

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



**OUR NEXT MEETING
GET YOUR TICKET TO RYDE!
SATURDAY 28 MAY**
Coach leaves 9 am sharp

**KEEP TEMPE BUS & TRUCK
MUSEUM IN TEMPE**

Petersham Town Hall 8.45 am. Back by 5 pm.
BYO lunch. \$30 includes morning tea and two
entries. Advise if you have to cancel. Bookings
essential. Angela 9280 2429 (AH).

The Ryde District Historical Society will host this
all day tour. It will include visits to James Devlin's
house, *Willandra* and what is believed to be Ryde's
oldest house, *Addington*. There will be a conducted
walking tour of the Ryde village including a walk
around St Anne's churchyard.

The area contains many architectural and historical
gems such as *Brush Farm*, *Riverview*, *Curzon Hall*,
the Ryde Pumping Station and, for those with
different interests, the site of the original Squire's
Brewery! Of course, a tour of the area would not be
complete without driving past the area of Granny
Smith's farm. We will see all of these, plus more.



Devlin family members at Willandra, Ryde c. 1872
(photo: Henry Beaufoy Merlin)

The Society congratulates **Jack Munday** on receiving
the EnergyAustralia Award for Lifetime Achievement
as part of the National Trust Heritage Awards. Jack
became synonymous with Green Bans in the 1970s in
fighting development in The Rocks, Kelly's Bush and
other places. He was Chair of the Historic Houses
Trust for five years in the 1990s and was awarded an
AO in 2000. Jack continues to be proactive in saving
the environment. He addressed MHS in October 1995.

**Annual MHS subscriptions due 1 June so why
not pay now! Concession \$12, individual or joint
concession \$20, household or organisation \$28.**

3 MARRICKVILLE POTTERIES IS LAUNCHED

See inside for Ali Wright's report on launch & Robert
Hutchinson's illustrated talk. The book, which is full
of photographs, with many pages in splendidly repro-
duced colour, is available from the Society for \$25,
with a discounted price of \$20 for MHS members.
Postage and handling \$2 extra.

2 MAY 1945 AIR DRAMA REMEMBERED

Monday 2 May was the 60th anniversary of the
explosion of the RAF Mosquito plane over Petersham
when Flight Lieutenant David Rochford and Leading
Aircraftsman Charles Boydell, both 25, were killed.
The body of Rochford landed in the grounds of
Petersham Public School, now Sydney Institute of
TAFE. Boydell's body was found in a nearby railway
goods yard and debris was scattered over the
surrounding district. MHS member Lu Bell was at
school when it happened and this extraordinary event
has been a defining episode of her life.

Lu (also known as Florence) has donated her
collection of material to Council's History/ Archive
Centre. The anniversary was commemorated at
Petersham Town Hall on 2 May and Cr Victor Macri
formally accepted Lu's donation, which was on
display. Lu and several other former pupils recalled
this dramatic day. A ceremony was held at the TAFE
site alongside the memorial plaque during the day.

DRIVERS SOUGHT

It has long been the practice of MHS to deliver the
monthly newsletter locally by runners thus saving
considerable money and enabling most local news-
letters to be received unfolded. Two or three more
drivers are needed for delivery to runners.
Requirements - have a car, be available 2-3 days a
year for 2-3 hours each time on the Thursday (or
Friday) after first Monday of each month, unpaid (of
course)! Ring Richard 9557 3823.

In April 2004 Marrickville Heritage Society
celebrated its 20th anniversary. MHS has now
come of age. Happy 21st to us!

3 MARRICKVILLE POTTERIES LAUNCH & OUR LAST MEETING

The launch of *3 Marrickville Potteries: Fowlers, Diana & Studio Anna* on **Wednesday 13 April** at Petersham Town Hall was a joyous occasion. The book was launched by the Society's President Lorraine Beach. It was a warm and friendly event that included a colourful display of work from these potteries which together operated from 1838 until the 1970s. Authors **Robert Hutchinson, Geoffrey Ostling and Donna Braye** spoke of their passion for the objects of their study and related personal stories of how they came to focus on and love their particular pottery.* After the launch the audience were invited to purchase the book and enjoy a glass of champagne in celebration.

