

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

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

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



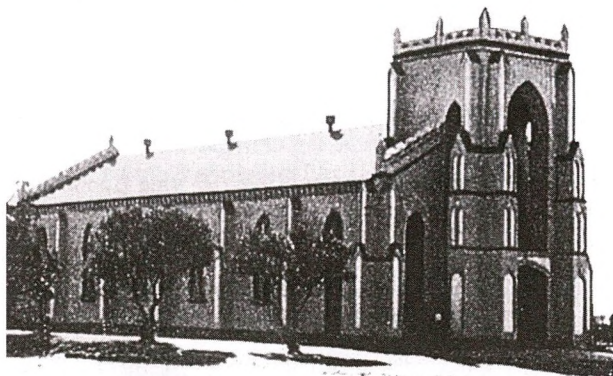
OUR NEXT MEETING

ST PETERS HISTORICAL WALK WITH LAUREL HORTON

Saturday 26 July 10 am

Meet at St Peters Anglican Church Cooks River on Princes Highway for a two hour round walk through the historic suburb of St Peters. Tea and coffee afterwards. Off-street parking in church grounds. Train to St Peters Station or 422 bus from Newtown. No bookings required.

St Peters the suburb took its name from the 1838 church (with its graveyard the first south of Sydney) whose *important architectural quality*, the National Trust stated in 1976 *together with its historical connections, make this church and graveyard of outstanding importance*. Laurel Horton has written a book on the church (co-written with Tom Halls) and another on its graveyard titled *Grave Reflections*.



There is now little other evidence of early St Peters, the Victorian villas that once graced the area or the brickyards for which St Peters became famous. As large properties were sold and subdivided, the population expanded and by 1884 when St Peters railway station opened, St Peters and Tempe had five churches and six hotels. Though hardly a single mansion remains, Laurel, with her intimate knowledge of the area's local history, will tell stories of the past and show us a range of architectural styles including attractive older homes, workman's cottages, former factories and corner shops. We will also see the 1927 town hall and decimated Sydenham. Enjoy a good winter walk and see this historic area.

NOTE - St Peters Church invites members to attend their Winter Concert on Sunday 27 July at 4.30 pm featuring a Vivaldi cello sonata, solo baroque and 20th century flute works, and classical songs and arias. Entry by donation towards restoration of the 1880 historic organ. A light fire-side meal to follow.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

OUR LAST MEETING WHO'S WHO ON THE EXECUTIVE

About 60 members, including patron Eve Sharpe, attended our thirteenth Annual General Meeting at Petersham Town Hall on Saturday 28 June. Vice president Angela Phippen called for a minute's silence in memory of the recent deaths of membership secretary Mary Tait and our late president John Zinsmeester. Angela presented the president's annual report. This was followed by reports from the treasurer, journal and newsletter editors, assistant secretary, and committees of Heritage Watch, Marrickville Remembers, and Amy Needham Prize.

Shirley Hilyard was returning officer for the annual election of officers. The new executive committee is president Richard Blair, vice presidents Robert Hutchinson and Mark Matheson, treasurer Fay Nash, secretary Joyce Roy, assistant secretary Gwenda Welsh, committee members Angela Phippen, Anne Catton, Noeleen Curran and Cheri Lutz. Other positions accepted were journal editor Mark Matheson, newsletter editor Richard Blair, membership secretary Pamela Stewart, honorary auditor Angela Collins and honorary solicitor Richard Hughes. The position of Heritage Watch/Classifications committee convener will be selected from those on that new committee.

Council's heritage architect Libby Maher introduced guest speakers architect Lester Tropman and historian Dr Ken Cable, who are part of the Tropman & Tropman Study Team undertaking the 1997 Heritage Study Review. The 1984-86 Heritage Study was comprehensive but rather parochial, and needs expanding to embrace aesthetic, social, cultural and scientific as well as historic values. Broad community consultation will enable residents to make recommendations and particular attention will be given to the Aboriginal, Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Portuguese and Vietnamese communities. Members adjourned to Maundrell Park for the traditional AGM picnic champagne lunch.

