

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



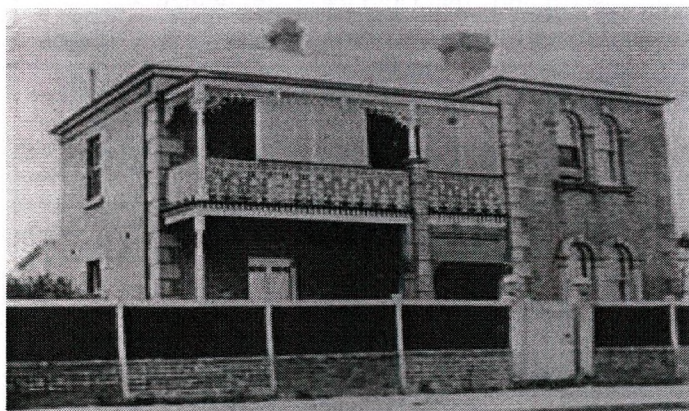
## OUR NEXT MEETING

### CANTERBURY TALES & VALES

Saturday 27 September 9.45 for 10 am start

Meet *Beulah Vista* 15 Church St. Canterbury (428 bus & C'bury Stn. nearby). \$8 members, \$10 non members includes morning tea. Bookings Diane 9588 4930.

In August 1992 Lesley Muir and Brian Madden addressed our Society about the rich history of the Canterbury LGA (*Canterbury Tales*). The first land grant in the area "dated 28 May 1793 was of 100 acres to Rev. Richard Johnson, the Chaplain of the First Fleet, and he called the land *Canterbury Vale*", now in Ashbury. Lesley and Brian will lead a two kilometre round walk in **Federation Canterbury and Ashbury**. Highlights: Canterbury Boys High School (no prize for naming its most famous pupil), Heritage Panel for Canterbury Farm and several Federation Style houses including two in Hardy Street with Marrickville connections – *Hanworth* built by Henry Smith of Petersham and *Burnley* a beautifully restored Queen Anne Style house.



*Beulah Vista in 1920s*

(Local Studies Collection, Canterbury Municipal Library)

Master stonemason George Tomkins married Florence Gifford in 1884 and they moved on medical advice from Petersham to Canterbury, then considered one of the healthiest areas in Sydney! He built *Beulah Vista*, a fine 1888 Victorian Filigree style two storey stone and brick house, now owned by Canterbury City Council and headquarters of **Canterbury and District Historical Society**, who are hosting this outing. We will also visit St. Paul's Church and graveyard next door.

## MARRICKVILLE FESTIVAL

The annual festival is Sunday 21 September from 10 am along Marrickville Road. Do visit our stall and donate items for sale. For collection and if you can help on the stall ring Angela 9280 2429 after hours.

## MHS WEBSITE UPDATE

Members may have noticed the society's website address did not appear on our last newsletter. This was due to a recent committee decision to discontinue our website which had operated since late 2001. It had become expensive to operate and we felt that even with a cheaper website it was unjustifiable given our need to cut costs. This money could be used in other ways for the benefit of members. We would love to hear from any member with a viable alternative. The Society has registered a free email address which is on back of newsletter <marrickvilleheritagesociety@hotmail.com>

Diane McCarthy President

(Note: Special thanks to member **Lisa Angus** for maintaining the website. – Editor)

## CADIGAL WANGAL WEBSITE

<[www.cadigalwangel.com.au](http://www.cadigalwangel.com.au)>

Described as the "most comprehensive indigenous website of any local government area" the Cadigal Wangal website was recently launched. It traces Aboriginal history from 40,000 years ago and site information came from the findings of an Aboriginal site survey of Cooks River. Check it out.

## MARRICKVILLE-BY-THE-SEA!

A Sunday Telegraph article (20 July 2003) described Ballina's "untidy layout, tall buildings, shrinking patches of native bushland and garish development in stark contrast to [nearby] Byron Bay." In response Cr Margaret Howes of Ballina Shire Council wrote to the Sunday Telegraph (27 July 2003) lamenting how poorly this reflected on the area. She wrote how her shire had been "devastated by the development lobby in the name of progress ... with a concrete jungle along the waterfront".

