

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE & PARTS OF

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
CAMPERDOWN HURLSTONE PARK NEWTOWN



## OUR NEXT MEETING COOKS RIVER HERITAGE WALK WITH DR LESLEY MUIR SATURDAY 26 APRIL 9.45 FOR 10 AM

Meet Old Sugarworks, Hutton St. Canterbury, a short walk along Cooks River from Canterbury Station & 428 bus terminus. To Undercliffe Bridge on 423 bus route. Cost \$5 members; \$7 non members. Bookings Diane 9588 4930.

Marrickville Heritage Society and Canterbury Historical Society join forces for **Lesley Muir's** walk along our shared Cooks River border. The walk begins at the Sugarworks (1840-42) with tales of the comen, entrepreneurs and developers who have been associated with the sandstone building. Morning tea/toilets at Beaman Park, just past the Wardell Road bridge, where we will toast Petersham's Dr Robert Wardell, who successfully blocked the way across Cooks River for over five years. Determined walkers can continue on to Undercliffe, the home of Wardell's opponent Joshua Thorp, where there is a very pleasant coffee-and-chocolate shop for relaxing.

## CRYSTAL STREET/TAVERNERS HILL INFANTS SCHOOL CENTENARY

In October 1903 the Minister for Public Instruction opened a school in Crystal Street Petersham, now occupied by Petersham TAFE. The school relocated to its current site in Elswick Street Petersham in 1978 and was renamed Taverners Hill Infants School. The school is organising centenary activities. If any member of the Society has information or memorabilia about the school or would like to participate in researching or attending any centenary activities, please call David Robinson, President, P & C on 9560 2907 or 0405 127 224.



*Crystal Street Infants School Petersham  
(from Robert Hutchinson's postcard collection)*

Details of 2003 Marrickville Medal which was awarded on 6 April will be in May newsletter.

April marks the 19th anniversary of the formation of the Marrickville Heritage Society. In April 2004 we plan to have a special event to celebrate our 20th birthday.

## TAKE THE RIVERLIFE CHALLENGE

Make a film under five minutes that inspires people to take positive action to protect Cooks River and be a real force for change. Unique interpretations of the river are especially encouraged. Films might refer to the natural, social or cultural attributes of the river, the way the river is now, the way it was or will be in the future.

**Prizes** (awarded at the Gala night) 1st prize \$5,000, 2nd prize \$2,000, 3rd prize \$1,000 production package, Peoples prize \$1,000

**Workshop** 17 May. **Entries close 24 May**

**Gala & Awards Night** Thursday 5 June 6 for 6.30 pm  
Dendy Cinema, King Street, Newtown

**Contact** Hazel Storey (Environmental Services,  
Marrickville Council) 9335 2068

[envtemp@marrickville.nsw.gov.au](mailto:envtemp@marrickville.nsw.gov.au)

## \$4.9 MILLION GRANT FOR COOKS RIVER

Has anyone kept count of the numerous surveys, studies, reviews, schemes and grants to revitalise Cooks River and environs with little apparent improvement? Now the state government has announced a \$4.9 million "funding commitment . . . to improve the green space along the foreshore, improve access to the water and extend pedestrian links along the river". Local councils will be asked to nominate projects for funding and match the state government grants on a dollar-for-dollar basis. The funding commitment will also involve "essential bank stabilisation and restoration work along the river". Sounds great on paper but we await the desired flow-on effect!

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Andrew Buchan, Gino Ciangura, Bruce Levingston, Kimberly O'Sullivan Steward, Marilyn & David Stuart-Wright all of Dulwich Hill; Rodney & Barbara Daniel, Marrickville; Ken Morrison, Petersham; Mike Ticher, Stanmore; Robyn Barnes, Arncliffe; Margretta Sculthorp, Balmain; Marie Holmes, Bradbury; Judith Reynolds, Earlwood; Roslyn Burge, Leichhardt; Win Evans, Sans Souci.

**Camperdown Cemetery Working Bees** Saturdays 12 April, 17 May, 21 June 9.30-11.30 am Church St. Newtown. Morning tea provided. Training by supervising bush regenerator. BYO hat, gloves, sturdy shoes & sunscreen. Details Nell Graham 9335 2197.



## OUR LAST MEETING ALL ABOUT ESTHER

With **Mary Haire** on Saturday 15 March we traversed the Annandale Estate and imagined **Esther Abrahams** driving her carriage at a furious speed around the farmlands that were granted to Major George Johnston. Thankfully she wasn't 'breathalysed' because her detractors said she was an alcoholic (this in an age when 'strong drink' was taken for medicinal purposes). That estate, in present day Stanmore and Annandale, ran down to Johnstons (now Rozelle) Bay.

