

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

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MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
CAMPERDOWN HURLSTONE PARK NEWTOWN



OUR NEXT MEETING

VINCENT CROW'S HABERFIELD: DISTINCTLY AUSTRALIAN Petersham Town Hall

Saturday 24 October 10.30 am

Haberfield is an area of great significance to Australia's heritage. In 1901 both the Commonwealth of Australia and the suburb of Haberfield were established. In common with other parts of Australia's cultural heritage, Haberfield is a blend of overseas influences adapted to the Australian context. However Haberfield is **distinctly** Australian in that it reflects the nationalism that helped form the Commonwealth of Australia. In 1985 it was gazetted as a conservation area by the State Government and in 1990 it was listed on the Register of the National Estate.



*Glen Ugie 6 Denman Avenue Haberfield (1908)
a Federation house in its garden setting
(photo: Vincent Crow)*

Our speaker **Vincent Crow** was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1994 for *service to heritage conservation*, as a result of his original research and campaigning to make Haberfield a conservation area. His book *Haberfield: Distinctly Australian* launched on Australia Day, describes Haberfield whose character comprises three main elements: the Garden Suburb concept, Federation style housing and Australian nationalism. Come and hear Vincent's talk, illustrated with slides, on the growth of Haberfield, its character and speculation as to how it got its name.

MHS sends best wishes to **Leslee Isted** in Balmain Hospital recovering from elbow and pelvis fractures. We hope to see you again at our meetings soon.

STATE HERITAGE INVENTORY – CALLING ALL LEGENDS!

Keen on local history? Like to become a **legend** in your own time? The Heritage Watch/Classifications Committee invites **you** to assist in the **classification** of local properties. Our mission is to remind the Australian Heritage Commission, NSW Heritage Council and The National Trust of the many valued treasures in our own community. As well as promoting our local heritage, these bodies may even throw in some conservation \$\$\$...

So, what's involved in Classification? Well, nothing too strenuous really. If you can spare a couple of hours knocking into shape some facts and figures (which we'll supply) about local landmarks for the State Heritage Inventory, you'll become a bona fide MHS **legend**.

Seriously, if committees aren't your style or you're just too busy to join them, why not turn your heritage interest into practice from the comfort of your own home!! Current classification projects are Stanmore House, the old Marrickville Town Hall, the Egyptian Room in the Masonic Temple, Petersham, St Stephens Church and Cemetery, Camperdown, and Nelson Lodge, Tempe.

Don't be shy or modest! No particular expertise is needed, just enthusiasm. While there are no ridiculous deadlines or other pressures, we'd love to hear from you ASAP. Interested? Call or fax **Mark Matheson** on 9559 5502.

Mark Maloney (Convenor, Heritage Watch/Classifications Committee)

COME TO NEWTOWN FAIR

Newtown is celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Newtown Festival and the annual fair will take place on **Sunday 8 November from 10 am** at Camperdown Memorial Rest Park. Bring any donations to the stall or ring Richard 9557 3823 if anything needs collecting.

STOP PRESS Launch of MHS journal *Heritage* 10 in early evening of Wednesday 18 November. Details in November Newsletter.

Members unfinancial for 1998/99 will find a reminder slip attached to this newsletter. If payment is not received soon this will be your final newsletter. Payment by cheque or money order from Australia Post will reinstate your membership. Any queries ring Diane 9588 2788.

OUR LAST MEETING HISTORIC PICTON & THIRLMERE RAILWAY MUSEUM

40 members and friends had a wonderful day in glorious weather on 26 September touring historic Picton. Ted's lollies provided sweet sustenance on the coach and the spring blossoms of wisteria, jasmine, may and mint bush made the countryside a picture on our way to the village of Thirlmere passing the old Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital built last century to care for people suffering from consumption.

The official SRA railway history museum at Thirlmere contains over 100 items of rolling stock. Graham, our guide, provided a comprehensive tour including vintage engines no. 18 locomotive built 1864 by R. Stephenson & Co., 2510 Freight locomotive built 1881 by Beyer & Peacock, Manchester, and NSW first locomotive no. 78 built 1877. Pullman sleeping and passenger cars built 1899 and 1913, a 1926 red rattler electric carriage, electric and diesel engines, and a BKD prison van were of particular interest.