Not just Ballina. She went on: "And why are we allowing the sleepy little seaside village of Lennox Head to become "**Marrickville-by-the-sea**", with grossly over-developed allotments and hardly any space between the buildings?" (Similar letter from Cr Howes appeared in Lismore's *Northern Rivers Echo* on 24 July 2003.)

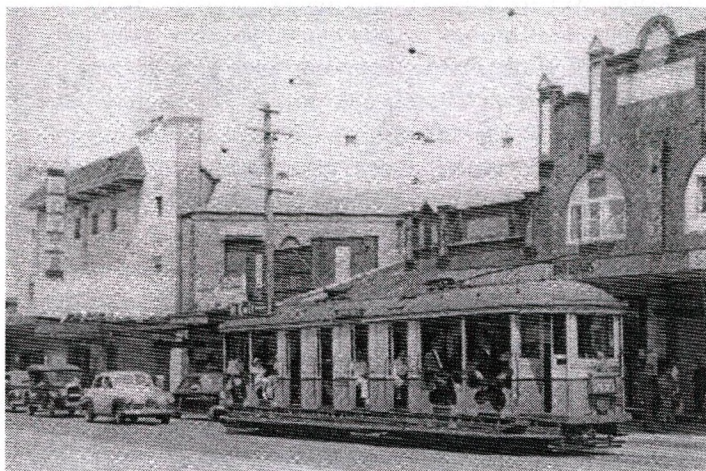
Congratulations to **South Sydney Heritage Society** for its tenth birthday celebrations this month!

**History Week 2003 13-21 September**



## OUR LAST MEETING SYDNEY TRAMWAYS 1861-1961

Over 60 members attended our (probably final) Saturday meeting at Petersham Town Hall on Saturday 23 August to see the slide history of Sydney's trams. **Peter Sage's** wonderful pictorial account was complemented by an illuminating narrative, interspersed with personal touches. Witness a shot of the last tram ride from La Perouse to Randwick (25 February 1961) – "you'll have to take my word for it, but that's my elbow!" To get the best shot of an intersection Peter would approach the manager of some department store or bank and ask for permission to go to the roof to take some photos. This was in the 1950s but, as Peter observed, bank managers would not be so accommodating these days.



Peter recalled the popular names of trams – toast racks, cross bench, Venerable 80 and the Coupled Es. Apart from the tram nostalgia, the audience relished the street-scapes of our fading past. Magical names like Bebarfalds, Snows, Beard Watsons, McDowell's, the Embassy & Mayfair; the First and Last Hotel and the Farmers & Graziers Building, replaced by the AMP; and the Fort Macquarie Tram Depot at Bennelong Point bringing speculation by Peter at how much money may have been saved had the fort been transformed into the Opera House!

There was plenty of tram trivia. The first tram fatality in Sydney was on 15 January 1864 when eminent composer Isaac Nathan was killed by a horse tram while crossing Pitt Street (Nathan composed and produced Australia's first opera and is buried at Camperdown Cemetery). We learnt about: the free ride over Gladesville Bridge as there was no footway, the prison tram, the Coogee Loop, the counterweight dummy to steady trams on steep Darling Street Balmain, the expression 'shoot through like a Bondi Tram', and the many tram crashes, including one into a barber shop yielding the worst imaginable puns.

Peter showed Emile Mercier's classic cartoons with trams heading for Shrdlu Junction; and the Green Lines that serviced the Marrickville LGA. Incidentally, the last trams to Dulwich Hill and Cooks River both ran on 28 September 1957. In thanking Peter we understand his slide library is vast, so we anticipate future glimpses into Sydney's past!

Richard Blair

Marrickville Council has advised the Society that a hefty fee will be payable for future **Saturday meetings at Petersham Town Hall**, however it has offered free use of alternate venues. Update next month. Thanks for donations for sale from **Ted Green & Ellie Zinsmeester** (old books) and **Shirley Hilyard** (succulents). – **President**

## SPRING TRIVIA QUESTION

Where is the tram picture on left? And the year?  
(Richard 9557 3823).