At our meeting on **Saturday 23 April** at Herb Greedy Hall, **Robert Hutchinson**, co-writer and coordinator of the book *3 Marrickville Potteries*, gave an illustrated talk on both the history of *Fowlers* and *Diana* potteries and their range of pottery. Robert also had an extensive range of pottery from his collection on show.

Robert showed slides of the *Fowler* pottery at its site on the corner of Australia Street and Parramatta Road. They had relocated there from Broadway to be close to clay deposits in the same area. Notable images included their famous ginger beer bottles and workers doing hand-turning with no proper safety clothing though, as one audience member pointed out, "he was wearing a tie!" There were pictures of some very collectable kitchen canisters and hot water bottles. Due to expansion, *Fowlers* left Camperdown in 1914 and relocated to Fitzroy Street, Marrickville, where production continued until the 1970s. The demand for the company's products included tiles for underground railway stations and urns for graves; occasionally, you will still see a broken one in an old graveyard.

The *Diana* Pottery at 122 Marrickville Road, Marrickville seems surprisingly small given its phenomenal production as exemplified by the various pottery ranges, from hand-painted vases, garden urns, mugs and mixing bowls to casserole dishes and more. The images included some lovely *Diana* vases with hand-painted native flowers and plants.

Many of the photos were taken at the pottery in the 1960s by Colin Haysom, a long-time employee of *Diana*. It was fascinating to see the working conditions in this small factory, particularly slabs of clay, which came from the Mudgee area, being loaded into machinery, workers without gloves or hats, people hand-turning and hand-painting vases and bowls, and a female worker dipping a bowl into a bucket of glaze.

A guest at the meeting, **Sylvia Preston**, who worked at *Diana* for 25 years and was private secretary to John Christopher (Director of *Diana*) said she believed that it was John's interest in Greek and Roman mythology that inspired the name *Diana*. *Diana* was the goddess of hunting and some pots are marked with the figure of a female archer.



Diana painter in the 1960s (photo: Colin Haysom)

After Robert spoke about items on display, members discussed specimens they had brought in. There was particular interest in how to identify pottery. Robert said that not all *Diana* pottery was marked with a *Diana* insignia or stamp. Some only have a letter and number, but as moulds were bought and sold between potteries you can often find the same shape made by different potteries. However, all pieces originally bore a seal with the name *Diana* on it and some pieces still have this sticker attached! Thank you Robert for a most illuminating talk.

Ali Wright

* **Editor's Note:** The article on *Fowlers* was reworked and expanded by Robert Hutchinson from material written in the 1980s by the late Gary Nicholls. Price details on front page of newsletter.

DR LIONEL GILBERT WRITES TO JOHN EDWARDS ON WARDELL STORY

"Many thanks indeed for the very handsome issue of *Heritage* 12 – it is finely produced. Your article, with its courageous diagrammatic key to the Wardells and the Priddles, sets an enviable genealogical example!

I once used to call on Miss Edith Priddle, who spent her last years at Blackheath. She was then (over 20 years ago) quite deaf and we carried on discussions by means of a notepad she offered to me on arrival. I well recall, too, the day Jim Wicks and I visited St James's Church so that I could take a photo of the Wardell memorial before going out to Botany to locate the broken remains of the Wardell broken column monument removed in 1901 from Devonshire Street Cemetery.

Now the whole family connection is on record in your excellent survey – congratulations. I have remained in touch with Jim, who will be fascinated, I'm sure. I really like the diversity of photos of historic sites, objects and buildings associated with your story. Thank you for generous and gracious mention on page 36!

Having "skimmed" your paper, I now look forward to an "early night" to rest the 80 year old gammy legs, and to enjoy reading your work in detail. I know now that I'll enjoy it. My present task is to consolidate my collection of Australian epitaphs into a volume to be

called "The Last Word". I'm often reminded that I should "hurry up a bit"! With thanks, congratulations and best wishes. Sincerely yours, **Lionel Gilbert**.
PS How Ken Cable would have enjoyed your article!"