Local historian Jan Ross, assisted by Judy Armstrong, President, Picton & District Historical & Family History Society joined us over lunch in Picton's Botanical Gardens, adjacent to a modern housing estate set in undulating Cowpastures first settled in 1796. This area had been the border of three Aboriginal tribal groups – the Gundagurra, Thurralwal and Dharug.



Stonequarry Creek, named by surveyor Henry Hacking in 1798 played an important part in defining the first land grants. Major Henry Colden Antill subdivided portion of his Jarvisfield Estate in 1841 as a private township known as Picton (after Sir Thomas Picton of Pembrokehire, Wales). In 1863 his son Henry Macquarie Antill built *Jarvisville* (pictured above) which is now used by the golf club. The adjoining golf pro shop was constructed from sandstone blocks from the 1848 Picton gaol.

Jan's Stonequarry Stroll included the 1877 former railway stationmaster's cottage (where Nolene and Mr Baker kindly showed us round their attractive garden), railway workers cottages, the imposing stone railway viaduct (the oldest one standing in NSW), and the Edmund Blacket St Marks Church

and graveyard. The 1885 Coach House is now rented by the historical society for the peppercorn sum of one dollar per annum. Before our journey home, we sampled the brew at the George IV Inn/Brewery, continuously licensed since 1839. Many thanks to Jan, Judy, Nolene, Graham and tour captain Richard for a great day!

Graham Hunt

MHS DOES MARRICKVILLE WEST

As part of the sesqui-centenary of public education in NSW, the Society was invited to participate in the celebrations at Marrickville West Public School. Three Society members contributed their services. Mark Matheson led a group of youngsters on his Cooks River historical walk. Betty Healey, a former pupil and teacher at the school spoke to two classes about *life in her day* – many kids were incredulous that television had once not existed and that pocket money was practically non-existent by today's standards. Robert Hutchinson showed three groups his postcards-on-slides of *old Marrickville*. Thanks to Mark, Betty and Robert for their great efforts.

TALES FROM THE ARCHIVES

"Most of us are in sympathy with the agitation for less noisy radio sets, because we have had practical experience of them. A form of noise to which we are not so accustomed was referred to by Alderman McBurney at Mascot Council. He said the nuisance caused by the noise from low-flying aeroplanes was just as bad as that caused by loud radios. It was time that aeroplanes were given silencers. The Council decided to ask the Minister for Local Government to introduce legislation to give councils wider powers over noisy radio sets. The resolution did not mention aeroplanes."

The Shire and Municipal Record April 28, 1935 p13
(provided by Shirley Doolan)

MARRICKVILLE FESTIVAL

Last year it was a storm, this year strong wind, but the Society had a successful day at this year's festival on 20 September, the first held on a Sunday. Keen interest was shown by new residents in how to research their street and house – take note Cheri Lutz! Many thanks to the hardy souls who ran the stall – Angela, David, Diane, Mary and Noeleen; and to those who made donations – John, Margaret, Pippa, Gwenda, Fay, Richard and Ellie.

Anyone interested in a **joint part-time Graduate Public History course at UTS and the University of Sydney** next year contact Associate Professor Heather Goodall 9514 2284 or Associate Professor Ian Jack 9351 2862. Applications close end of October.

CIVILIAN SERVICE MEDAL 1939-1945

This Medal is an official award within the Australian honours system administered by the Commonwealth Department of Administrative Services. It has been established to recognise service by members of prescribed civilian groups who have not previously been recognised by an existing World War II award. Members of prescribed organisations may apply for this Medal provided they meet specified criteria. Prescribed organisations are those in which members served in arduous circumstances subject to military-like arrangements and conditions of service in support of the war effort during the period 3 September 1939 to 2 September 1945. Eligible service is 180 days or more.

The number of eligible groups for the Medal was recently increased to 34 including the Voluntary Aid Detachment within the Catholic United Services Auxiliary, known as CUSA VADs. If you were a member of this organisation, or know someone who was, or want to find out more about other eligible organisations, contact the office of your federal MP.

