

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.



DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE & PARTS OF

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
CAMPERDOWN HURLSTONE PARK NEWTOWN

OUR NEXT MEETING

Saturday 27 April

10.00 am (morning tea) 10.30 start

Petersham Town Hall

To celebrate Heritage Festival *Bridging the Divide: Talk on Marrickville Backyards + Photographic Exhibition Marrickville Our Cultures*

When the Marrickville Community History Group was formed in 1996 social historian George Morgan had a long term interest in examining how people re-establish "fragments of old cultures in new environments". The oral history project *Marrickville Backyards* was funded initially by a Marrickville Council grant and substantially by the Commonwealth Government's Centenary of Federation Grants scheme. The MCHG acknowledges its greatest debt to the participants in the book which was published in early 2001.



Maria Manitsas & her wood-fired oven
(photo: Roslyn Sharp)

Mary Ann Hamilton and George Morgan will talk on backyards from this most ethnically diverse area that are distinct creations of their owners. The project provided "some small recognition of the industry and creativity of local residents and their traditions." Co-editors were Jane Gleeson and Megan Wynne-Jones.

... Bring your own lunch. Bus tour at 1.45 pm
OUR CULTURAL SITES (bookings essential)

At Petersham Town Hall join a vintage bus (from Tempe Bus and Truck Museum) to visit places significant to our different cultures. First to Cadigal/Richardson's Lookout for a *Welcome to Country*, entertainment by local dancer Jenny Thompson and an Aboriginal dance troupe, Cooks River Archaeological Survey presented by Lester Bostock. Then to St Nicholas' Greek Orthodox Church and the Portuguese Museum, Camperdown for guided tours. (Order of visits subject to change as there are two buses)

(Bookings for this Marrickville Council bus tour
Nick 9335 2253 or Peter 9550 3809)

2002 MARRICKVILLE MEDAL AWARD & EXHIBITION OPENING

Sunday 21 April 3-5.30 pm

Herb Greedy Hall 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville

All members are invited to attend the annual presentation of the Marrickville Medal Award for Conservation of Public/Commercial works. Photographs of entries, traditional Vietnamese music, refreshments. *Marrickville Our Cultures* Photographic Exhibition will also be launched. It shows a history of our diverse cultures collated from the Marrickville Local Studies Collection.

Exhibition in Council Admin. foyer, Fisher Street Petersham 22-25 April, Marrickville Metro 26 April & Petersham Town Hall 27 April.

MHS GARAGE SALE

In December the society cancelled its street stall at the Dulwich Hill Festival due to rain. As a result we have lots of donated material and are holding a garage sale on **Saturday 11 May 9 am-4 pm** at **93 Lennox Street Newtown**. We have plenty of room for contributions of jams, pickles, plants, old wares and bric-a-brac.

All members are invited to come and buy some treasure or just drop by for a chat. Please bring a small plate to contribute to the refreshments. **We especially welcome members who have joined in the last year** to meet the committee and find out more about the society. Contact Peter 9550 3809 for information or if you have stock to contribute or be picked up.

Peter Cousens, President

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Max Lees, Camperdown; Paul Carvalho, Dulwich Hill; Joanna Fielding, Marrickville; Janet Kossy (rejoined), Newtown; Louise Rimmer, Petersham; Kevin Williams, Stanmore; Belinda Bennett, Arncliffe; Molly Mitchell, Ashfield; Jamie De Sousa, Earlwood; Ann O'Connell, Haberfield; William Hamnett, Mona Vale; Joyce Waterworth, Undercliffe; Pamela Horstmann, Toowoomba, Queensland.

For enquiries about the new **Leichhardt Local History Group** ring Sue 9519 3268 or June 9810 6885

Despite several educated guesses no corroborated answer is yet known to the **Autumn Trivia Question** regarding the whereabouts of the first traffic lights in Marrickville LGA. Come on members! It should not be assumed that trivia answers are necessarily known at time of posing question!

MYSTERY OF THE PETERSHAM TOWN HALL CLOCKS

Chris Pratten, editor of *Ashfield at Federation* (2001), is a generous man but he delighted in conveying that a long-held belief about the origins of the Petersham Town Hall clock had been discredited. In this journal Julian Holland's article *The Man Behind the Clock Dials – AL Franklin's Ashfield Town Hall Clock* states: "The 1955 [sic] *Story of Petersham*, and later authors drawing on this source, have claimed that a clock which had been installed in the old 1880s Town Hall was reinstated in the new Town Hall when it was erected on the same site. But the contemporary correspondence and newspaper report, the clock in Franklin's photo album, and the appearance of the 'bird-cage' mechanism [see under] all provide convincing evidence to rebut this claim." Arthur Franklin was a scientific instrument maker.