Note: 9/3/05 letter printed with permission of MHS member **John Edwards**. **Dr Lionel Gilbert** (OAM) is a distinguished historian, author and former Principal Lecturer at Armidale Teacher's College. **Jim Wicks** wrote a BA Honours Thesis *An assessment of the colonial career of Dr Robert Wardell, LLD, 1824-1834* (1970).

2005 MARRICKVILLE MEDAL

The Marrickville Medal for Conservation celebrated its tenth anniversary with a well-attended presentation ceremony at the Petersham Town Hall on 13 April. The Medal was awarded for domestic scale residential projects that contribute significantly to the heritage values of the Marrickville LGA. The judges were heritage architects and specialists Elisha Long, Catherine Forbes and Scott MacArthur (representing MHS). Elisha commented on the extraordinary affection and attachment of all eleven owners of nominated projects for their properties, and expressed the hope that this reflected a wider community interest in protecting and valuing our heritage.

The 2005 Marrickville Medal was won by *Beauchamp Villa*, Cary Street, Marrickville, a large late Victorian villa with simple rendered façade, dating from c. 1883. It is one of the few remaining Victorian houses in this area from when the Warren Estate was first broken up. It is set in large, treed grounds and comprises two storeys with an attic, and features timber bargeboard to the bay gable and cast iron detailing to the verandah and balcony and a slate roof. The semi-elliptical window openings are capped by label moulds.



Anthony and Judy Deguara bought the house in 1978 and have since been painstakingly restoring and conserving it. The works have proceeded systematically, progressing from room to room, fixing floorboards, chimney and fireplaces, replacing the ceilings, plastering, painting, and paying careful attention to the intricacies of iron lace work and other aspects of the architectural style (photo: Marrickville Council).

The judges were impressed that *all the work had been done with great care to match original details – with the retention of as much original fabric as possible and extraordinary attention to detail. The love of the owners for the house is demonstrated by their research and long term commitment to its restoration.*

The first of two Merit Awards went to *Wendover*, Albermarle Street, Newtown, one of a pair of Victorian Georgian houses built c. 1860 which illustrate much of the typical detailing of the period despite some alterations to each. The owner is gradually restoring her two storeyed house which is a good example of the early residential development in the village of North Kingston (laid out 1854).

The judges noted the works demonstrated *excellent conservation practice, retaining as much of the original fabric as possible with careful piecing in of new fabric. The owner, architect and builder are to be commended for their adherence to the ICOMOS Burra Charter as the guiding principle for the works. They have achieved a finely-crafted structure that enhances the heritage significance of the house, reclaims the owner's privacy from the immediately adjacent footpath and enhances the quality of the streetscape.*

The second Merit Award went to a two storey terrace in *Terminus Street, Petersham*. Built in 1885/86 the house was extensively modified over the years, with the front room and verandah extended and enclosed for use as a shop/residence until 1961 when it was converted to residential use. In 1997 MHS member **Keith Sutton** bought the damaged terrace and in 1999 beneath three layers of paint and two layers of wall-paper Keith unveiled the first images in a mural dealing with the 1885 Sudan War, which started him on a quest to restore and research his find. With government and professional assistance, the mural has been restored (documented in previous newsletters), but additional support is needed for further research.

The judges commented that *this was an extraordinary and sustained research effort to uncover and conserve unique political murals. It is particularly praiseworthy that the owner wants to share his treasure with the public through invitations for visitors from historical societies, open days etc.*

An Encouragement Award went to *Rosevear*, Stafford Street, Stanmore, a 1907 single storey Federation house originally featuring fine stained glass, ornate plaster ceilings, Kauri pine floors, marble fireplaces and Australian cedar joinery. This had largely been damaged, painted or hidden.

The judges noted that *the planning of the addition works well with that of the original house and greatly improves the relationship between house and garden. The selection of materials and finishes in the addition is of high quality and suits the original fabric. The owners' engagement of specialists and experienced craftspeople for appropriate advice and restoration works is commended.*

Scott MacArthur

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

Saturday 28 May
Get your ticket to Ryde by coach
 Details on front page

Saturday 25 June
Annual General Meeting

Focus on Cooks River Catchment *Too many plans – not enough action* **Sunday 19 June 1.45 for 2-4 pm**

Debbie & Abbey Borgia Community Recreation
 Centre 531 Illawarra Road, Marrickville (Steel Park)

MHS members and anyone interested in the Cooks River Catchment are invited to a talk by **Bob Junior**, chair of the interim board, Sydney Catchment Management Authority on the condition of and visions for the Cooks River Catchment. Approximately 420,000 people live in the 100 square kilometre catchment spanning 13 LGAs. Talk organised by the Wolli Creek Preservation Society.

