

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.



DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE & PARTS OF

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
CAMPERDOWN HURLSTONE PARK NEWTOWN

OUR NEXT MEETING

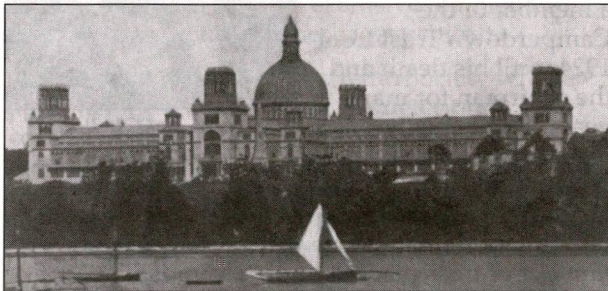
Lesley Muir *Politicians, public transport & the burning of the Garden Palace*

Peter Cousens *After the fire: site of significance Petersham Town Hall*

Saturday 26 August 10.30 am

Sydney's Garden Palace, a magnificent (James Barnett-designed) structure of glass, iron, brick but mostly timber was built in the Botanic Gardens for the International Exhibition of September 1879. Its construction was part of a "vigorous policy of public works" in New South Wales, which sent the railways to the state borders, created the city's public transport network, and changed Sydney from a run-down colonial outpost into a flourishing commercial city of Victorian sandstone buildings and rapidly-spreading terrace and villa suburbs.

The more cynical among us have come to associate the times where a city grows rapidly with an upsurge in scandals – stories of rushed contracts, developer-politician deals, "inside knowledge" and hasty cover-ups. The late Victorian era in Sydney was no exception. Historical geographer **Lesley Muir** will guide us through some of the lesser-known scandals of the development of Victorian Sydney and its transport system – a story tangentially linked (or was it?) with the Garden Palace fire of 22 September 1882.



The dome of the Garden Palace 100 feet in diameter and towering 210 feet above the ground, dominated the view of Sydney from the harbour. Memory of the Garden Palace survives in the ornate Macquarie Street Gates and the Pioneers Memorial Garden. Art conservator and MHS president **Peter Cousens** will speak about the two gardens on the site of the dome.

Come to the annual **Marrickville Festival** Marrickville Road **Sunday 10 September** from 11 am. The Society would appreciate donations of goods especially jams, small pot plants and bric-a-brac for its usual stall. Contact Angela on 9280 2429 for collection.

WWI GRAVES: A GENEROUS OFFER

MHS member Richard Hughes is travelling to various First World War Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemeteries in northern France and Belgium in early September. Richard invites members to contact him should they wish him to visit particular graves of relatives, to take a photograph, and/or to place a card or note there. This would be subject to itinerary and with no firm promise to locate a grave. Exact names and cemetery location required (Information obtainable from Office of Australian War Graves PO Box 21 Woden ACT 2606 phone 6267 1411). Ring Richard 9221 4000 or 0418 468 502.

FUTURE OF STEEL PARK

With the Marrickville Memorial Bowling Clubhouse in **Steel Park Marrickville** all but destroyed by recent fires and the nearby removal of numerous shrubs and trees by Council, we ponder the future of this site. Whilst the 1958 clubhouse is of limited heritage significance, what became of proposals before the Steel Park Steering Committee for a child care or community centre? Come to think of it, what happened to the steering committee?

As local residents resoundingly opposed a multi-purpose sports centre in 1997, converting the area to parkland (as happened after the demise of the Victoria Park Bowling Club) seems the most appropriate course of action.

STATE OF THE WARATAH

Members are invited to a special tour (with the Australian Society) of the exhibition *State of the Waratah: The Floral in Legend, Art & History* on **Sunday 10 September 12 noon** at the SH Ervin Gallery, Observatory Hill in association with the Royal Botanic Gardens. Our guides will be curator **Rosie Nice** and decorative arts expert **Margaret Betteridge**.

State of the Waratah shows how our State flower, the Waratah, has been used in the decorative arts and fashion since the late 19th century, along with some items of local interest. The exhibition (part of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival) runs from 1 September till 8 October. Entry \$5, \$3 concession. Enquiries & bookings Robert Hutchinson 9568 3079. Afterwards enjoy a picnic and stroll through the Botanic Gardens and see the beds of waratahs in bloom.

OUR LAST MEETING SYDNEY SCHOOL OF ARTS & TOWN HALL

On Saturday 22 July over 60 members and friends inspected the 170 year old sandstone Sydney School of Arts 275 Pitt Street now privately owned and restored to its former glory by architects Tanner & Associates. In the 1900s the building was significantly altered by conversion to shops and offices. It appeared derelict when Alan Bond purchased it in 1987 with the view to converting it into a monorail station. Strong protest led by Leo Schofield saved the building and City Council recommended restoration. The difficult task of recreating the interiors and the John Bibb ground floor facade from old photos commenced.