Richard Blair

1997 HERITAGE STUDY REVIEW INFORMATION MEETING

An information meeting will be held at the Herb Greedy Hall, Petersham Road, Marrickville (opposite St Clements Church) at 7 pm on Wednesday 13 August. Members are urged to come and meet some of the Study Team from Tropman & Tropman chosen to carry out the 1997 Heritage Study Review, learn more about the review and have input into this important project. Make sure you fill in the questionnaire provided.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1996-97

I wish I were not here today. I wish that John Zinsmeister was presenting this report. I will miss him personally and the Society has lost a valuable member. He hadn't been a member very long when he became convenor of the Heritage Watch committee and later president. His knowledge of architectural styles and details was amazing, not only in this area but across Sydney. He was always involved in Society activities such as stalls etc and was able to attend day and night time meetings to represent the Society.

It was fitting that his funeral service was held under St Clement's spire, now enshrouded, as its restoration commences. He was the force behind this Society's involvement in the campaign to save it. It was his idea to begin a petition and produce a banner. I remember that after last year's Heritage Watch / Classifications report John said he was disappointed at the lack of success the committee had had. I said that the most important thing was that we were in there fighting. To do justice to John's memory we have to continue the fight.

We will have reports from other committee members so this will be a short report. I believe it is fair to say that the executive committee was operating under difficulties throughout the past year: there was illness and death of committee members (John Zinsmeister and Mary Tait); and illness and death of close family members which meant some had less time to devote to MHS activities.

However, I would like to thank the following members of the executive committee for their good work throughout the year: Ed Jones, vice president and printer of our publications; Harold Welsh treasurer and co-editor of Marrickville Remembers; Gwenda Welsh assistant secretary and member of the Amy Needham committee, Robert Hutchinson, speaker and generous with his donations of material to be raffled; John Edwards and Ian Phillips; Chrys Meader, also on Amy Needham committee; Mark Matheson journal editor and Richard Blair newsletter editor. Finally, the most thankless job, secretary – thanks to Joyce Roy whose efficiency and competence in this position have been greatly appreciated.

The speakers for the year included: Cheri Lutz (Marrickville Archival Reference Centre); Doug Benson (*Bushland of Sydney*); Robert Hutchinson (*My Favourite Things*); Helen Armstrong (*Migrant Heritage Places in Australia*); Judith Dunn (*Tales from the Cemetery*); and Noeleen Curran (*Adaptive Re-use of Industrial Sites*). In addition there were walking tours around Sydenham, Cooks River, east Marrickville and Tempe; bus trips to Hunters Hill and Camden Park, Menangle and Belgenny Farm; involvement in the Marrickville and Newtown Festivals; attendance at Inner City Heritage Forum and the Pot Luck Dinner hosted by Joyce and Paul Roy. All other activities were reported in the newsletter.

One, however, deserves particular attention. On 20 April there was a ceremony to unveil a plaque to commemorate the crash of a Royal Naval Firefly

in the grounds of Lewisham Hospital. This crash occurred on 31 January 1946. Three people were killed, two were staff of the hospital and one was an occupant of the plane. Marrickville Council, with the co-operation of the St Vincent de Paul Society, arranged for a plaque to be produced. 70 people attended the ceremony including the Deputy Mayor, Carmel Tebbutt, representatives from the St Vincent De Paul Society and MHS and over 30 relatives of the victims. It was an extremely moving event.

This was a joint project between the Marrickville Heritage Society and the Marrickville Council Heritage Promotion Committee and it is good to see that Societies such as ours, and Councils can co-operate. The bulk of the work for this event, which included locating relatives of victims, was done by Richard Blair. In addition to his role as newsletter editor Richard organises the program, takes most of the phone calls and involves himself in most of the workings of the Society.

It is important that we, as a Society, are seen to be encouraging good developments, working on positive aspects of heritage and not merely seen as the group that will complain when any building is due to be pulled down!

I, for one, am always happy to see stories in the Press about increases in inner-city house prices, but more and more this will be putting pressure on the built environment. We live here because we like the area, its history, architecture, ethnic mix, proximity to the city and, dare I say it *being close to the cosmopolitan lifestyle of King Street*. No doubt developers will see it as an area ripe for redevelopment and so, as a Society, we need to be strong and relevant.