DUNBAR SURVIVOR JAMES JOHNSON OF THE BOULEVARDE DULWICH HILL (Part 2 of Autumn Trivia Answer)

Sole *Dunbar* survivor **James Johnson** is connected to the Marrickville LGA because the *Dunbar* tomb is in Camperdown Cemetery. Less known is that Johnson lived in The Boulevarde, Dulwich Hill for many years and was living there when he died aged 78 in 1915.

According to **Tim Smith**, Marine Archaeologist of the NSW Heritage Office, The *Sun* newspaper (20 August 1905) ran a story on the *Dunbar* stating Johnson was then a resident of Dulwich Hill. Smith writes "This tallies with a personal account of a Ms Doreen Whillis who stated that her grandmother lived at 122 The Boulevarde, Dulwich Hill (now units) from 1935. Ms Whillis recounted that two elderly spinsters named Johnson had lived across the street and she talked to their nurse Daisy O'Dowd as a child. The spinsters were said to be the daughters of James Johnson and lived there probably until the 1950s when they died or moved. That street is centrally located between Dulwich Hill, Petersham and Lewisham today."

Glenn Wardman, Local Studies Officer, Marrickville Council writes: "After viewing both *Sands* and the Rate and Valuation books it would appear that James Johnson had three daughters, Mary Elizabeth, Jane and Margaret Agnes Johnson. Mary Elizabeth lived at 83 The Boulevarde, Dulwich Hill whilst the other two lived together next door at the house formerly occupied by James Johnson (presumably until his death) known as *Beaulieu*, 85 The Boulevarde, Dulwich Hill."

"*Sands* confirms that James Johnson lived at 85 The Boulevarde from about 1901 until at least 1910. Interestingly in 1910 a Miss E Elphinstone is also listed as a resident and the words "private school" are noted. (W. Elphinstone was an alderman on Petersham Council

1885-1893, not sure if any relation.) Mary Elizabeth was listed as deceased by 1945 and it seems her sisters were deceased by 1952." (Glenn notes that rate books were only updated every few years.)

James Johnson was buried at Sandgate Cemetery, Newcastle on 15 April 1915 with [his first wife] Mary. His three daughters lived the remainder of their lives in The Boulevarde. Private researcher **Rod Cox** has confirmed that Mary Elizabeth died in 1932; Margaret born 1872, died in 1947 aged 76; and Jane, born 1863, died in 1952 aged 90. Jane and Margaret have adjoining plots in the Catholic Mortuary at Rookwood. An Annie Johnson is also buried there, but there is no record of her age, date of death or family connection.

The houses at 83 and 85 The Boulevarde, built by James Johnson around 1900, are still there, though externally much altered. As the below 1950s photo of number 85 shows, it was attractively tuck-pointed, only to be cement-rendered in the early 1960s. The tree on the verge still stands (photo reproduced with permission of **Margaret McGrath**).



*Beaulieu 85 The Boulevarde Dulwich Hill
 in the mid 1950s. James Johnson's house c. 1901-1915.
 Remained in Johnson family until c. 1952.*

Why did Johnson call his final home *Beaulieu*? It is French for 'beautiful place' and no doubt a century ago the area surrounding The Boulevarde, Dulwich Hill was far more scenic than it is now – once a broad avenue; now narrow, winding and full of home units. Johnson was a native of Drogheda, County Louth, Ireland who went to sea at 12. About five kilometres from Drogheda, on the banks of the River Boyne, is a 1660s mansion which was "one of the first unfortified houses in Ireland". It's name is *Beaulieu*. The name on the Dulwich Hill house has been cement-rendered, but when the above photo is blown up, the name above the bay side windows is visible. *Beaulieu* – a surviving local link with the sole *Dunbar* survivor!

Richard Blair

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