

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

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

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

MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR



1998 CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 28

Richard Cashman talks on local cricketers and other sporting characters

SATURDAY MARCH 28

Victoria Barracks & Garden Island with conservation architect Trevor Waters

SATURDAY MAY 2

(In lieu of April 25 Anzac Day meeting)
David McBeath talks on making traditional bricks and tiles

SATURDAY MAY 23

Stanmore walk with Mark Maloney

SATURDAY JUNE 27

Annual General Meeting

THIS SIX PAGE BUMPER NEWSLETTER IS THE LAST TILL FEBRUARY. HOWEVER FOR MEMBERS NOT RENEWING THIS WILL BE YOUR FINAL NEWSLETTER!

HERITAGE 10 UPDATE

Several MHS members have asked whether they may have missed getting their copy of *Heritage 10*. Well, they haven't. It is not yet ready for publication. When the Society began in 1984 the journal was intended to be an annual publication and six were produced in the first six to seven years. *Heritage 10* will be the fourth since 1990.

In addition the Society has published a) in 1992 *Heritage 1 & 2* combined in a more durable format; and b) in 1995, *Index to Issues 1-7*. Furthermore, many members have been involved in our project *Marrickville Remembers*, the publication of which is with the printer and available soon.

As we are a voluntary organisation, the editor and contributors donate their time and services. Members will recall the high quality of our last journal *Heritage 9* and editor Mark Matheson intends this quality to be maintained in *Heritage 10*. Fully paid members will, of course, receive a free copy of the journal (including postage where appropriate).

Even while we await the arrival of *Heritage 10*, the committee is already thinking about *Heritage 11*. If you have an article in you with relevance to our local area, let us know or better still, put pen to paper and send it in.

Richard Blair (President & Newsletter editor)

WANT TO JOIN THE SOCIETY?

Membership is only \$8 for concession \$14 for individuals or joint concession and \$20 for households or organisations. Subscriptions due in July. Membership includes monthly newsletter and the journal *Heritage*. Meetings on fourth Saturday of each month (except December and January)

Send cheque with name/s address and telephone or ring Harold 9569 5183 for details



Optimistic Society members auditioning for parts in 'Water Rats' on 27/9/97 Goat Island tour. Standing from left: Denys Tanner, Harold Welsh, Zena Hodges, Anne Walter, Shirley Doolan, Harry Stone, Shirley Hilyard, Gwenda Welsh, Danie Ondinea, Anne Catton, Ian Phillips, Kay McGrath (bending), June Cameron, Margaret Russell, Laura Dunn, Lyn Smith, Hillary Goldsmith, Norma Lawson, Keith Lawson, Noeleen Curran. Sitting etc: Frances Muller, Richard Blair, Del Stone, Valerie McLeish, Phyllis McCorquodale, Diane McCarthy, Ellie McKenzie, Cheri Lutz (in front). Those on tour but not pictured: Margaret Dortkamp, Robert Lutz, Chin Lian Tsuei, Beryl Winter.

HERITAGE WATCH & CLASSIFICATIONS COMMITTEE HITS THE ROAD!

Proving there's more to committee life than *meetings bloody meetings* (with apologies to John Cleese Esq.) your enthusiastic Heritage Watch/Classifications Committee journeyed by bus on Saturday 22 November to Lewisham, Dulwich Hill and Marrickville south. Accompanied by Heritage Study Review consultants Lester Tropman and Ken Cable, we discovered numerous lesser known (but no less important) features of our diverse natural and built environments that should not be ignored by Marrickville Council in its *Review*.

Member Danie Ondinea (consultant in fauna & habitat management) dispelled the myths that Sydney's inner west is biologically inert and that local plant communities offer little heritage significance. In fact, cemeteries, rail cuttings, and roadsides provide settings for locally rare turpentine, she-oaks, climbing plants and a variety of native lilies and grasses, to name a few. Having survived years of benign neglect by various public authorities, modern management practices – notably the use of herbicides – present new threats to vegetation, including the few areas that provide habitat for native fauna. The Parade rail cutting, Beauchamp Street, and Marrickville Golf Course all invite closer inspection of their plant communities.

Elsewhere the prevalence of timber-framed houses, the *mansion* residences of the Toothill and Victoria Streets precinct, and the streetscapes of Tamar Street, Porter and Stoke Avenues captured imaginations and kept the chatter alive. Special mention has to be made of our impromptu welcome by parishioners of the partly Carpenter Gothic Spanish Seventh Day Adventist (originally St Marks Anglican) Church in Livingstone Road, and of the miserably neglected former Curtis family cottage at 128 Wardell Road. Heritage benefactors lay down thy cash and conserve!

In all, it was a practical and effective way of enabling Council's consultants to meet some local people. Thanks go to Libby Maher and to Council for providing the bus, to our patient driver Spiros, and to Lester and Ken. 1998 promises more Heritage Watch/Classifications adventures. Finally, be part of *heritage watch* this Christmas and look twice at anyone wielding a ball and chain, or wearing a gas mask while holding a spray gun! Chill out ...

