

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



2004 is the Year of the Built Environment

## OUR NEXT MEETING MEMBERS' SHOW & TELL

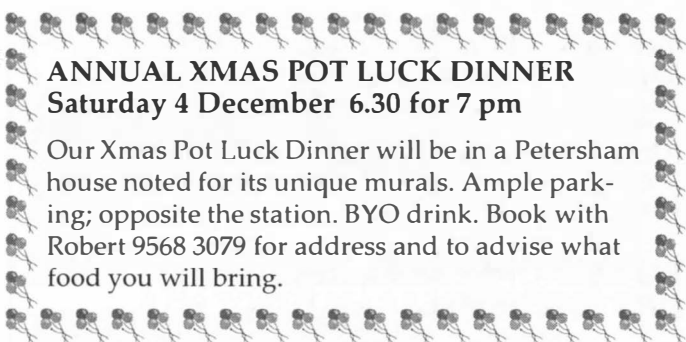
Saturday 27 November 10 for 10.30 am  
Herb Greedy Hall 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville

It seems that devotees of history and heritage are usually into collecting something, though in lieu of the word *collecting* one may insert accumulating, hording, or just plain ... keeping. Often amongst these items are the unusual, the bizarre, the valuable, the sentimental, the puzzling, and the ... well, intriguing. Perhaps there is something we would like to share with others. Well this is your chance to put it on **Show and Tell** us all about it. How you came by it; its significance; why you've kept it; why you can't bear to part with it even though it may not be appreciated by anyone else.

Past S&T meetings have been very popular and yielded items of enormous interest. This is a chance to have a minute or two of mini fame in front of our members, have some fun and maybe win a prize. Our host will be **Angela Phippen**, who with a little persuasion, may show us her infamous shark lamp!

\* \* \* \* \*

**From our President, Lorraine Beach:** The Committee want to make our last Saturday meeting of the year a relaxed affair with plenty of opportunity to mingle and chat. Morning tea will be a bit more sophisticated than usual with some home baked morsels and special tidbits adorning the table.



## ANNUAL XMAS POT LUCK DINNER Saturday 4 December 6.30 for 7 pm

Our Xmas Pot Luck Dinner will be in a Petersham house noted for its unique murals. Ample parking; opposite the station. BYO drink. Book with Robert 9568 3079 for address and to advise what food you will bring.

## LATE FEES PLEASE!

This will be the final newsletter for those whose 2004/05 fees are not paid by the end of November. Members who have not renewed their membership will receive a reminder slip with their November newsletter. Feel free to pay for two or more years if you wish. Fees are \$12 concession, \$20 individual or joint concession, \$28 household or organisation. Address below. Enquiries treasurer Pat Mullen on 9559 6684.

## INVITATION LAUNCH OF *HERITAGE 12* NEWTOWN TOWN HALL (OPPOSITE NEWTOWN STATION) TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 7.30-9 PM

We are pleased to announce the December launch of the Society's journal *Heritage 12*. The major article *A Bloodstained Inheritance* by MHS member John Edwards, examines the life of Robert Wardell, shortened by murder and, because he died intestate, the disposal of his estate. Wardell had owned much of the land in Marrickville LGA.

Other articles are Silas Clifford-Smith's story of Gelding's Nursery which was in today's Dulwich Hill; Ken Swinbourne's *Montlingham* in Dulwich Hill where the Carmelites were based for most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; an evaluation of the 1912-14 Carmelite letters compiled by Richard Blair; Peter Chinn's *Hawkers and Street Vendors of Yesteryear* and Willem Irik's *Decorative Ceramic Tiles in the Marrickville area*, which features a range of colour photographs of tile installations. Our walking tour is of Tempe, based on Laurel Horton's walk, which she conducted in March 2002.

Refreshments provided and our raffle will be drawn. The launch is a good chance to meet the authors and receive your complimentary member copy. The journal will be distributed to other members as soon as possible after the launch. Bookings Angela 9280 2429 after hours.