Further substantiation of this claim is in minutes of a Petersham Council special committee meeting of 28 March 1938: "The



Committee having obtained tenders for the provision of electric clocks, recommends, that the lowest tender, that of Mr A. L. Franklin, for the supply of a four-dial 5 feet face clock for the tower, & four secondary dials for the hall and offices, at a cost of £183/5/-, plus wiring charge, be accepted." A meeting on 16 May 1938 decided "that all details in

regard to the installation of electric clocks in accordance with quotation already accepted, be left in the hands of the Architects."

This additional evidence appears conclusive. However it remains curious why the author of *The Story of Petersham* (1948) wrote: "Of the old [1886 town hall] building the only portion retained and incorporated in the new Town Hall was the clock in the tower which as told earlier in this history had been presented to the Council by Alderman W. H. Paling in 1886. That clock was preserved and was fitted to work electrically and to operate as the master clock, synchronising the series of electric clocks in various parts of the new building. The value of that gift to the public by Alderman Paling, so many years ago, is emphasised by the fact that now after a lapse of sixty two years it is still accurately recording the passing hours." No mention whatsoever of Franklin and his clock.

The author goes on to say a special committee consisting of the mayor, several aldermen and the town clerk was appointed with authority to make decisions on "all matters of detail". The town clerk was long-serving staff member Allan M. Shepherd, who must have been aware of details pertaining to the town hall clock and the decision to accept the Franklin tender. This same Allan Shepherd wrote *The Story of Petersham* (on the eve of the amalgamation of Petersham, Marrickville and St Peters Councils; the book's foreword was by Stephen H. Roberts, then Vice Chancellor of the

University of Sydney). Written only ten years after the new town hall was opened, it is difficult to comprehend how he could have got such an important detail wrong.

The obvious solution was to go and see the evidence. There in the clock tower is the dismantled birdcage clock inscribed "Maker AL Franklin 1938". No trace of the Palings timepiece.



Sadly the Franklin clock has now reached its *use-by* date. After the death of its long time maintenance expert, it was decommissioned in early 2001 and replaced by a German made computer master clock with accuracy of two thousandths of a second of UTC (Coordinated Universal Time which officially replaced Greenwich Mean Time in 1986). Its life expectancy is 25-35 years. According to Ron Winterbine, Town Halls Coordinator, the 1938 four clock faces have been retained and the hands are replicas of the previous hands.

Holland and Pratten are vindicated, but the Shepherd assertion continues to puzzle. Perhaps some components of the Paling clock were initially retained in the 1938 town hall. If so, which? But why did Shepherd make no mention of the Franklin clock? Can anyone lend me a time machine?

Richard Blair

(Notes: 1. Thanks to Ron Winterbine at Council for facilitating clock tower visit. 2. The 1886 town hall had a single clock dial facing west whilst current town hall clock has four dials. 3. In April 2001 newsletter I was among those who unwittingly perpetuated the Paling clock myth. RB)



Laurel Horton, Geoff Croft & Peter Cousens at Nelson Lodge (photo: Scott MacArthur)

OUR LAST MEETING

I am sure that the 60 who came on local historian Laurel Horton's Tempe walk on 23 March were as curious as I to learn more about the area and its past particularly as it is on Cooks River navigated by Captain Cook in 1770. Prior to 1840 part of the area around the river was a quarry. In the mid 1830s the well known *Tempe House* was built on the south side as the country home of businessman and trader Alexander Brodie Spark whilst 500 convicts built a dam across the river in 1839.

Princes Highway clearly subdivides Tempe into two distinct areas with the original village east of the highway. The highway was once full of industry such as Tempe Brickworks, the old Illawarra Jam Factory, Smiths Crisps and Penfolds. The Harp Hotel was once known by the quaint name *Cottage of Content*. Opposite is the Bus & Truck Museum, formerly the Tempe Tram Depot where trams terminated their nine kilometre journey from the city.

After 1840 the area became more developed and solicitor Richard Way built the grand home *Lymmerston*. Its huge grounds were subdivided in 1884 and the house later acquired by the Sisters of

Mercy as a convent and they built a school there. It is now Kriskindl Guest House catering for budget short term stays. Hillcrest Avenue is noted for its fine brick footpaths with bull-nosed kerbing, laid in the Depression as relief work for the jobless.

The stone for two imposing stone mansions *Hurlingham* in Union Street (c1876) built by Frederick Gannon and *Nelson Lodge* (1858) in Unwins Bridge Road was quarried locally. *Hurlingham* once had its own pigeon shoot and from 1897 an 18 hole golf course. At *Nelson Lodge* Laurel reappeared dressed as an 1800s housekeeper, whilst the suitably attired owner Geoff Croft talked about the house and provided morning tea (plus snag). *Nelson Lodge* has been faithfully restored and is now a 4 bedroom B&B decorated circa late 1800s. So good to see old Australian cedar, local hardwood, wonderful craftsmanship and old gardens.

Our thanks to Laurel who showed how the area changed from 19th century grand country houses to a largely factory area with workers cottages built around good transport, churches, schools and Cooks River. A gem in the corner of Marrickville LGA!

