

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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

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



COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON

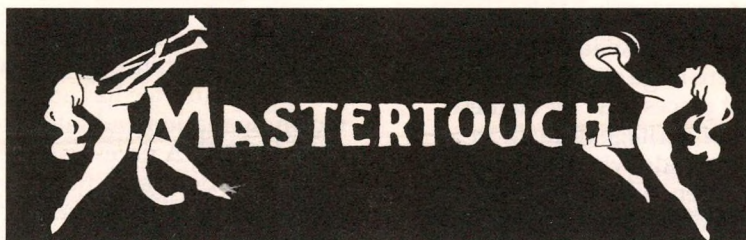
Society president John Zinsmeester and the executive committee wish all members and their families a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

The next newsletter will be in February 1997. Members are invited write to the editor about anything relating to local heritage, or to the president with views about the Society or suggested activities. Our mailbox is PO Box 415 Marrickville 2204. Phone contact numbers are on the back page.

HERITAGE STUDY REVIEW

Many members are aware that MHS came into being at the launch of the 1984-86 Marrickville Heritage Study. Marrickville Council is compiling a draft for the 1997 Marrickville Heritage Study Review. It will be updated to give a better understood basis for the recommended conservation areas and items and to include more places with heritage significance to people from all cultures and backgrounds. Heritage consultants to do the review will be selected and a steering committee established. If you wish to nominate any local building, piece of natural landscape or historic/significant site write to Mark Matheson c/o the Society with details or ring him on 9559 5502. MHS will submit a comprehensive submission to Council.



1994 marked the 75th anniversary of *Mastertouch*, which was founded in City Road, Chippendale by an American George Harry Horton. He also founded the Columbia Ribbon & Carbon Company. The company moved to Botany in 1940 and in 1961 the rights of the Mastertouch label were transferred to Barclay Wright who has owned it since. Barclay moved the enterprise to Canterbury and in 1975 to the former Christian Science Church in Crystal Street, Petersham.

The survival of Mastertouch is due to Barclay Wright's enthusiasm and determination. The significance of Mastertouch cannot be underestimated for it is the only company in the world producing piano rolls using traditional methods, whilst old rolls cut decades ago are re-released. There is also The Mastertouch Collection of musical instruments and archaeological industrial equipment, mostly in fine working order and classified by the National Trust. Box-making is another important part of operations.

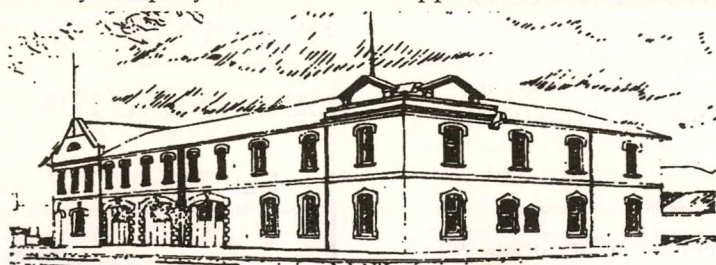
On 7 November the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning, Craig Knowles presented Barclay Wright

with a \$150,000 Heritage Assistance Grant to help acquire the 1886 heritage listed former Stanmore Fire Station and set up a living museum. Mr Knowles described Mastertouch as a "national icon" whose survival and growth was entirely due to the commitment of one man, Barclay Wright. Also present were local state member and Minister for Police, Paul Whelan, representatives from The National Trust, RAHS, Marrickville Council, the Friends of Mastertouch, staff members, and the Marrickville Heritage Society.

Marrickville Council had already approved an application to have the use of the former fire station

changed to that of a working museum. Piano roll production will continue at the Crystal Street building, the unique octagonal auditorium will house part of the collection and be used for the showing of silent films. Barclay

expects both museums will open to the public in 1997. Both buildings were open for inspection on 24 November (Founder's Day). The story of Mastertouch will feature in the forthcoming MHS journal *Heritage* 10.