## FAREWELL MRS TOP

Vanessa and Anatol Slabaspyckyj regrettably closed the doors of Marrickville's most famous restaurant **Mrs Top** for the last time on 23 August after 22 years. The name *Mrs Top* had been "the nickname of the mother of the original owners, who briefly ran the restaurant in the late 1970s". So sought after was this establishment at **395 Illawarra Road Marrickville** that **Mrs Top** was booked out until the end of 2004!

MHS member Betty Healey booked ten months in advance for the Society's dinner there on 10 March 1994. Judith Matheson wrote "Mrs Top's restaurant has become something of a local legend in recent years. ... The evening didn't disappoint ... food and service were excellent. ... Desserts were a wonderful frozen grape construction and a rhubarb crumble served with custard and cream and ice cream, which was enjoyed by our president Shirley Hilyard."

## MARRICKVILLE'S TOP EAT STREET!

*Feastability* is a popular annual Newtown event (next: 28 September) but we were intrigued to discover our ultimate eat street. Marrickville Council's list of DAs in *The Glebe* of 27 August included one to demolish part of the premises at **1 Chewable Street Marrickville** to erect a basement laundry (DA200300528). Council's website, however, revealed this was a typo for **Schwebel Street**. Quaint!

Thanks to **Lorraine Beach** for organising the splendid evening at Petersham's **Restaurant Portugal** on 29 August. Food, wine and company were all above par, but next time perhaps more newer members!

## HONORARY AUDITOR

We have regretfully accepted the resignation of the Society's Honorary Auditor **Barry Simmons**, who held the position from March 2000. Best wishes and thanks to Barry for his hard work over the past three years. Although an audited set of accounts is no longer a requirement of the Fair Trading Office, the committee believes it prudent for an audit still to be done. A replacement will be sought later.

**Diane McCarthy** Public Officer



## 2003 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER REPORT

(presented at our June AGM)

Now in our 20th year some people still call us the Marrickville Historical Society. I invariably point out that whilst we focus strongly on the **history** of the area, the society chose the descriptor **heritage** in the belief that protecting our built and environmental heritage is the major activity of the society. The defining heritage moment in the last year was the unforeseen demolition of *Prospect Villa* in Petersham last September. Photographic evidence demonstrated that the condition of this building had been more than satisfactory. As it was unlisted the society was not notified by council. This reprehensible act was endorsed by a council with a limited appreciation of conserving much of our built heritage; a council which was slow in appointing a new heritage adviser; and a council which continues to delay the release of the 1997 Heritage Study Review on which it spent tens of thousands of dollars.\*

The demolition of Prospect Villa coincided with a range of other buildings under threat and as a result we devoted the October 2002 newsletter to Heritage Watch and made it a six page newsletter. I understand some members wrote to council expressing their concern. I firstly thank Scott MacArthur who writes the bulk of our heritage watch reports, which are invariably well-researched and succinctly written.

Two significant changes have recently occurred with the newsletter. Firstly we lost Shrubs & Tubs as an advertiser. Thanks to an approach by Shirley Hilyard back in 1990 their ads had appeared in most of our journals since and in most newsletters between September 1991 and February 2003. The revenue from these ads assisted greatly in financing our publications. Shrubs & Tubs have since closed. Should a member know of a likely advertiser for either the newsletter or our other publications we would love to hear.

Secondly Gopher Graphics produced its final newsletter for us in May after an almost nine year association. When I became newsletter editor in August 1994, the owner of Gopher (then Harlow Printing), Ed Jones was on the executive committee and produced the first three newsletters for free. However it was decided for consistent quality it should be done on a commercial basis with Ed being paid. His cost for layout and printing was very reasonable and did not significantly increase over the years. Ed decided in April producing the newsletter was no longer viable. I appreciate Ed's assistance including his monthly trips in recent years to collect the disc and artwork, and the skills of his layout experts (Kelly, Marina or Lauren) who helped fine-tune the newsletter before printing (actually done by Galloping Press). Gopher may still produce some the society's other publications.

