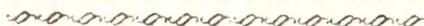




MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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OUR NEXT MEETING

Saturday November 23 (at our usual venue - the Aldermen's Room, Petersham Town Hall at 10.30 a.m.). Slide Show and Talk by Richard Cashman on his trip to the village of Marrick, North Yorkshire.

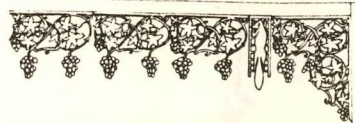
At 1.00 p.m. we will adjourn to Petersham Park for a picnic with music to celebrate the end of the Society's year and the onset of the Festive Season. Chairperson of our Social Subcommittee, Anne Carolan has organised volunteers to supply an array of delicious munchies. It will all be 'finger food' so cutlery is unnecessary, but do bring a paper plate and napkin, also something to drink out of. Phone Anne with any further offers of food or help - 406-4862. There will be fun and games for the children, including a Great Treasure Hunt devised by Aunty Chrys.

FUTURE PROGRAMME

The Society's first meeting of 1986 will take place on February 22, at the usual venue. Details to be announced.

HOW TO JOIN OUR SOCIETY: It's only \$7 for individuals, \$10 for households and institutions, \$2 for pensioners and students. You will receive each month a copy of the Society newsletter, and our journal *Heritage* each year. Meetings are monthly and are publicised in the newsletter. Post your subscriptions to Chrys at Marrickville Library, Marrickville Town Hall, 2204. Our 'rolling membership' means you're financial for a full twelve months from whenever you join!

OUR LAST EXCURSION



A large group turned out on the rainy morning of October 26 for the rare opportunity to visit the Egyptian Room of the Masonic Temple, Petersham. This unique room features a splendid frieze of scenes from the Book of the Dead - an Egyptian papyrus depicting the soul's progress after death. The room was originally built in 1927 for the Masonic Temple at 22-24 College St which succumbed to redevelopment in the seventies. Eve Sharpe, then an alderman on Marrickville Council, assisted the Masons with their plan to relocate the Egyptian Room in the Petersham premises. We also owe Eve our gratitude for arranging this visit.

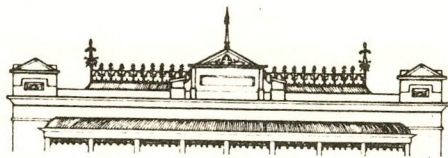
Amongst the room's other dramatic elements are its many lotus-headed columns and a bas relief by the artist Rayner Hoff. The gold which is prominent in the decoration is real gold leaf - it is for the replenishment of this that our \$1.00 donations will go.

Our host for the morning was Mr Harry Maas who has kindly offered to advise the society of the next formal lecture to be given on the room's significance. He told us something of the background to the room's relocation; the recreated Egyptian Room varies little from the original, Mr Maas feels that the only alterations are improvements - subtly enhanced proportions, better acoustics and a more authentic colour scheme.

LET'S KEEP MASTERTOUCHE IN MARRICKVILLE

As many Society members will know, The Federal Government has tentative plans to relocate Mastertouch - or at least its musical instrument collection - in Canberra. The move is the only means of assisting Mastertouch with its financial difficulties so far offered by the Government. If you object and want Mastertouch to stay in Marrickville, write to Barry Cohen, Minister for the Arts, Heritage and Environment, House of Representatives, Parliament House, Canberra Act 2600, to register your protest.

Iron Lace Decoration



Good news for renovators and those generally interested in Australia's rich heritage of cast iron decoration - 'iron lace' as it is known - is the recent publication of Brian Turner's book **Australia's Iron Lace**. This survey traces the use of cast iron decoration in Australia from the 'boom' days of the late Victorian era, through its fall from grace in the middle decades of this century, to the renewed interest which has characterised the move back to inner-city living.

The wealthy home owners and builders of the 1860's-80's undoubtedly meant their extravagant use of iron lace, along with flamboyant stucco decoration, to convey a sense of their affluence. However, as the author points out, neither modesty of scale nor the lowly social status of its occupants debarred a building from adornment; he cites Marrickville's No 43 1/2 Edgeware Rd (Sydney's tiniest house) which sports a full panoply of iron lace, as an example.

Burgeoning nationalism contributed a few Australian motifs, such as tree ferns and kookaburras, to locally produced cast iron panels, but imported designs predominated. The shamrock, rose and thistle were ubiquitous; more rare is the Harp of Erin, an example of which can be seen in Australia St, Newtown.

Since the beauty and elegance of Australia's iron lace has been 'rediscovered' demands for reproductions of broken and missing columns and baluster panels has grown. Grahame's Foundry in Newtown is one of the few working foundries using traditional methods to reproduce iron lace. By a highly skilled and painstaking process moulds are made from originals, the damaged or missing portions being recreated with the use of special tools.

Australia's Iron Lace is readable, informative and attractively produced - some of the line drawings from the book are featured in this month's newsletter.

LOCAL ORDER CELEBRATES ITS CENTENARY

On November 4 1885, six Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, aboard the *Liguria*, first sighted Sydney Harbour. Young Sister Brigid Rosser wrote in her journal: "It was a glorious morning... We thought Sydney was everything that was beautiful". The sisters stayed in temporary homes in Darlinghurst, at first, but within a year had moved to William St, Woolloomooloo where they set up a night refuge and soup kitchen for women and children. A year later, the Cardinal Archbishop presented them with the first Australian house for their order, on a site adjoining St Thomas' Church, Petersham to conduct an Institute for the Blind. So on October 4 1887 the Little Company of Mary came to Lewisham and founded the hospital that has become known and respected throughout Australia for the skill of its medical staff and the quality of its care for the sick.

PUBLICATION OF HERITAGE No.2

The 1985 edition of the Society's annual journal *Heritage* will be available at the November meeting. *Heritage No.2* is a very respectable 50 pages in length and contains 13 articles on subjects ranging from early Stanmore to the Winged Victory, from celebrity memoirs to a guide to the Municipality's historic pubs! Our thanks go to the many enthusiastic contributors and to *Heritage's* tireless editor, Richard Cashman.

NEW MEMBERS

Ros Tomlins, Robert Butterworth, Matthew Wilson,
Donald Sheehan, Wilma Gumm, Doug and Judy Benson,
June and Mike Hannah.

