

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE & PARTS OF

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
CAMPERDOWN HURLSTONE PARK NEWTOWN



OUR NEXT MEETING

Colleen Morris *Playing the Garden Detective*
Herbert Greedy Hall
79 Petersham Rd Marrickville
(Note new venue opp. St Clements Church)
Saturday 25 October 10 for 10.30 am start

19 (OR 121) YEAR OLD TRADITION ENDS: MEETINGS NOW IN MARRICKVILLE

The first Council meeting in Petersham's first Town Hall on Crystal Street was on 15 February 1882. "In March 1882, the Petersham Literary & Debating Society was granted free use of a room in the Town Hall; this decision is significant in that it established a precedent which no doubt led to other similar applications in those days, and perhaps helps to account for the fact that such concessions have been frequently sought and very often granted ever since" (Allan Shepherd's *The Story of Petersham 1793-1948*).

This tradition continued for Marrickville Heritage Society from our inception in 1984 to August 2003. As announced at our August meeting and reported in the September newsletter our bimonthly meetings will no longer be held at Petersham Town Hall. Whilst regrettable, Council has written to say that there are such issues as staffing, security and insurance to be considered. A not-for-profit organisation like ours simply cannot afford to pay \$58 an hour for weekend use whilst weeknight meetings are not viable.

In the spirit, as outlined above, that existed in the 1880s, Marrickville Council has offered free use of the Herbert Greedy Hall which, though lacking the marvellous atmosphere of the town hall, should suit our needs. Some Marrickville Medal award ceremonies have been there plus our trivia night last October. The move will disadvantage some, but conversely it will advantage others and may attract some fresh faces. So do try and make Our Next Meeting on 25 October.

The Herbert Greedy Hall is at 79 Petersham Road, Marrickville, opposite St. Clements Church and near Marrickville Town Hall. It is a few minutes walk from Marrickville Station and a Tempe 425 bus or fifteen minute walk from Sydenham Station. Well served by other buses: 426 (City, Newtown, Dulwich Hill) near the 423 (City, Newtown, Illawarra Road, Earlwood) and the 412 (City, Stanmore, Petersham, Livingstone & Wardell Roads, Earlwood). Street parking plus St Brigid's carpark off Marrickville Road and ample rooftop parking off Tuohy Lane (which runs between Illawarra and Petersham Roads) above Banana Joe's. Then there's Shanks's pony. Rear wheelchair access. Ring Diane 9588 4930 for further information.

And who was Herbert Greedy? Now that's a good question!

Diane McCarthy & Richard Blair

How should you approach researching and caring for an old garden? Colleen Morris is a heritage consultant who spends much of her professional time researching old gardens and landscapes. She will discuss looking for the evidence of your garden's past.



Colleen's work has included participation in undertaking Conservation Management Plans for the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Sydney Domain, Government House, Experiment Farm, Parramatta Government Sites, the former Government House Port Macquarie. She is currently involved in a study of Adelaide and Mt Lofty Botanic Gardens in South Australia and parks in Richmond, Wilberforce and Windsor. She is an active member of the Australian Garden History Society, the National Trust and the RAHS. (Photo: Nick Moir)

HERITAGE STUDY REVIEW ON SHOW

As indicated in our August newsletter the Marrickville Heritage Study Review 2001 is on public display until **Monday 27 October**. The Review "aims to introduce areas of additional heritage significance and enable a more detailed examination of the social and cultural aspects of Marrickville's heritage". At Petersham Town Hall and all four local libraries or on Marrickville Council's website <www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au>. Council's hotline is 9335 2052. Fax 0335 2029. Additional potential items of heritage and/or comments should be submitted in writing to Council by 27 October. Any members wishing to discuss relevant issues with our Society can ring Heritage Watch Committee Convenor Scott on 9559 5736 after hours.

OUR LAST MEETING CANTERBURY TALES & VALES

MHS members gathered on Saturday 27 September at *Beulah Vista*, headquarters of Canterbury and District Historical Society and set out from there in two groups led by Lesley Muir assisted by Brian Madden, and Jean Nolan. *Beulah Vista* ('beautiful view') had a prominent position at the time of construction in 1888. A two storey Victorian Filigree style house in stone and brick Flemish bond, it was built by stonemason George Tomkins at Church Street, Canterbury. The cast iron veranda balustrade scrollwork resembles a lyrebird's tail. Tomkins probably designed and made some of the grave-stones in the adjoining St Paul's Cemetery.

Canterbury City Council purchased *Beulah Vista* in 1978 and restored the building. St Paul's Anglican Church and School were designed by Edmund Blacket in 1858 to overlook the Village of Canterbury. The sandstone was quarried from near the railway line. The first rectory in Hardy Street was possibly designed by Blacket but was demolished in 1930. The new building in the Interwar Georgian Revival style, was built in 1934 and the surrounding land sold for housing.

