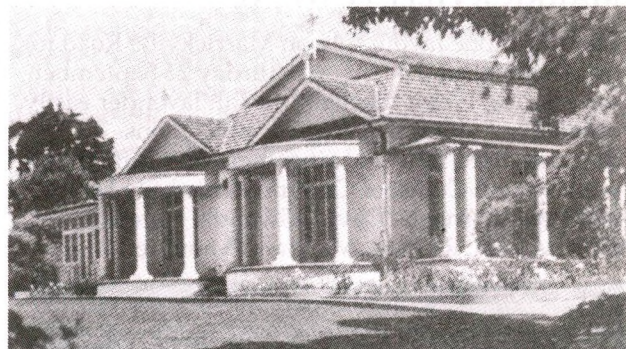
It is ironic that while Sydenham has virtually had its heart ripped out, a new suburb is being created two to three kilometres away. State Rail is building a link railway station where the new City / Airport / East Hills line crosses the Illawarra line beside *Tempe House* (designed by colonial architect John Verge and built in 1836 for Alexander Brodie Spark, it has been described as a *great rarity in Australian architecture*) and on the site of the demolished Boral's Gravelyard (previously the Wolli Creek Tram Depot).

At an Arncliffe community meeting on 16 September, Rockdale Council's Director of Town Planning Diana Cuthbert declared the link station would provide a major

stimulus for development in the area. It is not yet known whether Qantas (who paid \$8 million for *Tempe House*) will join State Rail in this development. But Council is planning to allow a complex of buildings from 8 to 15 storeys to overshadow the irreplaceable *Tempe House* curtilage and wants community feedback on a draft Local Environment Plan. High density office blocks or Meriton-style (double-glazed) housing apartments are said to be commercially feasible with panoramic 180° parkland views, a pedestrian bridge across to Waterworth Park, and a ten minute train ride to the city.

Both Council and Qantas strongly assure us that *Tempe House* and its garden wall will be restored as per Clive Lucas' 1990 Conservation Report, that views between the colonnade of the House and Cooks River will be retained, and that a 30 metre wide strip will be given to the public along the two waterways.

Though one can see positive aspects to this development, one wonders about its impact on *Tempe House*, the Cooks and Wolli waterways and the magnificent nearby bushland. We trust it will be more friendly than the overbearing, oversized development on the curtilage at *Stanmore House* which takes amenity from its surroundings and offers little to the community in return. Whilst State Rail is working around the clock excavating tunnels, Qantas is remaining non-committal and Rockdale Council has revealed no timetable for this massive (over)development. Ring Council Town Planning 9562 1666 if you wish to inquire or comment.



*Tempe House in the 1980's* (photographer: Unknown)

Incidentally, State Rail welcomes community suggestions for the name of the new station. Can you think of a more interesting name than *North Arncliffe*, *Wolli Creek*, *Dharuk*, or *Sparks*?

Mark Matheson

## NEWTOWN FESTIVAL

The festival will be held on **Sunday 10 November** from 10 am as always at Camperdown Memorial Rest Park. Marrickville Heritage Society is having a stall and would love to have new (as well as not so new) faces to help out on the day. Donations of jams, cakes, slices and bric-a-brac are welcome. Please call Angela on 9564 6370 if you would like to assist or have goods picked up.



## 1996 NATIONAL TRUST HERITAGE QUIZ

Well, we **almost** made it! For the last four years the National Trust has held an Australian Heritage Quiz and Marrickville Heritage Society has been represented each time by a team of 'experts' chosen from the members. So we read up on NSW governors, colonial architects, Olympic gold medallists, Archibald Prize and Melbourne Cup winners etc! Held at the S.H. Ervin Gallery on Monday 30 September, Master of Ceremonies was ABC Radio's Philip Clark with six celebrity quizmasters, one for each round of eleven questions. Fine wine and food helped wash down the answers.

*It was definitely 1944, not 1942, when Joshua Smith won the Archibald Prize* whispered Shirley Hilyard. She was right! *The letters GCMG stand for 'Knight Grand Cross of St Michael and St George'*, wrote David Blair on a note handed over the table. He was right too! Only one question related directly to the Marrickville area: *Which railway fitter gave Sydney an opera house (with an extra bonus if you can give his full name)?* The answer was John Joseph Cahill, commonly called Joe, state MP for over 30 years (including 18 as Member for Cooks River) and premier of NSW (1952-59) who worked for the railways before entering parliament.