Angela Phippen (1996/97 vice president)

WINTER TRIVIA ANSWER – OUR SMALLEST HOUSE



This sandwiched abode with only a three metre frontage is at 43a (formerly 43½) Edgeware Road, Marrickville. Douglass Baglin's 1973 photo *Caught in the Squeeze* is in *Rough as Guts* (with permission of author) co-written by Barbara Mullins. Note picture appears back-the-front because (Douglass says) the book was printed overseas.

OBITUARY – JOHN ZINSMEESTER

John Zinsmeester, president for the past two years, who died aged 54 after a long illness on Wednesday 11 June, had his own way of doing things. A few days before he died he asked if the latest newsletter and a brochure could be delivered to a potential new member living across the street. In organising his own funeral service at St Clements Church, John asked that instead of flowers, a donation be made towards the St Clements Spire appeal.



John Zinsmeester at 1996 AGM (photo: Ed Jones)

Before joining MHS at the end of 1994, John was a lone ranger in relation to heritage matters. After immediately becoming convenor of the Heritage Watch committee he involved the Society in opposing the DA to build on the site adjoining Stanmore House. Before long organisations like the National Trust, the Heritage Council and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects along with luminaries such as Clive Lucas and Jack Munday were supporting our cause.

John was elected MHS president in 1995 – a position he held with distinction – and served on the Marrickville Council Heritage Promotion Committee. Such was his fervour he managed to get many others, including non MHS members, involved in a variety of heritage causes. When the Anglican Church decided it could not afford to restore the St Clements Church spire in Marrickville, John would not hear of it and produced a petition that was signed by over a thousand people. After considerable publicity, Marrickville Council, supported by the National Trust, launched an appeal. The Heritage Council of NSW later made a pro rata grant of \$50,000. John survived to see the spire restoration work commence.

Born in Delft, Holland, John came to Australia aged ten with his family. Largely self-educated, he made a living as an antique dealer, where he gained considerable respect both in his vast knowledge of the trade and his endeavour to ensure certain items of historic importance ended up in museum collections for future preservation. On a visit to Old Government House in Parramatta, he pointed out a small, oval antique painting he had donated.

Never lost for words, John would argue his case to anyone prepared to listen. He kept an eye on what shouldn't go up and what shouldn't come down; he was the quintessential heritage watcher, not just concerned with his own house and street, but with the entire municipality and city. A man of enormous integrity and generosity, we will miss him. The Society sends its condolences to John's family.

Richard Blair

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It was certainly true that John Zinsmeester crossed the path of Marrickville Council on many occasions. He was not someone to bandy words. He felt very strongly, and he spoke from an extraordinarily well informed position. He fought a number of unsuccessful battles: to oppose the new rectory at St Peters and to prevent the demolition of the villas in Marrickville Road. He was appalled by what was happening next to Stanmore House.

He was a person who walked around with his eyes open. It was John who noticed the changes to the bank at Newtown Square and who noticed when the lettering was removed from the Enmore Post Office. He cared very deeply, but it wasn't the caring of an attachment to things that were old and therefore, automatically to be saved; and there was nothing he abhorred more than the tarring up of the old to make it look new. He thought there was a certain dignity in age and that had to be respected. That was why he wanted so much of the fabric of this municipality to be retained.

I think this community could well do with more people like John Zinsmeester, someone who was prepared to say not only that he did not agree, but was prepared to say it publicly and to do what he could to change the situation. It was not sufficient to whinge, to sit back and say, 'isn't it shocking'. The real test comes when someone is prepared to act on their convictions, and I think John demonstrated that quality. The fact that he had such an extraordinary attachment to a country in which he was not born and which was very different to the country from which he came, and his appreciation of the unique qualities of Australia, and of Sydney in particular, leaves us all indebted to him. I know among members of the Heritage Society, and for anyone who knew him at all, that there is a genuine sorrow and regret at his passing.

Councillor Sylvia Hale (excerpts

from transcript of remarks at the Marrickville Council meeting 17 June 1997. Full copy available on request)

PARADISE ROAD

Bruce Beresford's film *Paradise Road* has a good story, lovely choral singing in rather improbable circumstances and fine acting by a strong overseas and Australian cast. Of additional interest is that the opening scene was filmed inside Marrickville Town Hall, elegantly, but recognisably dressed up as Raffles Hotel in wartime Singapore. Many of the actors are seen dancing to Julie Anthony (sans dragon) belting out *Mad About the Boy* before an important announcement is made. Perhaps Council could consult Beresford's set designer prior to the town hall's forthcoming facelift!