A row of Federation houses, 103-107 Hardy Street were built by builder James Stephen in about 1912. No. 105 *Wyalong* has well-preserved original casement windows with small coloured glass panes. Prior to Canterbury Boys High School being built in 1924, it was a superior public school and a boys intermediate high school. The group of houses nos. 8-26 Second Street, were built by Henry William Robert Newman after 1916, being part of the Wattle Hill Estate. The original veranda fretwork used "tulip" brackets in an unusual design. Every Christmas the residents of Second Street illuminate their houses with Christmas lights, now a major local attraction.

We returned to *Beulah Vista* through Canterbury Park, which was purchased from the original Canterbury Farm by the Government in 1883 for a public park. We explored the house and Sue Shepherd led a group through the cemetery. After a sumptuous morning tea, our President Diane McCarthy gave a vote of thanks to Canterbury and District Historical Society members for their very warm welcome and interesting presentations.

Graham Hunt

(Note: We were alarmed to hear that Canterbury Racecourse is under threat of being sold for housing, given the very limited local green space.)

126 CRYSTAL STREET PETERSHAM: HILDAVILLE / LARNOOK

Member Coralie Wickers sent some newsletters to her brother John Wickers on the south coast. He showed them to his friend John Petherbridge, who belongs to the Pink Rock Poets and who sent MHS two of his evocative 'pieces of reminiscence', one reproduced here. John's father was Dr Walter Petherbridge who conducted his medical practice for over 20 years at *Larnook* 126 Crystal Street Petersham, on the corner of the north side of Fisher Street, now site of Marrickville Council's public car park

opposite Petersham Town Hall.

It has not been established exactly when the house was built, but probably between 1873 and 1879. The owner/occupant was Thomas Kennedy, accountant and an auditor with Petersham Council. The house was named *Hildaville* and prior to 1905 it was 146 Crystal Street. In 1895 the name was recorded as *Scots Craig* and later it became *Larnook*. Kennedy continued to live there in retirement until 1926 when he sold it to Dr Petherbridge. The Petherbridge family sold *Larnook* in 1958 to BP Australia who demolished the house for a service station (1492 square metres). It is not clear when it discontinued as a service station, but BP continued to own the property in the 1980s even though the site was already operating as a carpark.



This throws up a mystery because this block has been regarded as the site of *Bonera*, built around 1880 for solicitor Alfred Jacques by Blacket & Son (Joan Kerr *Edmund T Blacket Architect* 1983, p82 & Mark Matheson *Villas of Marrickville/Newtown* 1996, p26). *Bonera* is the name on the plans by Blacket & Son. However Sands Directory indicates that *Bonera* was over the road on the south side of Fisher Street, apparently one of a group of houses built in the late 1870s-early 1880s. Furthermore Kerr states the [unnamed] building for Jacques "involved major renovations and additions to an already existing house, turning it into a very typical gabled, barge-boarded, chamfered and verandahed imitation stone building . . . The firm also designed the picket fence surrounding Jacques' extensive grounds." This could apply to *Hildaville*, except no evidence has been found to link Jacques with *Hildaville*. The 1881 Rate Book shows Jacques owned a house in Fisher Street and Kennedy owned one in Crystal Street.

Two other ironies. George B Gough who resided at *Bonera* for around 20 years was, along with Tom Kennedy, auditor for Petersham Council, and both are in a council photograph in *The Story of Petersham* (1948, p23). Also, Hilda was the name of Edmund Blacket's youngest daughter and according to Morton Herman, his favourite. Is it possible *Hildaville* is in fact the Blacket & Son home, named for a sister and favoured daughter? (Thanks to Marrickville Council archivist Natasha Trpezanovski for her invaluable assistance.)

Richard Blair

PETERSHAM: THE FIREWHEEL TREE

As little urchins, with our earth browned feet,
Bare and dirty, in short pants, we chased around
The house, the old house with the shingle roof
Or rode a path cemented down one side
On tricycles; mine with a missing wheel
Though I could balance awkwardly on two.
The house was on a corner of the street
The Town Hall opposite, the Council too.