Mark Maloney (Heritage Watch/Classifications Committee Convenor)

If you have any stories, photographs, or pieces of pottery, from any local brickworks or potteries, that may be exhibited during Heritage Week 1998 (April/May), please contact Robert Hutchinson 9568 3079 or Infoline.

HERITAGE SNIPPETS

The Society thanks Marrickville Council for **\$2,000 under the Small Grants Scheme** towards publications for 1997/98. Council recognises *the vital part played by community organisations in the Marrickville area*.

MHS welcomes the **new General Manager of Marrickville Council Peter Black** from Victoria. Best wishes in this demanding position.

About 30 MHS members were among those who attended the third and final **Marrickville Heritage Study Review community workshop** on Tuesday 25 November. Whilst the four hour meeting, despite technical problems, was informative, too many questions went unanswered: Why is there an absence of nominated conservation areas in the central LGA? Why so few apparent nominated industrial sites? How many items from the 1986 Study will be scrapped? How safe will items included in the new list be when often scant regard has been paid to the 1986 Study? The list goes on. The identified conservation areas will be on display in the new year.

Despite strong resident opposition, the rescission motion opposing the DA to redevelop the **1884 Commercial Row in New Canterbury Road Petersham** (reported in November newsletter) was defeated at the Council meeting on 18 November.

The owner of the gutted **Canterbury Sugar Works** has finally installed a temporary roof and lodged a fresh DA.

St Thomas High School Lewisham is closing its doors this month, though the primary school will continue. In 1889 the Christian Brothers founded the boys' primary school that evolved into a high school. From 1988 it was entirely staffed by lay teachers.

The much awaited revised edition (in paperback) of the Richard Cashman & Chrys Meader **Marrickville rural outpost to inner city** is expected this month. It will retail at \$29.95 but MHS members can obtain it at our meetings for \$25.

Back numbers of our journal *Heritage* (1 & 2 combined, 4, 6, 7 & 9) are still available at \$10 each. Indexes are \$1; limited number of journal sets \$80.

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NORTH SOUTH WEST 1973

(David Foster's *Glade Within the Grove* won the 1997 Miles Franklin Award. Here are some extracts from a piece he wrote about his fondness for railway stations on the Strathfield line in 1973.)

I like Strathfield station because of the large numbers of platforms and the incessant traffic... and I like to see the railway staff operating the indicators. ... I like Burwood because of the undulating platforms... I like Croydon for its expansive platforms and the columns of its overpass. It has an air of general abandonment, except when the PLC girls in their delightful green uniforms are about. ... I like Ashfield for its interesting goods yard, and the quiet, neighbourly shopping areas that one can see from the platforms. ... I like Summer Hill for its leanness, for the fact that one can throw oneself off the main platform into the path of a speeding through train, a remark equally true of Lewisham, Petersham and most of the rest of the innermost western stations. ...

I like Lewisham because you can see your train in the station at Summer Hill from Lewisham, and therefore can tell in advance when your train is coming. I like the view across the viaduct, across the [Old] Canterbury Road. I like to see the silos. I find the view towards the Hawthorne Canal refreshing. I like Petersham Station, I like the idea of a bell ringing to warn of a train's approach from Stanmore. I like the idea of a small station having two entrances, one above, the other beneath the ground, for the convenience of passengers. And the rolling stock in the Petersham goods siding has always been quite odd, unlike rolling stock seen elsewhere. What are those large grey vans? Why are they forever being shunted from one end of the yard to the other? I like the Railways and Tramways Providential Foundation offices across towards the 'Carrington'.

And I like Stanmore Station, principally for the plethora of railway reading matter that adorns the walls of the waiting rooms; I have seen men throw down papers and magazines to read that matter: there is about the matter a Dickensian fascination. Full copies of the Railway Act and all amendments since, principally dire penalties to be exacted from those who maliciously damage, or cause to be damaged, or permit to be damaged, etc., Railway property. Don't touch that fish plate, on pain of life. The Railways, even ahead of the Church, being probably the largest owner of land and buildings and adjuncts in the state. The state of *North South West* as I once heard an R and R Yank loudmouth refer to it. But chiefly posters of forthcoming excursions. These read well late at night, or out of despair ...

And I like Newtown, it's so far down and I can't tell you how happy it makes me to know there are still people who'll pay money to the Keatings for lessons in ballroom dancing to overcome shyness. And above, the buses are crossing the Newtown Bridge. I just love McDonaaltdown [sic], there is no suburb really of that name, McDonald was a

shopkeeper in the past. And I love Redfern. I've sat longer on the platforms there than anywhere else. I caught trains out of Redfern virtually every day of my life, up until the day my wife said – move.

David Foster (from *A city in the mind – Sydney imagined by its writers* 1983)

CITY CIRCLE RAILWAY PLAQUE

A plaquing ceremony was held at St James Railway Station on 13 October to commemorate the Sydney City Railway. The Institution of Engineers, Australia, and City Rail jointly recognised Sydney City Railway, the first underground railway in Australia, as an *Historic Engineering Marker*. The authorising Act for the underground railway was passed on 13 October 1915 with John Bradfield (yes, that one) in charge of works.