Esther, a 15 year old Jewess, gave birth to a daughter Roseanna, in Newgate prison in 1787 while awaiting transportation for seven years to Botany Bay. Her crime – stealing silk lace. Aboard the *Lady Penrhyn* of the First Fleet, she met and formed an alliance with George Johnston, a lieutenant in the marines. That relationship was to last until George's death in 1823 and produced seven children.

At the various places of interest along the tour Esther's story was told in an engaging manner by Mary Haire, actor and writer. The entrance to Annandale House was beside the site of the old Stanmore Twin Cinema (now new apartments) and in Corunna Lane we saw the gatehouse (c. 1870s) just recognisable from the drawing, now standing in the backyard of 96 Corunna Road.



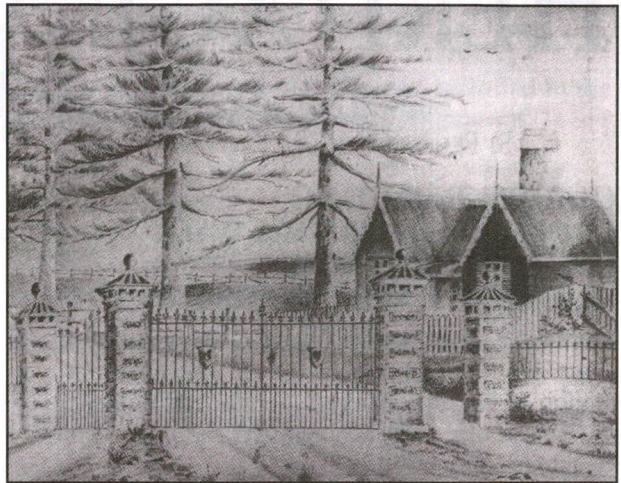
*Members at original entrance gates to Annandale House now at Annandale Public School*

*From left: Peter Riley, Ros Torrent, Margaret McArthur, Mary Armstrong (obscured), Ellie McKenzie, Sally Shand (crouching), Nancy MacAlpine, Laurel Young, Sue Miller, Mary Haire, Alex Redmond, Kurt Carlsen, Jennifer Kent, Keith Sutton & Michelle Carlsen (photo: Diane McCarthy)*

A remarkable woman, Esther was the strength behind the running of the farm that became a 'model' in the colony; George was busy as a high-ranking officer. All was gone by 1905 when the House was demolished and the magnificent Norfolk Island pines along the carriageway cut down. We walked to Weekley Park in Stanmore, a parcel of land given by the Johnston family on the sale of the estate.

In Annandale Public School in Johnston Street, our final stop, we saw those entrance gates and sandstone piers that once stood on the road to Parramatta and from where Major Johnston rode to put down the uprising of the Irish convicts in 1804 at Vinegar Hill and in 1808 to lead the column of

soldiers to arrest Governor Bligh. Throughout his turbulent career it was Esther who kept the estate working.



*FM Rothery's sketch of entrance gates & gatehouse: the only extant evidence of Annandale House & farm*

However Mary Haire is determined that we should not forget Esther Abrahams who arrived in the colony under such a disadvantage – the stain of convict, unmarried mother and Jewess. To this end Mary established the Esther Abrahams Project of history and art events.

**Shirley Hilyard**

## MARRICKVILLE'S HISTORY IN PICTURES

At Marrickville Library on Thursday 27 March Marrickville Library Services launched a new database containing historical images of the Marrickville Local Government Area. Library Manager Ross Coggin welcomed about 50 attendees whilst Marrickville Historian Chrys Meader introduced Sue Shaw.

In June 2001 The Marrickville Library Multi Media Collection & Publishing Project – a database of photographs with a limited number of images – had been launched at Marrickville Library. Sue and Local Studies Assistant Jannice Packer have since scanned and catalogued over 2,000 photographs and drawings from the local studies collection onto a revamped and user friendly images database, a valuable resource for anyone interested in the social, economic and cultural history and development of the Marrickville LGA.

The database can be accessed on council's website <[www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au](http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au)>. Queries and suggestions can be emailed directly from the database on <[lslibrarian@marrickville.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lslibrarian@marrickville.nsw.gov.au)>. Those without Internet access can use the computer terminal in local studies room and also utilise a selection of CD ROMs for historical research. Information Desk can help. The database will be constantly added to and enhanced. For more information, or to have photographs scanned without relinquishing them, ring Jannice 9335 2170.