Out of 27 teams Mitchell Library won with 113 points. Our group (David Blair, Richard Blair, Rod Cox, Shirley Doolan, Shirley Hilyard, Libby Maher, Mark Matheson, and Geoff Ostling) came second just five points behind. As runners up we each received two bottles of wine. Libby also won a luxury weekend for two at Bowral in a raffle for new National Trust members. Thanks to Shirley Hilyard who organised the team for this most enjoyable and fun-filled evening.

Geoff Ostling

## MARRICKVILLE FESTIVAL

The sun shone favourably on Marrickville Road for this multicultural event on Saturday 21 September. Dutch slice, Welsh pikelets and Tait lavender easily outsold our stunning array of publications. A donated dried flower arrangement was raffled and won by Vera Currie of Cronulla. Thanks to MHS stal(l)warts Angela, David, Gwenda, Harold, Shirley, John, Richard, Mary and Margaret.



David Cass & Mary Tait hoisting the banner at Marrickville Festival! (photo: Richard Blair)

## OUR LAST MEETING COOKS RIVER TOUR – WAG OF A DOG'S TALE!

On 28 September about 45 biped vertebrates aged between 1½ and 11 – that's about 10 to 75 human years isn't it? – armed and underarmed with the centrefold of *Heritage 9* wormed downstream from Canterbury to Arncliffe. Mark my words ... some of Mark's words were interesting especially ones like butcher house, Hutton's Smallgoods, piggery, lunch break etc. We passed where Lord Baden-Powell had a cold shower at the Scout jamboree in 1912.

In the olden days (1850s) the Nobbs family lived in a stone cottage which is still there. It seems the old Fig tree down by the river was an obsession with their dogs. So move the tree! Would you believe the river was moved (1943); mean eh! rough! ... ruff! ... bark! Standing still under the still standing, very same tree, in awe we watched white balls (the size of big hailstones) learning tricks. They had to hide in round holes in the grass and if hesitant, were sometimes hit very hard with sticks until they could do it. Some of these ball trainers were later at the golf club where the cook does a great sausage sizzle (especially if buckshee). A 1928 bust of an earlier Cook can be seen around the back peeping through bushes hoping not to become more bust.

Once a popular spot for picnics, boating and swimming, the river became a convenient conduit for waste – at one time it was even subject to raw *peopley-do* and so *not fit for dogs*. People and their houses turned their backs on the river which was inappropriately sent to obedience school to break its instinct to meander. Disciplined by channels etc it was to go as quickly as possible to the sea and beyond.

Slowly vegetation, marine and bird life are returning. New buildings and alterations are now also paying heed to the valley which has certainly seen history – intrigue, scandal, violence, contempt. There were hard economic times (when the river broke the banks) and even the influential Holt's vault lies empty – make no bones about it, there are none! Nun's Cave as it has been known, is an apt description.

At the tail of the tour 90 fetlocks stood outside Spark's beautiful but forlorn 1830s Arcadian villa *Tempe House* amidst the drizzle (which becomes the fluid of the river). We learnt of the planned link railway station and high rise Meriton-style megablocks alongside. Give me a dog's life any time! Thanks to Mark Matheson (with assistance from Danie Ondinea who told us which plants Capt. Cook saw) for a yappy day.

**Princess** (Ian Phillips maintains he merely transcribed the text for his Sheltie dog [which was pictured in the last newsletter as *backpacker extraordinaire*] because her writing paw was too sore from bringing up the stragglers!)

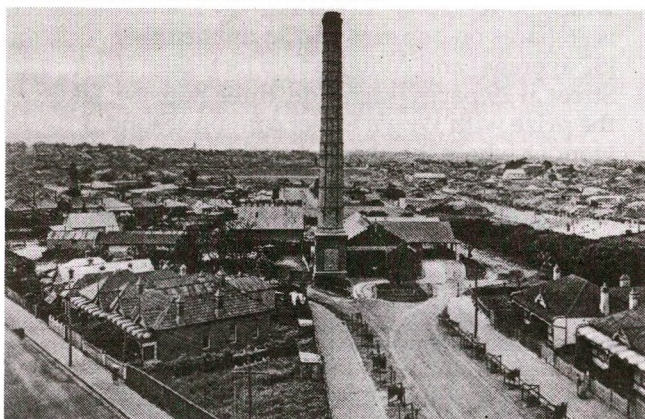


## TALES FROM THE ARCHIVES – MARRICKVILLE GARBAGE DESTRUCTOR

By 1910 the problem of garbage disposal within the Municipality of Marrickville was of considerable concern. Rubbish was previously dumped in a former brick pit Miller's Paddock. Once filled it became Marrickville Oval, and a Fitzroy Street waterhole became the rubbish dump. An increase in resident complaints and a decrease in available open space meant an alternative had to be found.