Stanmore Fire Station

Richard Blair

OUR LAST MEETING MIGRANT HERITAGE PLACES IN AUSTRALIA: MARRICKVILLE AS A CASE STUDY

The illustrated talk on 23 November by Helen Armstrong from the UNSW Department of Landscape Architecture was significant not only because of the current race debate, but also as the Marrickville Heritage Study is about to be reviewed. An important frame of reference will be to include multicultural items. The 1984-86 Marrickville Heritage Study was groundbreaking and comprehensive, yet in one of the country's most multicultural municipalities, only two migrant items, both Greek, were identified.

Helen's study examined communities from three post war migrant phases – Greek (1947-64), Lebanese (1964-75) and Vietnamese (since 1975). The Greeks gravitated towards Marrickville where they could easily find factory work (such as at Vicars woollen mill) and cheap houses which they often painted blue and white and in whose gardens they grew lemons, olives and oregano. They adopted dance halls, clubs, cinemas and *hidden places* for men, about forty of which, like the Athenian Centre, were above shops in Marrickville and Illawarra Roads.

The Lebanese opened restaurants in Surry Hills or shops such as Mansours and Scarfs *in the tradition of their Phoenician forebears*. Addison Road Community Centre and Steel Park, where large group picnics were held, were important places. The Vietnamese find some of our concepts of heritage difficult to grasp: their heritage is more to do with people and ritual rather than places. Helen, whose publication won a 1996 National Trust Award, skilfully demonstrated how these migrant groups regard heritage places. One of her interviewees said: *the spirit of the Greeks lives in Marrickville*.

Richard Blair

NOMINATIONS FOR THE 1997 MARRICKVILLE MEDAL

The Marrickville Medal is awarded annually during Heritage Week by Marrickville Council's Heritage Promotions Committee to buildings and conservation within the Marrickville LGA that contribute to the cultural heritage of Marrickville. The 1997 Medal will have a **residential** focus on houses that have been restored, conserved or renovated, have had minor or substantial alterations, or on new dwellings. Single dwellings or groups such as apartments or townhouses are also eligible. Unsuccessful nominations from previous years may be nominated in 1997 but all work must have been completed since the start of 1994.

Anyone may nominate. Feel free to nominate your own home, your neighbour's house, or the one down the road. Closing date is 3 March and Heritage Week is 20-27 April. For nomination forms and further information, call Libby Maher, Marrickville Council on 9335 2114.

Matthew Devine

LOCAL (HERITAGE) HEROES OF 1996



Del & Harry Stone of Sydenham with their FJ Holden
(photo: Richard Blair)

INCORPORATION OF THE SOCIETY

The outgoing committee of 1995-96 discussed at length the need for the Marrickville Heritage Society to adopt the formal structure and consequent responsibilities required by incorporation. As well as defining responsibilities, it seems clear that in the future, applications for grants would be regarded more favourably if the Society were incorporated. Doubtless, many members belong to societies or associations which have already taken this step.

The committee decided to recommend that its successor effect incorporation in 1996-97. The present committee has accepted the recommendation and intends to initiate the process early in 1997. A necessary step will be the adoption of an amended constitution, which will be submitted to all members for ratification at a meeting of the Society. At all stages, comment from the membership will be appreciated.

Harold Welsh (for the Committee)

MARRICKVILLE COUNCIL GRANT

Under Marrickville Council's Small Grants Scheme, MHS has been fortunate to receive a \$2000 grant assisting production of our journal *Heritage*. The scheme is designed to provide support for community organisations in the Marrickville LGA and this recognises our contribution towards recording the history and thus the heritage of local people, places and buildings.

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HERITAGE WATCH

In November 1994 the Jessie Street National Women's Library found a "permanent home" at the **1879 former Marrickville Town Hall** in Illawarra Road, Marrickville. The estimated cost of restoration to meet heritage requirements was \$500,000. Efforts to raise the substantial sum needed were unsuccessful and at their recent AGM, the JSNWL reluctantly voted not to proceed with restoration. The Department of Housing has been asked to resume ownership of the building. Back to square one!

Marrickville Council has sympathetically repaired the **Hillcrest Street brick footpath in Tempe**. The street ought to be classified by the National Trust.