**Sue Shaw** (former Acting Local Studies Librarian)



## COOKS RIVER AUTUMN TRIVIA

In response to what is the earliest recorded use of the name **Cooks River** local historian **Brian Madden** advised that according to James Jervis, ASTC, FRAHS *A History of the Municipality of Canterbury* Canterbury Municipal Council, 1951, p. 10: "Cook's River does not appear to have been named until 1798. In that year Governor Hunter sent to England a map showing the country around Sydney and on it Cook's River is named. The name does not appear on an earlier map which Hunter sent Home in 1796." (**Scott MacArthur** gave a similar answer.)

**Shirley Hilyard** submitted an extract from Reed's *Place-Names of New South Wales* (AH & AW Reed, 1969, p. 42) "Cook's River. After Captain James Cook, for it was here that he made his first landing in "New Holland" on 29 April 1770. The first record of the name is on a chart of the NSW settlement dated 10 January 1798."

Shirley also ascertained from Carol Jarvis (Geographic Names Board) that in the Geographic Names Register of New South Wales the name Cooks River (without the apostrophe) was **not formally assigned** till 9 March 1973. It was described as "A stream rising about 1.5 km N of the suburb of Bankstown flowing generally NE then ESE for 20 km into Botany Bay." Its origin: "named after Captain James Cook 1798 (information from Canterbury & District Historical Society Bicentenary).

Brian Madden and Lesley Muir (who will lead a Cooks River walk on 26 April: see front page) queried the assertion in the trivia question that Captain Cook had ventured up Cooks River. They have never seen written evidence of this, though agree that "the very fine stream of fresh water on the north side" [of Botany Bay] was probably Cooks River.

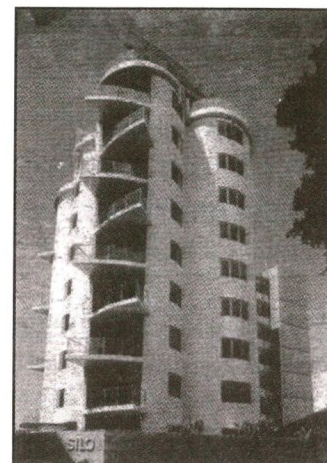
Richard Cashman in *Early Land Grants in Marrickville in Heritage 1* (1984, p. 2) states "It is believed that Captain Cook travelled up the Cook's River as far as Princes Highway, Tempe, in 1770." Frederick Larcombe in *Change and Challenge: A History of the Municipality of Canterbury, NSW* (1979, p. 18) says "Cook discovered the 'very fine stream' afterwards to bear his name, and his map of Botany Bay shows he travelled up it at least as far as the Wolli Creek junction." The Wolli Creek junction is west of the Princes Highway.

In *Captain Cook and Australia* edited by Sylvia Corner (1973) are extracts from Cook's Journal. Thursday 3 May 1770 (pp. 35-36) "I went in the pinnacle to the head of the bay, accompanied by Doctors Solander and Monkhouse, in order to examine the country . . . and went almost to the head of the inlet, where we landed and travelled some distance inland." The 'head of the bay' from the accompanying sketch of Botany Bay would appear to be the inlet (Cooks River) entering the bay, so presumably the 'head of the inlet' was some distance up? Though not proven, it is likely Cook did go up the river.

**Richard Blair**

## OPTICAL ILLUSION ARCHITECTURE

Waratah Flour and the Great Western Milling Co. in Dulwich Hill date from 1914. It later became Goodman Fielder Flour Mill and in May 1999 many members toured just before the mill closed and was sold for adaptive reuse as housing. The *Waratah Mills* apartments have been selling like hot cakes as buyers have warmed to the striking, innovative design of the 1923 heritage-listed silos pictured in the *Sunday Telegraph* of 2/3/03. Are those balconies really on an incline?



An intriguing item presented at last September's *Show & Tell* was the wedding certificate of member **Ros Torrent's** parents. To clarify report in October newsletter, Ros wrote "To set the record straight, it was my parents' marriage certificate, and both the bride and the groom had the same name, Reeves. The minister – Rev. Arthur Reeves, of St Peters, Cooks River – was the father of the groom. The witnesses were the brother of the groom and the sister of the bride, both named Reeves. Not to be left out, the father of the bride, also named Reeves, signed his name too."

- Several of the Society's theatre buffs went to **Newtown's New Theatre** on Sunday 30 March to see Moira Buffini's thoroughly entertaining play *Silence* set a millennium ago but with age-old themes. Apart from supporting MHS and local theatre this was an enjoyable and inexpensive way to round off a weekend. Thanks to Tricia Blombery and Stuart Grigg (also co-construction supervisor) for organising this theatre party.

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- We note the passing of the **last of the over 100-year-old pepper trees at Dulwich High School** (reported in *The Glebe* on 2/4/03). After dropping branches last year arborists recommended the tree's removal. Trunk remnants 'will be made into furniture as a memory of the iconic piece of nature'. Perhaps the tree had reacted to earlier plans to close the school (aborted for political reasons)!