Maureen Salier



Out-of-town members looking for an affordable B&B might consider the heritage-listed **Nelson Lodge** 125 Unwins Bridge Road Tempe. Double \$99, single \$67. "Not just a stay An Experience". Tel 02 9573 1858.

* Zuttion's Corner Mystery

Inscribed on the building at Union Street and Princes Highway is "1922 Zuttion's Corner DI-VISC". Peter Zuttion was an Austrian immigrant who had an ice-cream factory and allegedly manufactured the first ice cream cones in Australia. The business ran from this building for over 25 years from about 1908. The mystery lies in the significance of "DI-VISC". Zuttion was also noted for financially assisting the Sisters of Mercy at *Lymmerston* and building a wall for them in 1924. Zuttion Lane nearby and Zuttion Avenue, Beverly Hills are also named after him. For trivia buffs these are also the final entries in Sydney street directories.

Tempe walkers on back steps of Nelson Lodge
(photo: Scott MacArthur)

* The Nutshell

At 870 Princes Highway is a building with "The Nutshell" written across the top. A local paper thus named was first printed in 1922 and lasted over 50 years. Trenear Printing, which originally printed *The Nutshell*, is still in business, now in nearby Wood Street. At the behest of Tempe Residents' Group they produced a one-off edition of "News in the Nutshell" on 2 August 1992.

* A Gannon Find

Whilst rummaging through artefacts on sale in the yard at *Nelson Lodge* Scott MacArthur discovered and bought some photos which included some of Alfred Gannon of Brisbane and his house. Scott will be conferring with Anne Carolan and other Gannon descendants who are MHS members. The Gannon family built nearby *Hurlingham*.

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY 27 APRIL

Mary Ann Hamilton & George Morgan talk on *Marrickville Backyards* (am). Bus tour of multicultural sites (pm)

Details on front page

SATURDAY 11 MAY

MHS Garage Sale:

Details on front page

SATURDAY 25 MAY (afternoon)

The Adventures of Algy (1925) silent movie with live accompaniment at Mastertouch, Petersham

CAN YOU HELP?

Wendover at 54 Albermarle Street Newtown is a mid 19th century Georgian style house that has seen better days. Its current owner is keen to start restoring the house to its former glory, and wants to contact former residents or neighbours who may have memories, drawings or photos of the house. *Wendover*, on the corner of Oxford Street, has a matching villa on the corner of Albermarle and Chelmsford Streets, and both houses are identified as being of local heritage significance in the Heritage LEP.



The recent Heritage Study Review assesses them as being of state heritage significance. These are good examples of the early residential development in the village of North Kingston (laid out 1854). The two identical villas illustrate much of the typical detailing of the period despite some alterations to each. The houses are two storey, and have symmetric rendered facades. They have hip roof compositions, one being metal clad, one being slate. *Wendover* retains its stone stables to Oxford Street and these feature a timber roller shutter from the early 20th century. The slate roof verandah of *Wendover* was badly damaged when hit by a truck and is close to collapse.

The houses were intended to be the corners of a row of similarly grand houses, when they were built by Ferdinand Reuss possibly as early as 1850. *Wendover* was the home of Frederick Searl, whose Blair Athol Nursery at Petersham was florist to the State Governor. Later it was a boarding school for young ladies run by a Mrs Salisbury, for whom Salisbury Road was named. If anyone has any further information, contact Vivien Johnson on 9557 2499 (ah).

Scott MacArthur

HERITAGE WATCH

The associations between Marrickville LGA and John Burcham Clamp keep getting stronger! The Anglican Church has been proposing to demolish the rectory at St Luke's Church Enmore on Stanmore Road and build a project home for some years now, with the excuse that the building is in disastrous condition and not able to be adapted for modern pastoral conditions (see April 2000 newsletter). This is in spite of repeated advice from heritage specialists on how the building could be repaired and adapted. This site forms an important visual link between the Enmore Road Retail Precinct and the fine row of the late Victorian and Edwardian houses which lies along the Stanmore Road boundary of the South Kingston Residential Precinct. The insertion of a project home into this significant precinct would be unacceptable.

Thankfully, a change of heart and personnel on the relevant committees has finally seen some serious investigation undertaken as to what will be required to retain the building. The Society was discussing these revised proposals with church representatives (MHS members), when it was revealed that the rectory was designed by John Burcham Clamp, who as we now know designed the nurses home (and probably) the administration building at Eversleigh Hospital.

As the hall between the church and the rectory was designed by the influential early twentieth century architect Professor Leslie Wilkinson, the St Luke's precinct is a unique complex of significant buildings from the 1800s and early 1900s and should be recognised as such. The efforts of the church in now trying to save the rectory are to be applauded. As John Burcham Clamp had strong connections with the Church of England, we anticipate that we will be unearthing more of his work in the area as more research is done.

Scott MacArthur

The War Memorials of the St Peters Municipality is nearing completion and launch details will be announced soon.

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PRESIDENT Peter 9550 3809

TREASURER Susan 9798 2538

HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823

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