

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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

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

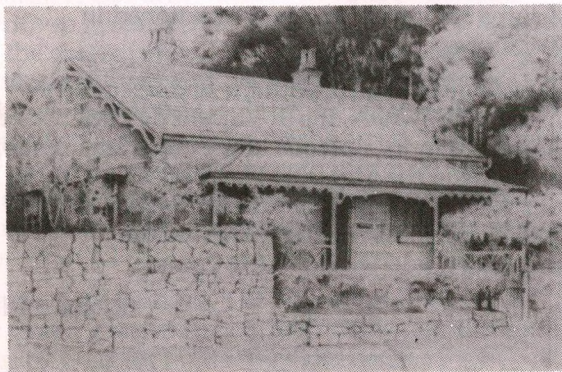


## OUR NEXT MEETING

**THE TREASURES OF HUNTERS HILL  
A WALK LED BY TED GREEN  
Saturday 22 March 9 am**

Meet at Petersham Town Hall 9 am for 9.15 am (sharp) departure. Anticipated return about 4.30 pm at Petersham. BYO lunch. Cost \$14, \$12 concession (includes coach and entrance fees). Bookings essential. Ted 9958 8980 (please advise if wishing to cancel).

Someone once called the houses of Hunters Hill *poems in stone*. In no other suburban area of Sydney has time dealt more kindly with the architecture of a leisurely and gracious past: leafy streets, old garden walls, houses of stone ranging from simple cottages to grand villas. The purchase of Mary Reibey's farm in 1847 by a shrewd Frenchman, Didier Joubert marks the beginning of Hunters Hill as a suburb. With his brother Jules and later with other Frenchmen Charles Jeanneret, Leonard Bordier and Count de Milhau, and aided by Italian stonemasons they developed this charming garden suburb, appropriately called the *French Village*.



Vienna Cottage (sketch: Frank Lee)

Included in the walk will be a guided tour of Vienna Cottage (1871), a look at a Horbury Hunt Church, and the missing Marrickville masonry. BYO lunch at historic Kelly's Bush, site of the world's first *green ban*. Bring good walking shoes but Ted promises "no hills and no steps!"

## MARRICKVILLE MEDAL

The closing date for this year's Marrickville Medal nominations has been extended to 1 April. As explained in last December's newsletter there is a residential focus this time on houses that have been restored, conserved or renovated, have had minor or major alterations, or on new dwellings. The 1997 Medal will be presented on 21 April during Heritage Week. For further information contact Libby Maher 9335 2114.

## OUR LAST MEETING

**TALES FROM THE CEMETERY**

The first MHS meeting of 1997 held on Saturday 22 February was wonderfully grave, but far from mournful. Judith Dunn, President of the Parramatta & District Historical Society, a local historian and author with an interest in cemeteries, gave the large gathering a heavenly talk *Tales from the Cemetery*, and many tales there were. Every headstone has its story to tell, as long as you know how to read the clues correctly.

Judith told us about Mays Hill Cemetery, one of the district's seven cemeteries. First established for the Presbyterian and Baptist residents of the Parramatta district, it was used by other denominations as well. The wealthy had the high ground near the main gate, with their impressive marble and stone monuments, which could be seen from the road; the less well-off were interred down the hill, with poorer quality headstones, often pointed to give a *better* appearance.

Many sad tales are told as one reads the inscriptions – the infant mortality, suicide, drowning and disease, each a story in itself. Like many Victorian graveyards, Mays Hill is a source of old roses, now growing wild, and remnant grasses. While many of the colony's notables are buried at nearby St John's cemetery, Mays Hill has its share of the local population, even a plot of Nutters from Pendle Hill. Now, there's a story!

Robert Hutchinson

[Note – *Mays Hill Cemetery* (\$23) is the latest title by Judith Dunn and the Historic Graves Committee in the series *The Parramatta Cemeteries*. There is still limited stock of *St John's Cemetery* (\$15). Judith (9686 6861) can access information on all local cemeteries.]