The site was at first (1830) designed as a Chapel for the wealthy people of the Colony. Our guide **Megan Jones** described the huge 1940s concrete slab which divided the room in two with a false ceiling hiding the original skylights. Removal of these exposed the now imposing Mitchell Room and original chapel. Scrapings of the walls revealed parts of glorious murals which facilitated restoration and their recreation where panels were missing.

The Reading Room and the Library form part of a later structure built in 1860 with the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts built on to the chapel and the Bibb sandstone facade added. Conscious of natural light these builders incorporated domes and skylights and glass block floors with stunning results. Glorious Georgian timber windows were restored. Scrapings revealed magnificent stencilling on walls and around the skylights and dome. When rotten floors were removed remains of convict huts were found as well as marbles, dice, newspapers and even a mummified rat. Nothing was disturbed. New floors were placed over all archaeological remains.

The 1880 building containing the timber room known as The Smoking Room is at the rear of the Chapel and Library. The architects initially found a totally blackened home for birds and vermin. It is now an interesting room in cream and brown, a contrast to the others in soft greens, pinks and creams.

Our tour up the grand 1880 Sydney Town Hall Staircase was abbreviated due to stencilling work still-in-progress by artists. **Scott MacArthur** briefed each small group before ascending the elegant birdcage lift past The Sudan Memorial. Scrapings revealed the stencilled motifs depicting England, Scotland, Wales and Australia. The original colour scheme and gold leaf have been restored and when completed will be magnificent. Tanner & Associates have restored these heritage sites with distinction. Thank you Megan Jones, Scott MacArthur and Lorraine Beach for coordinating this illuminating tour.

Maureen Salier

Note: The Sydney Mechanics School of Arts (founded 1833) moved into the refurbished 280 Pitt Street this year and Executive Officer Ellen Elzey showed a few members over it on the afternoon of 22 July. Classes are no longer offered, but amongst other functions the School operates the oldest lending library in Australia. Across the road stands the wonderful 1907 YMCA building, sadly doomed for imminent demolition.

FROM THE ARCHIVES: REMEMBERING PERCY GLEDHILL

MHS member **Susan Pinson** has sent a cutting from the *Manly Daily* 10 September 1970 when the Manly-Warringah-Pittwater Historical Society was celebrating its 46th anniversary! The following excerpt from an article on the Society's history by Charles McDonald reveals a Newtown connection:

"An unusual coincidence is found in the fact that three men who played a prominent part in the society originally came to Manly from Newtown. Mr Gledhill carried on his estate business there. He and Mr J Wheeler, I believe, attended the Newtown school together and the society's first archivist, former Town Clerk Mr Les Wellings, also came to Manly from there. Why Mr Gledhill and Mr Wheeler decided to make Manly their home is not known, but Les tells us, quite frankly, he was in some trouble for swimming in his birthday suit as a boy at Newtown so his dad moved to Manly."

Percy Gledhill moved to Manly in 1913 – his grandfather having been the district's first chemist – and was a founding member of MWPHS in 1924, secretary for 16 years and president for 22 years until his death – no short stints in those days! He wrote *Manly & Pittwater* and *A Stroll Through The Historic Camperdown Cemetery NSW* 1946. He maintained an active interest both in Newtown and Camperdown Cemetery.

Rev TG Rees in *Historic Camperdown* writes of Gledhill (1890-1962): "He was a fine Christian gentleman, an excellent Church Historian, an authority on Heraldry, and a foundation member of the Church of England Historical Society. He was a member of the Camperdown Trust from 1924 until his death and the chairman for many years, being chiefly responsible for the negotiations with the State Government for the resumption of what is now the Rest Park, for the building of the sandstone wall, and the large number of trees planted in the grounds. His oversight, enthusiasm and dedication to Historic Camperdown is remembered by these Memorial Gates." The Gledhill Gates are at the entrance to St Stephens Church and cemetery. I wonder what he would make of current plans to insert entries in that sandstone wall!



Percy W Gledhill

Richard Blair

On 5 August four Heritage Watch committee members had a productive meeting with Greg Hammond, Chair of the Camperdown Cemetery Trust in the **graveyard of St Stephens Newtown**. The aim of the meeting was to view the **remnant Turpentine-Ironbark grassland** in the cemetery grounds and discuss the possibility of MHS helping the CCT initiate a community project to restore the remnant. Watch this space!

HERITAGE WATCH

* The DA for **McDonalds 1-5 Bridge Road Stanmore** has been deferred pending further legal advice and mediation. Whilst the Johnston's Creek Canal may not be an item of environmental significance under the Marrickville Planning Scheme Ordinance, the site is listed as an item of heritage significance in the 1986 Marrickville Heritage Study (Inventory Item No 2.8: Site of Annandale House). Marrickville Council in 1988 acknowledged this by placing an historic trail plaque at the site (see May newsletter).