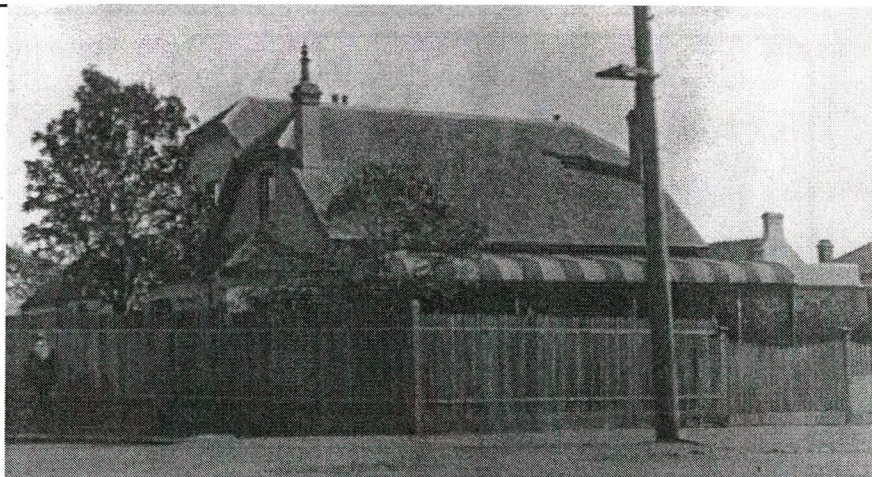
At the garden corner, just inside the fence
And off the grass, there was the firewheel tree.
When we went to live there, many years ago
As kids, the tree was young, though big enough
To climb, one branch a step above the ground;
We clambered on and clutched the branch above.
The flowers of the tree were red, flame red
And red spokes round gave them the look of wheels.
In clusters they would move and shine like flames
Which could be seen from windows of the Hall.
The wind would blow the wheels and fan the flowers
Till all gave out a brilliance rare amid
The traffic noise of this suburban scene.

In later years the bottom branch was higher;
We swung up to it, just as monkeys would,
And surely so we were, by all accounts.
We lifted to the taller heights like cats
Stalking the doves or bulbuls with black crests.
My youth passed with the flowering firewheel tree
I pondered life from shade of dark green leaves.
I left the old house at the call of war;
Returned, but not to there; elsewhere, to work.
So only on visits, now often rare, would I
Be reassured that it was standing there.

Then father retired, the shingle house was sold.
And later when I passed, lo and behold
A petrol station stood where it had been.
But joyfully, though nothing else remained,
The tree was there, alone but burning bright.
I filled with petrol, time to look around
The attendant muttered, yes, the tree was there
But what a nuisance, it got in the way
Of cars, the public and the petrol truck.
Trouble is, Council won't let us take it down
They say it's history, unique or what
So we put up with all the strife it brings.
I drove away delighted with this news
Some Council clerk must have a love for trees
Knows what a precious specimen it is.

The years moved on still more before again
I came that way; then looked with pain and grief,
Gone was the petrol and the Service store
And the tree that had adorned it was no more.
What was there, was an asphalt emptiness
Which was parking lot for Council cars.
I enquired around about the sad old tree
It was tired and old, or that's what I was told
And in the way, it took up space for cars
So Council ruled that it should be removed.

I suppose that clerk protector had moved on
And Council is the master of its rules.
Come think of it, we'd shared some seventy years
Though trees can live much longer than can we.



I thought of how I saw its flower wheels
As my young wheels of feet ran round the house
Around for twenty times, a measured mile.
Please no one tell the Council I am old
As old now as the tree that is no more.

In the garden where I live now by the sea
Just in my gateway is a firewheel tree
Too small to climb but having that low branch
That will become the foothold for some child
To clamber on and leap still higher up
As it ascends the ladder of its life
And looks for wheels of fire to guide it on.
I shall not see; it is my legacy.

John Petherbridge (who also sent the two undated photos. Earlier photo above on corner shows Firewheel Tree, taller one on left; Jacaranda on right. Photo to left is Crystal Street frontage. Some members recall the house and Petherbridge surgery.)

PETERSHAM PROMENADE

In the Society's first midweek daytime outing and as part of History Week, 22 MHS members and six visitors enjoyed a promenade in Petersham on Wednesday 17 September, commencing with a guided tour of Petersham Town Hall by Chrys Meader, Marrickville Council Historian. The 65th anniversary of this fine Art Deco building was recently celebrated. In New Canterbury Road we saw the former police station, water tower, Scout Hall and original Returned Soldiers Memorial Hall; along Stanmore Road the All Saints Church and Fire Station, now home of Mastertouch Piano Roll Company. In Albert Street *Merrydale* (1887) (described in *Heritage* 5) and a lovely view of Marrickville and St. Clements Church. Geoff Ostling and Ellie Zinsmeester told how Ellie's brother John and MHS were largely instrumental in saving the church spire.

In Addison Road we saw the Eversleigh site undergoing redevelopment, Tresillian and the old (much altered) Castlewood surgical hospital, now a rehabilitation hospital. Our promenade ended at *Trethaway Gardens* originally *Paritana* (1896) an Italianate mansion, where we enjoyed morning tea served in elegant Victorian style surroundings. Special thanks to Chrys and to Robert Hutchinson for conducting the walk.