The scheme was long and controversial but firstly the Eddy Avenue bridge and Elizabeth Street retaining wall were built. The eastern section to St James through Museum came into use on 20 December 1926. The service to Town Hall and Wynyard began on 28 February 1932 and was extended across the Harbour Bridge on 20 March. Though work on the link across Circular Quay began in 1936, it stopped during the 1939-45 war period. This section completed, the City Railway (also known as the City Circle) was finally opened on 20 January 1956.

The plaque was unveiled by Kevin Moss MP for Canterbury, and Parliamentary Secretary for Transport, and Bill Jordan, Institution of Engineers, in the presence of Dr K N E Bradfield, son of Dr J J C Bradfield.

Shirley Hilyard

SUMMER TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. Which cricketers played for Petersham or Marrickville (or Petersham/Marrickville) and Australia?
2. This clock, once so well known to Sydneysiders, is still keeping time. Where was it and where is it now? (Clue: no local connection)

(Write, or ring Richard 9557 3823)



CITIZENSHIP CEREMONIES

During 1997, I have been honoured to represent the Marrickville Heritage Society at several citizenship ceremonies at Petersham Town Hall, along with representatives of local churches, schools and other organisations. Usually around 160 new settlers gather to swear allegiance to the Commonwealth, and receive a certificate declaring that they are now citizens of Australia.

Mayor Barry Cotter (or his Council representative) greets the new citizens, coming from all the Asian countries, the Pacific Islands, Africa and the Middle East, Western and Eastern Europe, the British Isles and the Americas. He tells them how Australia benefits from their being here, such as with the skills they bring, their culture and particularly their food.

As each new Australian is called by name to receive his or her certificate, family members and friends rush forward to capture the moment on film. Often this has to be re-enacted at the end, as because of nerves or excitement, cameras sometimes fail to operate.

After the last name is called, a chorus of *Advance Australia Fair* is sung by all, and the new citizens are invited to partake in an international supper. It is then that these people, of all ages and backgrounds, mix together for the first time as Australians.

Robert Hutchinson

MYSTERY ENTRANCE GATES

It took someone who grew up in Dulwich Hill but had not lived locally for over 30 years, Elva Blair (nee Pittendrigh) to carry off the coveted *moments like these you need Minties* by indentifying the sandstone entrance gates to Fraser park (photo in last newsletter) off Marrickville Road near Sydenham Station.

The park is now home to the Sydney Portuguese Community Club and IKO (International Karate Organisation). It is not known how old the park is or whom it was named after. It seems likely the gateposts are remnants of a grand house, but... well, these are other mysteries aren't they?

OBITUARY – JEAN MONCUR

We regret the passing of Jean Moncur who died on 25 November aged 91. Jean, who resided at the Castle Leap Nursing Home Marrickville, lived her entire life in Marrickville, mostly at 3 Moncur Street named after her grandfather. Jean joined the Society in 1984 and was the subject of an article in *Heritage 2*.

Fay Nash has resigned as treasurer for family reasons. At the committee's invitation former treasurer Harold Welsh has agreed to resume this position till the June AGM.

JOHN'S AWARD



Heritage Council of NSW Chair Hazel Hawke presents Ellie McKenzie with a posthumous Certificate of Achievement in honour of former MHS President and Ellie's brother John Zinsmeester at the annual RAHS Local History Conference in Camperdown on 11 October (photo: Mari Metzke)

REFLECTIONS

It seems that they are building staircases steeper than they used to. The risers are higher, or there are more of them, or something. At any rate it is getting harder to make two steps at a time. Nowadays it is all I can do to make one step at a time.

Another thing I've noticed is the small print they're using. Newspapers are getting further and further away when I hold them and I have to squint to make them out. It is ridiculous to suggest that I need glasses but the only way I can find out what's going on is to have someone read aloud to me, and that's not very satisfactory because people speak in such low voices these days that I can't hear them very well.

Everything seems further away than it used to be. It's twice the distance from my house to the station now and they've added a fair sized hill that I never noticed before. The trains leave sooner too. I've given up running for them because they start faster when I try to catch them.

They don't put the same material into clothes any more either. All my suits have a tendency to shrink, especially around the waist or in the seat of the pants and the laces they put into shoes nowadays are much harder to reach.

Even the weather is changing. It's getting colder in winter and the summers are hotter than they used to be. I'd go away if it wasn't too far. Draughts are more severe too. It must be the way they build the windows now.

I got to thinking about all this while I was shaving this morning. I stopped for a moment and looked at my reflection in the mirror. They don't seem to use the same kind of glass in mirrors any more.

Anon

PRESIDENT/NEWSLETTER Richard 9557 3823
HERITAGE WATCH Mark 9516 2788
INFOLINE Cheri 9557 3144