## HERITAGE STUDY REVIEW WALK

**Sunday March 16 10 am**

**Meet Petersham Town Hall.**

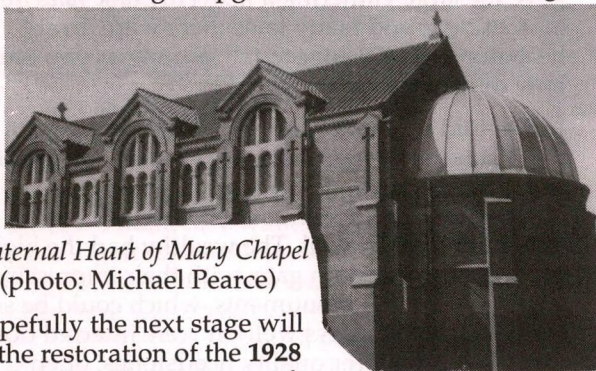
**All welcome.**

Instead of the usual monthly Heritage Watch meeting the committee is holding a walk to examine some prospective items for the Heritage Study Review. Let us know of items you feel we should look at. If you have a car available please phone Mark 9559 5502.

With the advent of Chinese New Year we wish all our members a very merry *Ox-mas* for 1997!

## HERITAGE WATCH

The **Maternal Heart of Mary Chapel** of the former Lewisham Hospital, now owned by the St Vincent de Paul Society, was opened in 1927 to commemorate the Golden Jubilee of the establishment of the Little Company of Mary (the *Blue Nuns*) founded in England in 1877. In a 1990 conservation plan the chapel was described as a *superb interwar Romanesque style building ... which demonstrates a very high degree of craftsmanship in all the trades involved particularly in the excellence of the brickwork, stained glass lead lighting and internal joinery.* Following representations by MHS, the National Trust wrote to the St Vincent de Paul Society about this building's significance and urgency for repairs. The SVDP has now lodged a DA to Council for repairs and replacement of roof tiles, guttering, downpipes, rain heads and arch bars. Full credit to them for deciding to upgrade this beautiful building.



Maternal Heart of Mary Chapel  
(photo: Michael Pearce)

Hopefully the next stage will be the restoration of the **1928 Moller chapel organ**, one of only three imported from Maryland, USA made by the celebrated organ builder Mathias Moller. When installed, organ consultant Joseph Earnshaw described it as a *fine organ ... [whose] touch is delightful; [with] prompt repetition; excellent workmanship; ... a credit to the art of modern organ construction.* The Heritage Council of NSW Pipe Organ Advisory Committee supports restoration of this organ and we urge that a grant application be made.

The Commission of Inquiry into the proposed development in and around *Scali's Shame*, the semi-ruin (caused by the February 1996 fire) better known as **Canterbury Sugar Mill** was held on 20 and 21 January 1997. The Commissioner has lodged his report with the Minister for Planning Craig Knowles who, though neither bound to follow the recommendations nor to make his report public, is believed to be making a decision soon. The building's owner Nick Scali has been directed to comply with several interim conditions.

An era ended on 27 February when the new **Marrickville Police Station** was officially opened at the renovated site of the former convent of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan at 101 Despointes Street which they had occupied since 1901 (see *Heritage 5*). Marrickville Police had continuously operated from the Gladstone Street building since it was erected in 1895. The architect was Walter Vernon whose unusual rusticated stone building had changed little except for 1920 additions. The intended use for this building is not known.

## MEMORIAL PLAQUE UNVEILING CEREMONY FOR 1946 LEWISHAM HOSPITAL AIR CRASH

At about 9.30 am on Thursday 31 January 1946 a Royal Navy Firefly crashed into the courtyard and kitchen attached to Ward 26 of the former Lewisham Hospital, burst into flames and killed three people. The aircraft's rudder control mechanism had failed, the plane went into a spin, plunged, and glanced off the Maternal Heart of Mary Chapel bell-tower before crashing. The pilot had luckily bailed out and parachuted to safety, but the observer, unable to free himself, went down with the plane. Two members of the hospital staff were also killed.

Those killed were Iris May Thompson, 19, of Granville, John Kevin Smith, 17, of Enfield, and Petty Officer Edmund Mackenzie Butterworth, 25, of Fleetwood, Lancashire, England. A ceremony organised by the Marrickville Heritage Society was held on 31 January 1996 in the chapel grounds near the crash site to commemorate the 50th anniversary of this tragic event and Iris' three sisters were among those who attended.

After intensive inquiries contact has been made with John's brother Herbert, four of whose sibilings are still alive, and PO Edmund Mackenzie Butterworth's sister Mrs Margaret Blackwell, of Lancashire. Writing in appreciation of plans to install a plaque, she sent a copy of her brother's extensive service record and two photos including one taken with his Australian fiance, whose name is not known. He had been in the Royal Navy since 1937, the Naval Air Arm since 1939, had served on 18 ships and bases, and was Mentioned in Despatches.