Overwhelming resident opposition to the DA on compelling grounds such as health issues (rats, vermin, litter, drain and fume pollution), vandalism, increased noise and traffic seem regarded as secondary to many councillors determined to prevent this matter being taken by McDonalds to the Land & Environment Court – described by Leo Schofield as the Rape and Development Court – if the DA is refused.

* Following a site inspection of the **former Waratah Flour Mills Terry Street Dulwich Hill** by members of Council, developers, local residents and the Society, and discussions with Council's Heritage Architect and planners, the applicant has considerably modified the original proposal. The principal heritage elements of the site, including the mill building and the silos are to be retained and adapted for residential apartments. A new apartment building will replace the existing timber silos building and large areas of the site will be reserved for landscaped open space. The developers have also been very responsive to resident concerns about privacy and traffic issues.

* Despite strong community & MHS opposition the DA to demolish **94 Brighton Street Petersham** was approved; however the DA for the mid 19th century **Tempe Hotel** (see March newsletter) has been withdrawn and extensive maintenance work is to be done by a heritage architect.

* Following resident concern the Society will be approaching Council about the deteriorating condition of **Weekley Park Stanmore**. The National Trust advises that the park should be maintained as a rare example of an intact early 20th century suburban park, with period plantings and retention of picturesque building elements, including pergolas and garden beds. Unfortunately the intensive use of the park by a nearby school combined with reduced maintenance by Council is causing degradation of grass and garden beds.

* Though the recent removal of exterior wall tiles on the **Art Deco Marlborough Hotel King Street Newtown** is deplorable, this hotel is unlisted and a DA for this and other works was approved in 1997. Such approval is valid for five years. The hotel plans to replace them with 'sympathetic' tiles in its refurbishment. **This underlines the importance of heritage societies and in this case the Art Deco Society to seek classification and listings for significant buildings as a safeguard against such DAs slipping through.**

NEWSLETTER REPORT 1999/2000

The newsletter is a mouthpiece for the Society – what the Society feels about and is doing about our threatened built and natural heritage; keeping members informed about what has happened or is about to happen, and items of general interest. I do sometimes wonder however to what extent the newsletter is being read, especially in relation to some trivia questions which have yielded little response. Take those sewer vents in the June newsletter which many of us see every day – I've had just one response. Are we collectively ignorant about some things or just too preoccupied to respond to such trivial questions? Perhaps the questions are too easy, or, too hard – sometimes I haven't initially known the answer myself.

On the other side of the ledger I hear regularly in writing from members such as Susan Pinson of North Manly, Shirley Kirkham of West Wyalong and Peter Chinn of Springwood. More locally I hear from many members particularly Diane McCarthy and Ian Phillips with interesting and varied items of interest, but also Stan Bales, John Blattman, Antoinette Buchanan, Anne Carolan, Shirley Doolan, Ted Green, Chris King, Vivienne Larking, Norman McVicker, Dorothy Skinner, Harold and Gwenda Welsh.

May I thank all who have written up *Our Last Meeting* and contributed feature articles; fellow committee members especially president Robert Hutchinson for several contributions and Heritage Watch convenor Scott MacArthur for his succinct monthly reports; and Shirley Hilyard for her unstinting assistance as sub editor and proofreader.

Thanks again to Ed Jones and Gopher Graphics which continues to do a professional job, and farewell to Kelly Cook who has left to get married and travel after a long association with the newsletter; Diane McCarthy for providing updated membership lists and addressed envelopes; membership secretary Pamela Stewart for despatching the postals and maintaining membership records; and Ian Phillips, who despite his quick-fire quips, is totally focused and efficient in helping me deliver newsletters to runners.

Finally may I thank all the runners who deliver local newsletters sometimes with insertions such as the recent questionnaire – Lorraine Beach, Lu Bell, Richard Blair, John Blattman, June Cameron, Iain Carolin, Peter Cousens, Fred & Joyce Ellis, Rosemary Fallon & Glynnis Burnett, Barbara Gibbons, Monica & Joe Grabowski, Shirley Hilyard, Paul Heath & Marilyn Leeds, Valerie McLeish, Allan Outlaw, Ian Phillips, Angela Phippen, Andrew Serafin, Pamela Stewart, Kenneth Swinbourne, Ken Turner, Anne Walter, Harold Welsh and Coralie Wickers.

Despite various hassles in getting out any publication I still enjoy producing the newsletter. I trust members keep sending contributions and if you know of those sewer vents, you never know, your prize might be a trip to Paris for two!