STARTED MEMORIES STIRRING ...

The Hub on Newtown Bridge is currently leased as a remaindered book outlet. For many years it was a porn cinema. In response to the April newsletter article about Newtown's The Hub theatres Norman McVicker of Mudgee (who owned Sydenham's Pocket Playhouse 1957-73, subject of a Heritage 6 article) wrote:

The last paragraph of the item on The Hub Theatre started memories stirring: In the late 1920s or early 1930s I remember it [The Hub Theatre in Bedford Street, Newtown Square pictured during Newtown Jubilee 1910] was definitely called "Clays". As a small child I attended a concert there. My cousins, Hazel and Bill (McVicker) who lived in Redfern at the time appeared. It had a stage which indicates it had been a live theatre. Among my theatre memorabilia I have references to Harry Clay's suburban vaudeville circuit which included Clay's Newtown Bridge Theatre. He also had Harry Clay's Gaiety Theatre, Oxford Street, Sydney.

George Wallace, the Australian comedian began at Clay's on £4 a week. Started with Fullers on £20 and at the Tivoli later up to £120. There was an interesting reference in the Sun Herald 23 October 1960 – Audiences knew George as *Sophie the Sort* or the *Drongo from the Congo* and as a tubby little comic with half-mast trousers, bubble eyes and an elastic expression. With Jack Paterson he made up a comedy team called *Dinks and Onkus*. Both were under contract to Harry Clay's suburban vaudeville circuit when they became a double persuading the old man (Harry Clay) to give them a try. They never looked back and ran from 1919 to 1924 in four Sydney Theatres – a record.

About 1934 to 1936 I used to work in the school holidays for a family friend who was the proprietor of a Real Estate business S. Bernard Quigley and Co., in King Street, Newtown. This

was in the block near the old IXL Jam Factory (the shops are still there). I got 12/6 a week with a choice of a free pass to either The Hub at Newtown Bridge or Hoyts. The free passes were the payoff for displaying theatre posters in the shop.



In 1937 and 1938 I was working in the 2UW Children's Session and interviewed George Wallace (probably for his film *A Ticket in Tatts*). I still have his autograph in my book. In 1940 I was in Wallgrove Camp. By this time George Wallace was living on a chicken farm at nearby Eastern Creek. He and Bubby Allen, who appeared with him in sketches at the Tivoli, often came to the camp to entertain the troops.

Oldtimers (I'm one myself now) always made a distinction between burlesque and vaudeville but I think it was a thin line of distinction. When another Newtown theatre Fuller's Majestic opened on 2 June 1917 it was announced as a home of 'burlesque' and the first show was part vaudeville and part revue headed by Bert Le Blanc's *Travesty Stars*. Oh for the days of the Tiv, George Wallace, Roy Rene 'Mo' and Jim Gerald.

Norman McVicker

SPRING TRIVIA (NON) ANSWER

A Council brochure lists about 100 local parks including ovals. Your response about the LGA's smallest park, reserve or playground was 'underwhelming'. Whilst roving reporters (Phillips and Hilyard) suggested Peter Cotter Rest Area, Camperdown; Mallam Reserve, Dulwich Hill; Francis Street Playground, Enmore; and Princes Street Playground, Marrickville as possible candidates, the identity of our smallest public green space remains a mystery, even to the editor!

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CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY 24 OCTOBER

Vincent Crow's Haberfield – a model for heritage conservation
Details on front page.

SATURDAY 28 NOVEMBER

Elsie Ritchie on the influence of Josephson family on the development of Marrickville

SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER

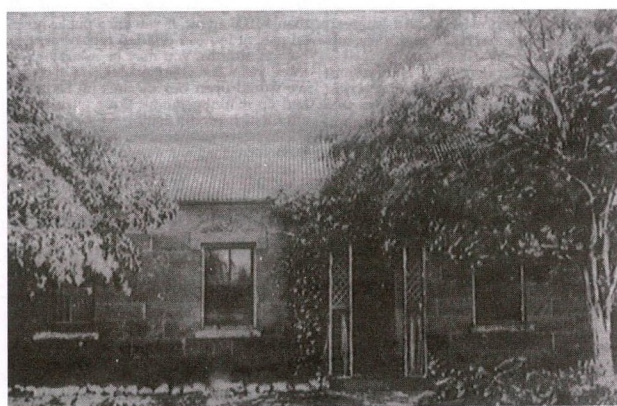
Pot Luck dinner. Details November

LOUISA (& HENRY) REMEMBERED

Marrickville Council has done a good job on the Louisa Lawson Reserve off Harnett Avenue, Marrickville which more than merely commemorates the name of the mother of Henry Lawson. A plaque near the entrance states "Louisa Lawson (1848-1920) Social reformer, writer, feminist, and mother of Henry Lawson. These stones are all that remain from the walls of her home in Renwick Street, Marrickville. These stones were donated by Boral Resources Pty. Ltd. to Marrickville Council in 1996."

In addition to the attractive park benches inscribed with Louisa's name is a lovely mosaic thus described in a second plaque: "This mosaic is a tribute to Louisa Lawson (1848-1920) and depicts the cover of her feminist publication *The Dawn*. Artist Cynthia Turner created the mosaic in 1997." The words on the mosaic are – *The Dawn A journal for the household edited printed and published by women Issued monthly Price 3d.*

According to Louise's granddaughter Olive Lawson "*The Dawn* was published monthly from May 1888 to July 1905 in Sydney [and] . . . was the first Australian journal produced entirely by women which actively campaigned for women's rights".



Louisa spent most of the last 15 years of her life in the *Old Stone Cottage* (pictured above) in Renwick Street, Marrickville where she planted Australian natives in her garden, unusual for the time. The house was demolished in 1947. When Boral offered the stones to Marrickville Council in 1994 there was also a drinking fountain and a plaque commemorating Henry – not his mother – which said: "To commemorate the memory of a

distinguished poet and author Henry Lawson (1867-1922), this drinking fountain was constructed with stones taken from the walls of his home in Renwick Street Marrickville where the BHP By Products first commenced operations in Sydney. This tablet was unveiled by Mr C Y Syme, Chairman of Directors on 25 July, 1955."

Henry would have been amused that a memorial drinking fountain was installed in his honour. It is not known what has become of this fountain, offered to Council as a donation in 1994. Of course the *Old Stone Cottage* never belonged to Henry (could he ever afford a home?) and one wonders why in 1955 it was believed he had owned it. He no doubt used to visit Louisa and his brother Charles there, as well as his brother Peter in nearby Bridge Street, though it seems Henry's visits grew less frequent in later life (around 1898 Henry and his wife Bertha had lived with his brother-in-law, later notable politician, Jack Lang at 20 Dulwich Street, Dulwich Hill).

Other than a North Bondi block of flats named after Louisa, the Louisa Lawson Reserve is her only known monument. It is appropriate that she has been honoured locally in these ways for her significant contributions.

Richard Blair

MOBBS' SUSTAINABLE HOUSE

In the project, a small, two-storey terrace house built in the heart of Sydney less than two kilometres from the central business district on a lot five metres wide and thirty five metres deep, has become self-sufficient. Living here, our family of two adults and two children are making our own water and energy and managing our own waste... cheaper than the local monopoly. We city-dwellers are as independent as if we were on a farm without external services... [and we] can live a great deal more cheaply and healthily.

Environmental lawyer Michael Mobbs and his wife Heather Armstrong converted their ordinary two-storey terrace into a house almost entirely self-sufficient in electricity, water and waste disposal. To learn more about this unique venture you can pay for a guided house tour, conducted each Monday (9310 2930) or buy Michael's book *Sustainable House – Living for our future* just published by Choice (\$30).

See November Newsletter for booking details for Cooks River Crossing on Sunday 13 December.

Eminent collector **Robert Hutchinson** will talk with slides on potteries and brickworks of the Newtown and Erskinvale areas at Newtown Library at 10.30 am on Saturday 7 November. All welcome (conducted by South Sydney Heritage Society).

PRESIDENT/NEWSLETTER Richard 9557 3823
HERITAGE WATCH Mark 9516 2788
TREASURER Diane 9588 4930