Marrickville Council, with the endorsement of current site owners, the St Vincent de Paul Society, has agreed to fix a plaque at the crash site. A short ceremony in the Maternal Heart of Mary Chapel courtyard is planned for Sunday 6 April at 2 pm (to be confirmed). Please ring me 9557 3823 if you would like to come.

Richard Blair

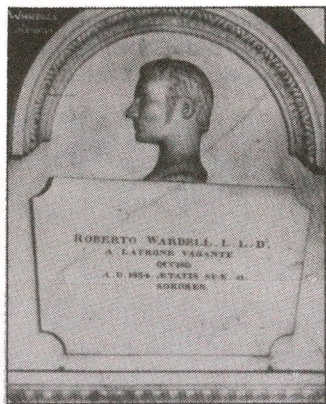
### TIBETAN BUDDHIST THANGKAS FOR SALE

Paintings on light canvas with silk brocade surround, similar to Chinese scrolls. Rarely seen here, they hang well with both traditional or contemporary European art work. Artist Singh Bahadur Lama works in Nepal using traditional methods and materials. Small number of thangkas imported for sale can be viewed at our home or we can bring them to you. Price on application.

Allen Outlaw & William Reader  
37 Audley Street Petersham Tel 9569 5726

## THE REMAINS OF DR ROBERT WARDELL

The story of Dr Robert Wardell (1793-1834) who gave his name to Wardell's Brush (now Dulwich Hill) and Wardell Road, is well known. Murdered in 1834, he was buried at the Sandhills Cemetery, which was later cleared to build Central Railway Station. According to the Sydney Gazette (4 June 1839) on Thursday last the remains of Dr Wardell were removed from the Sydney Burial Ground preparatory to their removal to England for reburial in the family vault. Whether they ever arrived has remained a mystery.



*Dr Robert Wardell's memorial marble tablet  
in St James Church Sydney*

Taking advantage of a European holiday, I decided to investigate this obscure corner of our local history. I had a tip-off that Wardell's father, also Robert, had been buried at the Bayswater Burial Ground, but there was no such place in the current London A-Z. Parish records in various London archives revealed that from 1763 to 1858 a large site at the eastern end of Bayswater Road, near Edgware Road had been used by St George's Church (of Alfred Doolittle *Get me to the church on time* fame), Hanover Square as an additional place of burial. I was however both intrigued and dismayed to be confronted with the reality of nineteenth century mortality: in 1839 there were no less than 1,191 burials in this parish alone!

Persistence paid off. The *Register of Graves at the St George's Burial Ground 1707-1858* gave the vault inscriptions for both father and son –

- \* *Wardell Esq Robert (Rest of Names defaced)  
Sept-1821 Age 61.*
- \* *Wardell Robert (Who died by the hands of  
Bushrangers at Petersham, N.S. Wales and whose  
remains were buried here) 7th Sept 1834 Age 42.*

Dr Wardell's widowed mother Mrs Jane Wardell had accompanied her son to Australia in 1824, but died near Bathurst in 1830 and was buried at Holy Trinity Anglican Church Kelso. Her remains were not returned to England to be with her husband and son in eternity. Perhaps she knew it was not to be her son's last journey!

In 1855 a new cemetery was opened at Hanwell in West London and in 1859 the vaults at St George's Row (Bayswater) were closed. It appears that many of its citizens were moved to Hanwell, although records prior to 1895 are not indexed. The

Bayswater Burial Grounds survived as a park until 1970, when the last of those buried were moved and a block of flats was built on the site! Well may we say *Rest in Peace, Robert Wardell.*

**John Edwards** (author of *From Bulanaming to Education* – the story of the site of Dulwich Hill Primary School)

## CALLING ALL JETS SUPPORTERS!

I am a local history student researching the removal of the Newtown Jets from the NSW Rugby League competition in 1983. I would like to speak with any former players, members, or supporters of the Newtown District Rugby League Football Club, in an attempt to analyse the changes which took place in the district over time. In particular, I want to examine the link between changes to Newtown's population and industry, and the loss of the club's support base. If you would like to contribute, please contact me 9519 1719.