Richard Blair, editor (presented at June AGM)

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY 26 AUGUST

Petersham Town Hall 10.30 am

Lesley Muir: *Why Garden Palace burnt down & Peter Cousens:* *After the fire – site of significance*
Details on front page

SUNDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 12 noon

State of the Waratah – Details on front page

(Usual fourth Saturday meeting cancelled due to Olympics; but members can participate in this and/or the Marrickville Festival both on Sunday 10 September.)

SATURDAY 28 OCTOBER

Bushplants of the Cooks River Valley talk by **Doug Benson (am) & walking tour with Danie Ondinea (pm)**

TEMPE / ST PETERS WAR MEMORIALS

MHS War Memorials Project Convenor **Angela Phippen** needs help piecing together the history of two organisations that operated in the St Peters/Tempe area – the RSS & AILA (St Peters-Tempe Sub Branch) and the St Peters Ex Servicemen's Memorial Hall and Club. Both groups were instrumental in the creation of war memorials in the area.

The St Peters-Tempe Sub-Branch of the RSS & AILA was responsible for the retention of the name "Memory Reserve" for the small park at the corner of Unwins Bridge Road and Gleeson Avenue Sydenham when in May 1951 there was a move in Council to have it renamed after a councillor. It also wanted the St Peters Town Hall called the "St Peters-Tempe Memorial Hall" and a war memorial to the fallen of World War II constructed.

The St Peters Ex-Servicemen's Memorial Hall and Club, as the name suggests, constructed a building in Park Road, St Peters, now Sydenham, in 1952-53. The Ladies Auxiliary of the club asked Council (July 1953) for two needle pine trees to be planted in front of the club, one in memory of the President's son who lost his life in WWII.

Does anybody have photographs of this building or of Anzac Day services conducted in the area? Were you involved in either organisation and have memories that you can share? When did these organisations cease to operate? Any information will be useful. Please ring Angela on 9280 2429 or write care of MHS.

When is a 112 year old building not a 112 year old building? The sign at **120 Australia Street Newtown** (opposite Bishopgate Street) says "brand new apartments" and yet the date on the building is 1888. The only parts of the original building appear to be the two side walls, though even this is not certain. Buyer beware!

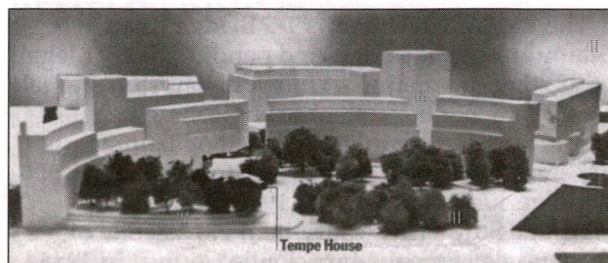
PRESIDENT Peter 9550 3809

MEMBERSHIP Diane 9588 4930

HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736

NEWSLETTER Richard 9557 3823

1836 TEMPE HOUSE AT RISK



MHS is preparing a response to the LEP and DCP for the development proposed (as above) around the John Verge-designed **Tempe House**. While AB Spark's house and **St Magdalene's Chapel** are preserved in the proposal, the intensity, bulk and height of the development so close to these significant buildings is inappropriate.

EDITING COURSE FOR MHS

The Society is planning a local one day course on editing conducted by Consultant Editor and MHS member **Robin Appleton**. Topics/issues likely to be covered:

1. **Remember whose story it is** – accountability and responsibility to sources and readers.
2. **Legal issues** – ethics about ownership of data; copyright; rights and permissions; slander; defamation; libel; recording sources during research, quoting sources in text, acknowledging sources; plagiarism; adaptation; paraphrasing; words that can be 'dangerous'.
3. **Grammatical issues** – active and passive voice, 'that' or 'which'?; collective nouns and verb agreement; singular or plural forms of some nouns; clichés, jargon, metadiscourse, dangling modifiers, bureaucratese and other 'eses' and other 'bad' habits in writing.
4. **Punctuation** – habit versus logic in punctuation use; discussion about forms of punctuation.

Other issues can be covered if requested. The course will be on Saturday 11 November (about 10am-5pm including breaks) and formally advertised in October newsletter. Nominal fee about \$30 MHS members, \$40 non members & pre-payment required. If you are interested or want further information contact Richard on 9557 3823.

Nicholas Buzacott, father of two new members **Olive** and **Norma Buzacott**, was Mayor of Newtown in 1924. He was an alderman on Newtown Council for ten years and on Ashfield Council for three.

Newington College Association of the Arts and the Balmain Sinfonia present the complete Beethoven piano concertos to be performed by five young Ukrainian pianists at the Centenary Hall **Newington College** on **Sunday 3 September** 10.30 am to 4.30 pm. \$40/\$30. Enquiries/tickets Gary Stavrou 8910 5080 or on day.

Members are also invited free of charge to the Centenary Hall Newington College for the Concerto Competition final on **Wednesday 23 August** at 7.30 pm.