The committee anticipated the newsletter would cost more to produce and early quotes certainly supported that view. However despite some initial establishment costs including an external CD burner now owned by the society, the newsletter will actually cost less to produce than before. I could not have done this on my own and I've been on a steep learning curve. I'd like to acknowledge genuine offers of assistance from Mark Matheson, Angela Phippen, Alison Wright and Ellie Zinsmeester. I was assisted by Angela Wong from work and Lorraine Beach, but I would especially like to thank Lisa Angus, who also handles our webpage, for her assistance which was most readily available to me at the eleventh hour and will be ongoing. The World of Print in Ultimo, who were most accommodating, did the printing. The newsletter does not seem to look much different, though further fine-tuning is needed.

Writing up *Our Last Meeting* attracted a different reporter for each meeting, but 80% were women. I'm not sure whether this is because our male members were more backward in coming forward or just more backward! Trivia questions were all successfully answered but none more so than naming yesteryear's local picture theatres.

I would like to thank all who contributed to the newsletter. Special thanks to Shirley Hilyard for proofreading and constructive suggestions. Diane McCarthy warrants special mention not only for all her contributions and encouragement, but for the staggering amount of work she does behind-the-scenes. Diane and Keith

Sutton also helped with newsletter deliveries to runners when I was unavailable. Thanks to Ian Phillips for hoofing the batches of newsletters to runners' doors.

And so to the runners, many who have earned long service leave but still enjoy this monthly outing. Alphabetically they are Jan Armstrong, Lorraine Beach, Lu Bell, Richard Blair, John Blattmann, Glynnis Burnet, Nigel Butterley, June Cameron, Iain Carolin, Peter Cousens, Fred Ellis, Rosemary Fallon, Tricia Feast, Barbara Gibbons, Monica & Joe Grabowski, Shirley Hilyard, Peter James & Joan Sinclair, Diane McCarthy, Mark Matheson, Pat Mullen, Allan Outlaw, Ian Phillips, Peter Robertson, Pamela Stewart and Ken Turner. Pamela Stewart continues to do a sterling job with postals and maintaining the membership records.

I would especially like to single out our most senior runner Fred Ellis. We gave him leave of absence when his wife Joyce was ill last year but he resumed his run this year. We have had an exceptional year for gaining new members especially through our festival stalls. Locally this phenomenon happened mainly in three sectors: north west Dulwich Hill (9 new) (runners Rosemary Fallon & Glynnis Burnet), central Marrickville (8) (runner Lorraine Beach) and north Newtown (7) (runner Peter Cousens). Thank you.

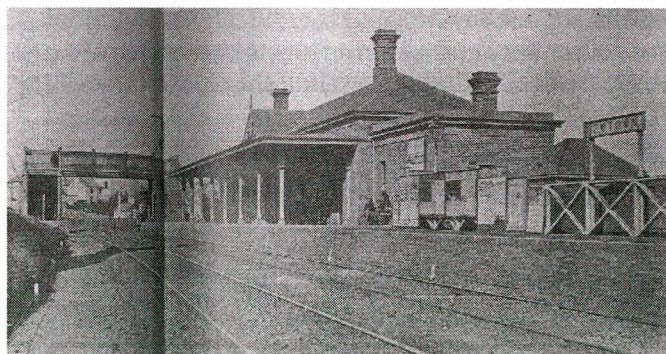
**Richard Blair**

\* As reported in last newsletter Council has since decided to make the Review available for public comment.

The Heritage Office has decided that following the three month Interim Heritage Order the DA approval for the driveway into historic *Ferndale*, Newtown will stand (see April & May newsletters). However the Heritage Office has recommended to Marrickville Council that *Ferndale* be added to the Heritage Local Environment Plan as an individual item.

Shirley Doolan found this gem from the minutes of Newtown Municipal Council Tuesday 25 March 1890: "Correspondence – From the Australian Gas Light Company that at the next full moon the public lamps will not be lighted for 4 nights before and on the night of the full moon. Received."

### ORIGINAL NEWTOWN STATION IN 1863



The first railway line in New South Wales opened on 26 September 1855 between Sydney and Parramatta. The original Newtown Station, seen in this 1863 photo, stood on the site of the former Crago Flour Mill, soon to be transformed into apartments. Newtown Station was relocated to its present site in 1892, but it is not known if any of the original building fabric was retained. The overhead footbridge was near the appropriately named Station Street. Note the array of advertising (reproduced from Robert Lee's *Colonial Engineer: John Whitton* UNSW Press, 2000).



## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

**WEDNESDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 9.30 am**  
**Petersham Promenade to Trethaway**  
(History Week activity)

Details last newsletter. Bookings Diane 9588 4930

**SATURDAY 27 SEPTEMBER**  
**Canterbury Tales & Vales**

Details on front page

**SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER**  
To be advised

**SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER**  
**Tour of Gore Hill Cemetery**

### FOR THE TERM OF HIS NATURAL LIFE

If you missed it in 1927 you can now catch up with this classic Australian silent film. Based on the novel by Marcus Clarke (no, not that one) and produced by Norman Dawn it is "a gritty, epic adventure of the penal system in early Tasmania, with drama and intrigue to spare." Greg Crease on Hammond organ will accompany the film at **Mastertouch Music Room** 308 Stanmore Road, Petersham Sunday 21 September 2 pm. Admission \$12.50. Bookings essential 9569 5128.

### QUAGMIRE OF NEW NATIONAL HERITAGE LEGISLATION

With most media focus on political personalities and parties, members may be unaware of legislation passed in the Senate around 21 August. The Australian Heritage Commission website says that "three bills will usher in a new era of protection and management for Australian heritage places. ... There will be a public nomination process that will allow individuals, the community and governments to nominate places to the National Heritage List and the Commonwealth Heritage List. The Australian Heritage Commission will be replaced by the Australian Heritage Council as the federal government's expert advisory body on heritage matters."

In a media release (13 May 2003) the Federal Minister for the Environment & Planning Dr David Kemp said "the new list does not replace the existing Register of the National Estate, but adds a new category of protection. When the new list is commenced, the existing register with 13,500 places, will remain in place, and will continue to be added to." Really! According to Sen. Bob Brown the new legislation "excludes forests and delists thousands of places off the Register of the National Estate". What is fact and what is spin? Much is still unclear about the legislation which will return to the House of Representatives with numerous amendments. We should definitely remain wary. Watch this space!

Richard Blair

### 200 YEARS AGO MATTHEW FLINDERS

arrived back in Sydney on 9 June 1803. He had been charting the coast of Australia, but the condition of *Investigator*, a 'rotting hulk', forced him to abandon the survey after sailing through the Wessel Islands in the Gulf of Carpentaria. His plan was then to return to England where he hoped his mentor, Sir Joseph Banks would equip another ship.

He left Sydney on 10 August 1803 as a passenger on *Porpoise* in convoy with *Bridgewater* and *Cato*, only to be wrecked one night on a reef in the Coral Sea (named by Flinders). Only *Bridgewater* sailed on. Was it unaware of the wrecks? There they remained on a sandbank for seven weeks while Flinders and a small crew took the cutter to journey back to Sydney.

On 9 September Governor King was very surprised at his return and gave him *Cumberland*! Again in convoy with *Rolla* (bound for China) and *Francis* (to go up with them and return with news of the situation for King), they left Sydney on 20 September bound for Wreck Reef and arrived on 7 October to relieve those on the sandbank.



William Westall's *View of Wreck-Reef Bank* (1803)

And so they embarked on the various ships with Flinders and a crew of ten on *Cumberland*, not forgetting his beloved cat, Trim. Now it was *Cumberland* 'exceedingly crank' and 'very leaky' that caused him to call at the island of Mauritius, a French possession. The rest is history. Treated as a spy, he was detained for six and a half years. Back in England on 24 October 1810 and ill, he wrote the narrative for his charts. *A Voyage to Terra Australis* was published on 18 July 1814. Matthew Flinders died the next day.

Shirley Hilyard

**Note:** On 25 May 1991 wreck diver Logan Apperley addressed MHS about discovering the wreck of *Cato* at Wreck Reef. The Matthew Flinders exhibition returns to the State Library from 1 December.

**PRESIDENT** Diane 9588 4930  
**TREASURER** Stuart 9560 8070  
**HERITAGE WATCH** Scott 9559 5736  
**NEWSLETTER EDITOR** Richard 9557 3823