The view of **Stanmore House** from Enmore Road has gone with the overbearing building under construction on the former *Cronulla* site. One wonders how different this building application approved in February 1996 as shops with two floors of dwellings above will be from that declined by Marrickville Council in February 1995 on the grounds of "height, scale and design" which was to be a three storey building. Do two plus one not equal three? Also, what became of the curtilage that was supposed to have been left between the Stanmore House site and the *Cronulla* site?

Marrickville Council has gone against the advice of its own officers in approving Australia Post's application to divide **Marrickville Post Office** into two shops and move the post office itself to the rear of the building. Council officers had opposed the work on the grounds that being an item of heritage significance (1891 James Barnet building classified by The National Trust) such work could only be undertaken if it could be demonstrated that it was necessary to prevent the disintegration and decay of the building. However 22 conditions have been imposed on the redevelopment.

On 13 November several MHS members attended the Sydney Institute of Technology's official opening of the extensions and refurbishment at the **West Street campus in Petersham**. The building served as a primary school from 1879 and a high school from 1965 to the late 1980s. The restoration work is outstanding.

SUMMER TRIVIA QUESTIONS

- 1) Name any thoroughfare(s) in Marrickville LGA whose house numbers run in opposite directions?
- 2) The father of which prominent Australian politician once owned a motor garage in the LGA? Where is/was the garage?
- 3) Why, about a century ago, were fire stations often built close to churches (eg. Stanmore Fire Station & All Saints Church)?

(ring Richard 9557 3823)

MARY REIBEY AND ME

My ancestor, Thomas Sharp, arrived in NSW on the *Sugar Cane* in 1793 as a soldier in the 102nd Regiment. Thomas and a convict Martha Burrell had eight children before he died in 1823. Faced with having to support eight children on her own, Martha applied to have two of the youngest girls, Anne and Elizabeth, admitted to the female orphan school. What happened to Anne is unclear but burial records for St Peters, Richmond list the death of an Anne Sharp in 1825. Thomas had received land in the Richmond/Windsor area after leaving the 102nd Regiment so this Anne Sharp was possibly his daughter.

Elizabeth was admitted to the orphan school on 5 March 1825 aged 6 and was apprenticed to a Mrs Raby in 1830. Fortunately indentures of apprenticeship for this period have survived and I was able to locate Elizabeth's papers which revealed Mrs Raby, to my delight, to be the one and only Mary Reibey! The indenture records that Elizabeth was to *dwell and serve four years... until 8th of February, 1834* so I was surprised to find an Elizabeth Sharp marrying a William H Clemson at Wilberforce in 1832. Mary Reibey had a farm [*Reibeycroft*] near Wilberforce so perhaps, even though she had married, Elizabeth could still have served the remainder of her apprenticeship in the service of Mary Reibey at Wilberforce. Yet another example of family history raising more questions than it answers!

Cheri Lutz

ARCHITECT & ARCHIVIST



Libby Maher and Cheri Lutz look on the lighter side at Petersham Town Hall during Heritage Week April 1996 (photo: Richard Blair)

NEWTOWN FESTIVAL

On the most glorious of days, Camperdown Memorial Rest Park has probably never seen more (live) bodies than it did on 10 November. Our honorary MHS canine member *Princess*, established scribe (see October newsletter) showed her athletic skills by winning the trophy for the fastest small dog. The Society raised some funds, attracted new members, and those who helped had a lot of fun. Thank you Angela, Gwenda, Harold, Shirley, John, Richard, Joyce, Fred and Peter.

1997 CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22 10.30 am

Local Historian Judith Dunn *Tales from the Cemetery – getting it right by reading the clues.*
(Note – venue to be confirmed)

SATURDAY MARCH 22

Coach trip to Hunters Hill.

SATURDAY APRIL 26 10.30 am

Talk by Archaeology & Heritage Consultant Noeleen Curran.

SATURDAY MAY 24

Camden Park & Belgenny Farm.