**Andy Carr**

## OBITUARY – LYNSEY WELSH

We extend our condolences to Gwenda and Harold Welsh, esteemed executive committee members of MHS on the death of their daughter Lynsey, late of Leeton and Stanmore, on Sunday 23 February 1997. Lynsey was an inspiration to us all as she fought an illness that ended her all too short but remarkable life.

## PLACES OF MEMORY: SYDNEY HOME MOVIES

Whilst to many, others' home movies are a traditional source of tedium, such chronicles display moments of our life and times. In collaboration with the National Film & Sound Archive, the Museum of Sydney in Bridge Street has produced 72 minutes of cleverly edited home movie memories directed by Virginia Hilyard, and juxtaposed on two screens recalling life in twentieth century Sydney. If you haven't been to this most innovative of museums, go soon and take in this new installation.

June Lane and Frances Muller won the two very collectable pieces of Newtown pottery (made in Erskineville) in the raffle drawn at our last meeting, generously donated by member Robert Hutchinson.

## SHRUBS AND TUBS GARDEN CENTRE

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## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

**SATURDAY MARCH 22**

*The Treasures of Hunters Hill with Ted Green*  
Details on front page

**SATURDAY APRIL 26 10.30 am**

**Petersham Town Hall**

*Down Under Down Under*

**Archaeology & Heritage Consultant**

Noeleen Curran talks on adaptive reuse, decontamination and redevelopment of industrial heritage sites.

**SATURDAY MAY 24**

**Camden Park & Belgenny Farm by coach.**

**SATURDAY JUNE 28**

**Annual General Meeting**

**SATURDAY JULY 26**

**St Peters Walk with Laurel Horton**

## COOKS RIVER TOUR

**Sunday April 13 1 pm.**

**Meet opposite Canterbury Railway Station**

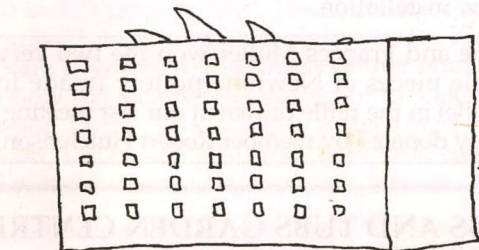
Mark Matheson (9559 5502) will lead this guided 2-3 hour easy walk from Canterbury to Tempe as part of the National Trust Heritage Festival. Refreshments available from golf club along route. Children and cyclists most welcome. Cost (including detailed map) is \$5 adults, \$3 children or MHS members.

## AUTUMN TRIVIA QUESTIONS

- 1) What sporting events, which took place at Newtown in and around 1854, were a source of inspiration for Banjo Paterson's famous *Rio Grande* and several of his other stories and ballads?
- 2) When did the last tram run to Dulwich Hill and to Cooks River?

(ring Richard 9557 3823)

(with permission from Alan Moir,  
Sydney Morning Herald 24/2/97)



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## OURIMBAH - 49 GARNERS AVENUE MARRICKVILLE

*Ourimbah* at 49 Garners Avenue Marrickville was built by Hugh Duff, an auctioneer, on part of the Cooper Estate when the land was subdivided in 1887. Sands Directory shows the house was used as a private school for four years before being bought by my grandfather John McKechnie in 1904. He lived there with my grandmother Phillis and their family for 50 years. The house had shutters on all windows, stained glass entry side panels and French windows to the front bedroom which had a high ceiling. My mother Gwen was the elder of twins born at *Ourimbah* just after the house was purchased.



*Gwen Hunt (nee McKechnie) with twin Ronald on left at Ourimbah about 1906*

John's father Andrew Hardie McKechnie immigrated with his wife and children from Glasgow in 1855. He owned a grocer shop on the corner of King Street and Lord Street at St Peters Railway Station until his death in 1892 when John took over the business before selling it in 1901. The shop was later demolished for widening the railway. Andrew's eldest son James was a saddler in King Street near Rochford Street while another son Archibald was also a grocer. Archibald's son

Andrew was drowned with six others when a sailing boat capsized in Botany Bay in 1893.

After the house was sold in 1954 the slate roof was replaced with tiles and the stables at the rear boarded up. Recently new owners have built a picket front fence and intend to restore the property. It is hoped that *Ourimbah* might be included in Marrickville Council's revised Heritage Study.

**Graham Hunt**

OH THA-A-A-T  
BUILDING !!



**INFOLINE** Ian 9558 2682

**MEMBERSHIP** Harold 9569 5183

**HERITAGE WATCH** John 9550 6447

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR** Richard 9557 3823