\* \* \* \* \*

- An archival search reveals **Castle Leap** on the corner of Wallace Street & Livingstone Road Marrickville was built on the Riverside subdivision of 1884 when it was owned by James Bushby, a stonemason. By 1905 the stone cottage was called *Petra* (Greek rock); changed to *Castle Leap* by 1911. It was converted into Castle Leap Hospital in 1959, with so-called "improvements" since. Now, apart from the stone fence, there is little evidence of it ever having been a house. Castle Leap recently sold at auction for \$2.855 million (see February newsletter).



## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

**SATURDAY 26 APRIL 9.45 for 10 am start**  
**Lesley Muir's Cooks River Heritage Walk**  
Details front page

**SATURDAY 24 MAY**  
**Leonie Knapman on History of Joadja Creek**

**SATURDAY 28 JUNE**  
**Annual General Meeting**

### ANZAC DAY EXHIBITION

Members are invited to the launch of a special exhibition of material held in the Local History Collection to commemorate Anzac Day. The earliest material dates back to the First World War 1914-18, some of which has never before been on public display. It includes photographs, poetry and short articles from the local community relating to family history or examining the social impact of war on local communities.

The launch is at **6 pm Thursday 24 April** at Petersham Town Hall. **RSVP 9335 2162**. Exhibition 28 April to 1 May upstairs at Petersham. For other enquiries ring Marrickville Historian Chrys Meader 9335 2138.

### THE WAR MEMORIALS OF ST PETERS MUNICIPALITY & MARRICKVILLE

**REMEMBERS** are two war-related publications produced by Marrickville Heritage Society and on sale. *The War Memorials of St Peters Municipality (incorporating the suburbs of St Peters, Sydenham, Tempe)* [2002; \$25 for members; \$34.95 non members + \$7.50 p & h] contains over 3000 recorded names from the former St Peters Municipality who served in the two World Wars. Compiled by Angela Phippen assisted by Scott MacArthur and partly funded by a NSW Heritage Office grant allocated by the RAHS. The RAHS magazine *History* (March 2003) review says "the presentation of the information has been very well structured."

*Marrickville Remembers 1939-1945: Extracts from the oral and written histories of Marrickville residents* [1997; \$10 + \$6 p & h] encompasses over 100 oral history interviews conducted by MHS members with people who were associated with the current Marrickville LGA during the World War II years. Compiled by Angela Phippen and Harold Welsh. Both publications are available at meetings or can be home-delivered for free in the Marrickville LGA. Ring Diane 9588 4930.

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## IHO SOUGHT FOR FERNDALE

(The following is extracted from a 25 page submission to the NSW Heritage Council by **Bruce Preston** who is not a MHS member. It is noted that **Ferndale was Classified by the National Trust in 1995 following a submission by MHS: see December 1995 newsletter. It is also included in the Draft Marrickville Heritage Study Review.**)

*Ferndale*, 31 Camden Street Newtown, built in the mid 19th century, is the original schoolmaster's residence for Camden College and the only surviving structure & remnant of historic *Camden Villa*. It represents an important link both to 19th century Newtown and to the broader context of social, economic, political and cultural development of Sydney in the mid to late 1800s. *Ferndale* has a significant connection to many important historical figures – Thomas Holt, Rev. Robert Bourne, John Fairfax, David Jones, Henry Kendall, Arthur Aspinall, Rev. Samuel Kent and Mary Reibey.



*Ferndale from Kent Lane 1991*  
(photo: David Hilyard)

Marrickville Council has in the face of sustained local objection granted permission to a developer to construct a dwelling in the three-metre wide driveway to the property from Camden Street. Such a structure would permanently prevent views and access to the house from Camden Street and spoil the curtilage of the house. Also Council has not responded to suggestions that a heritage classification of *Ferndale* is appropriate and claims it cannot re-examine its approval of the relevant development application.

This matter is now urgent because the developer is doing initial preparatory work. *Ferndale* is in pressing need of a preservation order for the house & grounds. It is also highly desirable to restore the driveway and access to Camden Street by careful demolition of the disused garage that fronts on Camden Street and refurbishment of the strip of land behind it, adding appropriate gates to the Camden Street frontage.

The Heritage Council of NSW is in a position to contribute to an important work of preservation and conservation by placing a heritage status on this property. **It is submitted that the timely intervention now of placing an Interim Heritage Order (IHO)** will allow the Heritage Council an opportunity to study this matter in more depth. Such an action will prevent a rash decision by the present pro-developer faction controlling Marrickville Council from causing yet another permanent heritage loss to the area, to Sydney and to NSW.