Diane McCarthy

(Note: Thanks also to Diane for conceiving outing and organising brochure. The Society's 10th anniversary celebrations were held at *Trethaway* in April 1994.)

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY 25 OCTOBER

Colleen Morris *Playing the Garden Detective*

Details on front page

SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER

Tour of Gore Hill Cemetery

SATURDAY 13 DECEMBER

Annual Xmas Pot Luck Dinner

NEWTOWN FESTIVAL Sunday 9 November from 10 am. Come and visit our stall. Donations welcome – smaller bric-a-brac items preferred. For collection of goods or if you can help on day ring Peter 9550 3809.

NEWINGTON CONCERTS

(\$20, \$15 concession)

- Friday 24 October 7.30 pm Prescott Hall Jazz Concert **Andrew Robson Trio**

- Sunday 9 November 2.30 pm Prescott Hall
The Sydney Welsh Choir "A Tribute to Dylan Thomas" (50th Anniversary of his death). Includes Stravinsky's motet *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*

MARRICKVILLE FESTIVAL

This year's festival on 21 September was a day of two parts – cloudy and rainy in the morning with only the diehard festival goers attracted; then the skies cleared to a warm sunny afternoon and throngs of visitors. A number of our members came to the stall. Many new and old publications were sold and Margaret Sinclair's Heritage Marmalade was a winner as usual. Oddly scant interest was shown in bric-a-brac. People asked the usual questions about our streets and whether assorted relatives were mentioned in local publications.

Thanks to the following for assisting with the stall: Angela Phippen, David Cass, Ina Penning, Ellie Zinsmeester, Audrey Furney, Robert Hutchinson, John Waterstreet, Richard Blair, Lorraine Beach and Diane McCarthy. Thanks for donations from Ted Green, Megan Hicks, Ken Turner, Barclay Wright at Master-touch and others.

Diane McCarthy

Information sought about relatives of **Alexander David Scouller** alderman on Marrickville Council 1913-1922 (married Sarah Vidler at Newtown) and his nephew **Montague A Watts** a WWI airman who served at Richmond Air Base and lived at 104 Enmore Road Marrickville. Contact Neville Hayes, 76 Oswald Court, Portland, Victoria 3305.

SPRING TRIVIA ANSWER

The tram photo was gleaned from the back cover of Brian Madden and Lesley Muir's *Canterbury Farm: 200 years* (1993) and the caption reads "A Canterbury tram in New Canterbury Road at the Hurlstone Park shops in 1954 (Courtesy N. Reed)". Some of the shops are still there. No one correctly picked the year but some educated guesses were made based on identifying the FJ Holden and Austin A40.

Various theatres in Marrickville LGA were nominated by members, but **Rob Allen, Graham Hunt and Ina Penning** correctly identified the location. Technically this photo was in Canterbury Municipality, though it would have been taken from the side of New Canterbury Road then in Marrickville Municipality. Whilst the tram is the photo's focus, it is the context which gives the photo its broader interest. Educated guessers were Les Logan (of Melbourne), Peter McLaren and Ian Phillips. Brian Madden and Lesley Muir graciously refrained from proffering an answer.

The **Hurlstone Park Hoyts Theatre** (Kaberry & Chard architects) with seating capacity of 1945, was opened on 5 May 1927 by JH Mostyn, Lord Mayor of Sydney. The theatre was remodelled in 1939, but fell victim to the cinema decline of the late 1950s and closed on 1 October 1960. It was sold to Ice Sports Pty. Ltd. which converted it into the Ice Palais. It operated as an ice skating venue for a time before becoming an auction house in 1966. This lasted only two years. It remained unused until on 16 October 1971 (surprise, surprise!) it was extensively damaged by fire and subsequently demolished. (source: Kevin Cork *An Awkward Site: The Hurlstone Park Theatre* 1986).

Richard Blair

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Carol Appleton, Arthur, Elizabeth & Karen Drabble, Stephanie Hume, all of Dulwich Hill; Anna Crossley, Lynne Greenwood (rejoined), Colleen Schofield & Eva Gubacsi all of Marrickville; Denis Condon & Robert Mitchell, Newtown; Andrew Zafra, Petersham; Moya Riley & Brendan Cribbin, Erskineville; Sue Jackson-Stepowski, Haberfield; Janet Hemming, Potts Point.

TEMPE SCHOOL REUNION

Anyone who attended Tempe Primary or Intermediate High School 1946-1952 is invited to a reunion on Saturday 28 February 2004 from noon. Contact Brian Coote <bjcoote@hn.ozemail.com.au> or on 6862 2184 or Laurel 9558 7504.

PRESIDENT Diane 9588 4930

TREASURER Stuart 9560 8070

HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823