SATURDAY JUNE 28

Annual General Meeting

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Rosemary Fallon & Glynis Burnett, Noeleen Curran all of Dulwich Hill; Carolyn & David Pye, Hurlstone Park; Herman & Erika Kozelj, Kim Good, Stephen Westgarth, all of Marrickville; Wendy Dyson, Newtown; Robert Lutz, Henriette Vimlati, both of Stanmore; Nicky Teffer, Annandale; Tammy Telford, Arncliffe; Joan Lawrence, Cromer; Ian Latham, Earlwood; David & Jill McDonald, Lidcombe; Laurel Young, Padstow Heights.

75TH AT ST BRIGID'S CHURCH

The original St Brigid's Church Marrickville was in Despointes Street from 1886 to 1916. The foundation stone for the new church, founded by the Passionist Fathers, on the corner of Livingstone and Marrickville Roads was laid in 1918 and the new church was opened in 1921. Following the completion of a four year restoration program St Brigid's celebrated its 75th anniversary on 24 November with a thanksgiving mass conducted by Bishop John Heaps, a former parishioner.

HOME OF HOPE LAUNDRY

Among the items on display at the State Library of NSW *Stories in Silver* is a trowel with the following inscription – Presented to Miss Sarah Taylor by the former inmates of the Home on the occasion of laying the Memorial Stone of the Home Of Hope Laundry, Newtown 28th Feb 1891.

What and where in Newtown was the Home of Hope Laundry? If you know anything please contact either the Society or Marrickville Library's Local Studies Librarian. This unusual exhibition, which also contains Captain Cook's sword made in 1743, Jackey Jackey's breastplate, a Dunbar connection, and Newington College's remarkable 1907 silver mounted cricket ball, is on till 31 March 1997. Thanks to MHS member Sr Maree Loadsman for drawing our attention to this.

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IS THERE A SANTA CLAUS?

Santa Claus has an extremely high case load.

Given that a) no known species of reindeer can fly, but assuming one might; b) there are about 378 million *Christian* children in the world, with say, 3.5 children per household, that is 91.8 million homes; c) Santa has 31 hours of Christmas to work with, thanks to different time zones and the rotation of the earth; this works out to about 822.6 visits per second. Thus Santa has 1/1,000th of a second to park, hop out of the sleigh, jump down the chimney, fill the stockings, distribute the remaining presents under the tree, eat whatever snacks have been left, get back up the chimney, into the sleigh, and move on to the next house.

91.8 million stops evenly distributed around the earth (for ease of calculation) makes a **total trip of 75.5 million miles**, not counting stops to do what most of us do at least once every 31 hours, plus feeding, etc. Therefore Santa's sleigh is moving at about 650 miles per second, 3000 times the speed of sound. By comparison, the fastest man-made vehicle on earth, the Ulysses space probe, moves at a poky 27.4 miles per second whilst a conventional reindeer runs, at best, 15 miles per hour.

Assuming each child gets nothing more than a two pound Lego set, **the sleigh is carrying 321,300 tons**, not counting Santa, who is invariably described as overweight. On land, conventional reindeer can pull no more than 300 pounds. Are eight enough? No, we need 214,200 reindeer which increases the payload to 353,430 tons.

353,000 tons travelling at 650 miles per second creates enormous air resistance which will heat up the reindeer in the same fashion as spacecraft re-entering Earth's atmosphere. The lead pair of reindeer will absorb 14.3 quintillion joules of energy. Per second. Each. In short, they will burst into flame almost instantaneously, exposing the reindeer behind them, and create deafening sonic booms in their wake. The entire reindeer team will be vaporised within 4.26 thousandths of a second. Santa, meanwhile will be subjected to centrifugal forces 17,500 times greater than gravity. A 250 pound Santa (which seems ludicrously slim) would be pinned to the back of his sleigh by 4,315,015 pounds of force.

Notwithstanding the above, we have little doubt Santa Claus is coming to town. Soon!

[edited from Doug Mayer *Cyber Jokes* 1996. American weights and measures retained.]

INFOLINE Angela 9564 6370

MEMBERSHIP Harold 9569 5183

NEWSLETTER Richard 9557 3823

HERITAGE WATCH John 9550 6447