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CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY JULY 26

St Peters Walk with Laurel Horton

Details on front page.

SATURDAY AUGUST 23

Sydney Then and Now with Bob Irving

VICTORIAN VILLAS OF MARRICKVILLE / NEWTOWN

This booklet will appeal to readers keen to learn more about the colourful history of the Marrickville and Newtown area. As well as successfully capturing the spirit of the Victorian era, Mark Matheson has investigated the significance of social changes that affected the development of the region. Photographs of early residences, now sadly demolished, are included.



Porter family picnic in late 1800s local bush setting from 'Victorian Villas of Marrickville / Newtown' (collection of MHS member Ian Phillips)

Arranged by decade, commencing with the 1830s, information on some important local and national events adds a further dimension to a well researched and attractively presented publication. This is not just a collection of interesting photographs (including many published for the first time from the National Library and National Gallery) but an excellent reference resource for those wishing to undertake further research. For a book containing such valuable information it is unfortunate that no index was included, possibly due to size limitations imposed by the publisher.

[Local Information Resources Series No. 4. Designed and written by Mark Matheson. Published by Marrickville Council Library Services, Sydney 1997. Produced under the Heritage Assistance Program. Available from all Marrickville libraries. Price \$10 (or \$11 cheque to have it posted).]

Shirley Doolan

GROVE REFLECTIONS

MHS velocipedist Ian Phillips spotted the strange case of Grove Street, St Peters whose house numbers follow a rather bizarre sequence: ... 9 11 13 21 17 25 ... 35 45 37A 37 39 41 43 ... 63. A new postie's nightmare!

IN BRIEF

Robert Hutchinson will present *Views of Newtown through old postcards* at the next meeting of the **Newtown-Erskineville Group** of the South Sydney Heritage Society at Newtown Library on Saturday 2 August at 10.30 am.

An exhibition on the life and work of Francis Greenway, the first professional architect in Australia will be held at the Hyde Park Barracks Museum from 26 July to 1 February 1998.

Congratulations to MHS member and conservation architect **Alan Croker of Design 5 Architects** which won the **1997 Greenway Award for Conservation for the restoration of Rose Bay Cottage**, designed in 1834 by colonial architect John Verge. This three year project established *new benchmarks in architectural practice* in restoring this rare and sophisticated example of a colonial cottage built in the Georgian style. Rose Bay Cottage is a private residence, only open to the public on rare occasions such as one day during recent Heritage Week.

Marrickville Agenda 21 Environmental Strategy was officially launched on 5 June (World Environment Day). In planning for some time, it will address local environment problems and a forum will meet quarterly commencing 17 July. Hopefully a priority will be cleaning up our filthy streets! Environment Week is 25 July - 3 August.

We extend best wishes to Marrickville Council General Manager since 1990 **Colin Mills, 50, who has retired** due to ill health (Motor Neurone Disease) after 33 years with local government. Colin updated many Council practices, set up mainstreet committees, implemented strategic plans and helped local groups. He is also a member of the Heritage Council of NSW.

Finally we **farewell Norm's dilapidated 1898 and 1913 trams** which he has donated to the Loftus Tramway Museum for restoration after their 40 year tenure in Norm Boxall's backyard in Henson Street, Marrickville. Norm, whose father was a tram driver, now lives in a nursing home.

FAMILY FUN DAY SUNDAY 3 AUGUST - BASEBALL AT PETERSHAM HITS 100!

It is thought US Consul GW Griffin who lived in Petersham in the late 1800s may have been instrumental in Petersham becoming the home of baseball in Sydney. To celebrate 100 years of local baseball the Petersham Leichhardt Baseball Club is holding a Family Fun Day at Petersham Park on Sunday 3 August from 10 am, including a first grade game at 2 pm. MHS has been invited to have a stall. Come along!

INFOLINE Robert 9568 3079

MEMBERSHIP Fay 9519 6531

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823