In June 1911 a Sanitary Committee report suggested incineration as an alternative and recommended that a loan be raised to cover the cost of erecting a destructor. In May 1912 advertisements in the daily press called for tenders for the *construction, erection and completion, including all necessary buildings, of a Garbage Destructor*. Three responses were received.

After the Commonwealth Bank granted a £9,000 loan, Marrickville Council accepted the tender of H.H. Swarbrick and Co. on 8 February 1915 for the erection of a *Meldrum Simplex Three Cell Garbage Destructor* and work commenced one week later.



*Marrickville Garbage Destructor or Incinerator*  
(*'History of the Municipality of Marrickville to Commemorate the Seventy Fifth Anniversary 1861-1936', p 109*)

The garbage destructor was located in Cecilia Street, and within 200 yards of the new Town Hall site at the corner of Marrickville and Petersham Roads – near the Marrickville Depot. The 3 1/2 acres of land obtained was partly occupied by a large abandoned brick pit [Despointes now Jarvie Park] containing ... a considerable amount of water.

The destructor continued to operate until around 1950 when it was shut down and demolished. It is not clear from the archives why this happened. Perhaps Council had been receiving complaints from residents or a more viable method of garbage disposal may have been found. Whatever the reason I can't help wondering what became of the bricks from the demolished destructor?

Cheri Lutz (Archivist, Marrickville Council)

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## DON'T HARM THE FARM!

When the National Trust and the Historic Houses Trust of NSW join forces in a rally to preserve our heritage one assumes the cause is worthwhile. When it is actively supported by the (now ex-) Lord Mayor of Parramatta, the Heritage Council of NSW, the local federal member and former MP Tom Uren, one **must** take notice. *The Farm* refers to the historic 1793 Elizabeth Farm (the oldest European cottage in Australia) of John and Elizabeth Macarthur, Experiment Farm and Cottage, 1823 Hambledon Cottage and the 1834 Queens Wharf Colonial Precinct at Parramatta, all of which Uren described as *the cradle of our nation*.

The rally took place at Elizabeth Farm on Sunday 8 September and was attended by Marrickville Heritage Society members. There is a proposed development currently before the Land & Environment Court for a high rise hotel and a block of apartments to be built on Oak Street between James Ruse Drive and Arthur Street adjacent to the historic precinct. Elsa Atkin, Executive Director of the National Trust of Australia (NSW) urged that a clear message be sent to the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning that the development be stopped and this colonial precinct be protected by an Interim Conservation Order.

Jack Munday, Chairman of the Historic Houses Trust, took this further by asking *what Government will put Heritage on the agenda for evermore?* He commended the stand of Parramatta Council on opposing the development despite the somewhat poor heritage conservation record in Parramatta in recent years. Tom Uren (who was largely instrumental in setting up the Register of the National Estate) decried the greed of developers who *want to place monstrosities in the cradle of our nation* and appealed to people regardless of their political affiliations to support this issue.

MHS strongly believes that not only must the Farm Precinct be saved but more appropriate planning controls are needed so that high rise does not dominate this significant and beautiful place. Contact the National Trust or Historic Houses Trust for information.

Richard Blair

## HISTORIC TREE PLANTING

The June 1995 MHS Newsletter reported on the 2 May 1995 remembrance ceremony to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Mosquito Bomber that crashed into the grounds of the former Petersham Public School resulting in the deaths of the two pilots (LAC Charles Broughton Boydell and Flt-Lt David George Rochford). Another ceremony was held last May.

On 11 September in conjunction with the Sydney Institute of Technology Petersham, a tree planting ceremony took place attended by Justine Tweed, sister of Boydell, and Anna Newton, cousin of Rochford. Several MHS members attended. Full credit to member Lu Bell who was a pupil at the school on the day of the crash and was instrumental in organising these ceremonies.



## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

**SUNDAY OCTOBER 13 2 pm**

**Meet at Tempe Station for Laurel Horton's Heritage Watch Tempe Walk.**

Details in September newsletter.

**SATURDAY OCTOBER 26 10.30 am**

**Petersham Town Hall**

***My Favourite Things* – Robert Hutchinson shares his collection of *Australiana***

Details on front page.

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 23 10.30 am**

**Petersham Town Hall**

**Heritage Award winner Helen Armstrong discusses migrant heritage places in Australia.**

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 7 7 pm**

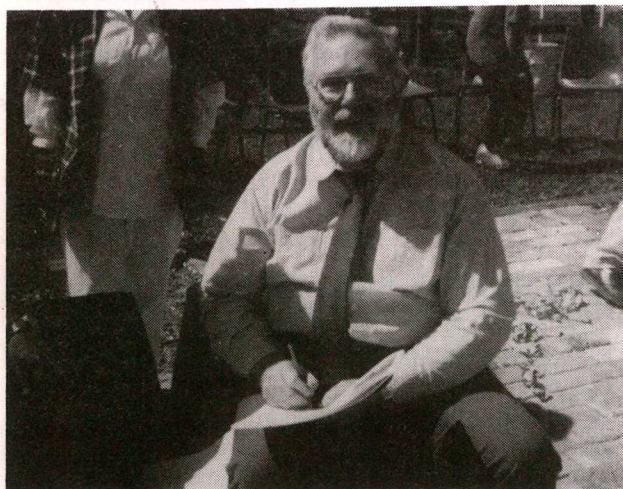
**Annual Xmas Pot Luck Dinner**

Details in November newsletter.

## FROM BULANAMING TO EDUCATION

11 September marked the 21st anniversary of Dulwich Hill Primary School (*Kintore* and *Hercules* streets) and as part of the celebrations MHS member John Edward's publication *From Bulanaming to Education* was launched. This is the story of the site before it was a school and was written mainly for primary age children, though it can also be enjoyed and appreciated by adults.

John was ably assisted in the research by his son Gareth and wife Ruth, and the cover by pupil Claudia Husin is very striking. The book is available from the school (9559 2699) for \$5. *Heritage 10* will feature a related article. [The original Dulwich Hill Public School in Seaview Street opened in 1885 and closed in 1964, though its buildings were retained as Dulwich High School.]



*John Edwards signs his book (photo: Richard Blair)*

## SPRING TRIVIA ANSWER #1 – OUR SHORTEST STREET

What's in a name? Members Julie Drew, Fred Ellis, Ed Jones, Ian Phillips and David Blair responded. Julie, Ed and Ian cleverly suggested streets named *Short*: Enmore [Julie], Hurlstone Park [Ed, though

this is outside our LGA] and Marrickville [Ian]. Fred offered *Roach* Street Marrickville near *Louisa Lawson Reserve*. It is shortish and has about five dwellings, including flats. At least two streets are two sides of a square. One is *Station* Street Marrickville where Dr Andrew Refshauge has his office; the other is *Short* Street Enmore which has houses only on one side of one half. One of the shortest street is *Pritchard* Street Marrickville. The peripatetic Ian submitted several Marrickville streets [*Amy*, *Cecilia*, *Council*, *Rose*, *Short* and *Gordon Square*]. Each is about 40 to 70 metres long, though *Cecilia* has sides of unequal length.

So how long is such a street? Take *Wright* Street in Sydenham. The shorter side is 27 (Editor's) paces; the other about 41. It contains one solitary house (#5). This was David's choice, but the mathematician in him feels the sides should be averaged [making its length 34 paces]. Beat that! Well, running off *Victoria* Street, Dulwich Hill are *Little* Street and (you guessed it!) *Short* Street which both run down to a railway line. *Little* Street is 36 paces on one side and 38 on the other [37 average] and contains two factories. *Short* Street at 29 paces (each side; three houses), takes the prize with *Wright* Street coming second. I wonder where the shortest street (containing at least one address) in Sydney is!

**Richard Blair** (who was wrong in thinking it *Wright* once confirming the aptness of *Short*)

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Roma Bates, Danie Ondinea, both of Dulwich Hill; Ferncourt Public School, Dave Burrows & Bronwen Bassett, Father Gregory Kirby, all of Marrickville; Jan Armstrong, Newtown; Cheri Lutz, Stanmore; Geoff Croft, Arncliffe; Lois Korendijk, Blackheath; Joy Smith, Panania; Karl Lorenz, Summer Hill; Kathy Symonds & Sandy Eager, Undercliffe; Ruth Cruickshanks, Mt. Compass, South Australia.

May you enjoy the benefits of membership and we look forward to seeing you at our meetings.

## HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Membership is \$8 for concession & seniors, \$14 for individuals & joint concession, and \$20 for households & organisations. 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  
or ring Harold 9569 5183

**INFOLINE** Robert 9568 3079

**NEWSLETTER** Richard 9557 3823

**HERITAGE WATCH** John 9550 6447

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