## FUN(D)-RAISING RAFFLE

Three great prizes: first, another splendid framed local painting by member and artist Nancy MacAlpine; second, a Xmas hamper and third, dinner-for-two at Vic-on-the-Park Hotel, corner Enmore and Addison Roads. Tickets: 1 for \$2, 3 for \$5, 7 for \$10. On sale at 27 November meeting, pot luck dinner and journal launch when raffle will be drawn (see below). Raffle tickets will **not** be accompany newsletter. Members unable to attend these functions and wanting tickets, can obtain by sending cheque, minimum \$5, plus 50 cents for return postage.

## NEWTOWN FESTIVAL: 14 NOVEMBER

MHS will have its usual stall at the Newtown Festival on **Sunday 14 November** at the Camperdown Memorial Rest Park from 10 am. If you wish to donate goods either bring on the day or ring Peter 9550 3809 for collection. Stall helpers welcome.

## OUR LAST MEETING

### *An Armchair Tour of Rookwood Necropolis*

MHS Members were given a thoughtful and informative insight into one of Sydney's most important heritage sites when Peter Sage was guest speaker at our 23 October meeting. His depth of knowledge of the history and unique features of Rookwood Cemetery – one of the three largest cemeteries in the world – came to 'life' when illustrated with his magnificent collection of photographic slides.

Originally known as Haslam's Creek\*, Rookwood Cemetery is located on 283 hectares of land near Lidcombe Railway Station. There are 80 religious groups represented in the burial sites. The cemetery is the last resting place of many famous, infamous and tragic individuals who were part of the history of Australia. Well remembered Australians whose monuments we viewed were: David Scott Mitchell, Anthony Hordern, Bert Oldfield, Louisa Lawson and Isaac Nichols, to name a few.

Peter showed how some of the older sections were originally laid out and how vandals had destroyed certain sections; happily some have been restored, with the assistance of government grants, including those given to mark the Centenary of Federation. The story of the rail link to the cemetery included photographs of the Pyrmont sandstone terminus and the train that ran from Central Station to Rookwood, conveying both coffin and mourners. By 1948 motor funerals made the rail link obsolete and in 1957 the Rookwood Mortuary Station was sold for £100 and became All Saints Anglican Church in the Canberra suburb of Ainslie. At least this ensured that James Barnett's fine building was preserved, and the stonemasons' workmanship survives.

Members marvelled at the intricate stone carvings on Victorian and Edwardian monuments. We saw examples of religious and occupational symbolism. Peter added a touch of humour with some of the more unusual tombstones and epitaphs; and photographs of the recently constructed mausoleums, in which funeral services can be held and permanent crypts purchased for departed loved ones.

Peter concluded his fascinating talk with a number of stunning photographs of the cemetery, accompanied by the music of Handel's *Largo* and the much loved hymn *Abide With Me*. It was evident from the round of applause that those present had not only learnt a great deal about Rookwood but were impressed with the sincere and tasteful way in which Peter had spoken on such a personal topic.

**Shirley Doolan**

\* After original grantee Samuel Haslam. Name often misspelt Haslem's (D Weston ed. *The Sleeping City*, 1989 p. 16)

Whilst the October newsletter was with the printer the editor received a correct answer to the Spring Trivia Question as to the all-time wealthiest Australian – **Samuel Terry**. It was from our president **Lorraine Beach** who had refrained from answering as she thought everyone would know! No one else responded correctly. Well done Lorraine!

## Poem on local native grassland remnant *Anglican restraint*

Kangaroo and spear grass  
bloom in Camperdown Cemetery  
remnants of the original flora  
of the Cumberland plains  
surviving somehow  
because of dead bones  
unmown grass, neglect  
and lack of herbicide use.  
Scuffed by green winds  
flimsy afternoon light  
illumes undulating grasses  
as soft sunlight languishes  
amidst the droop and  
crumple of gravestones.  
And I thank god  
or whoever  
for Anglican restraint  
total neglect  
as native grasses  
continue to flourish  
in this miniscule  
inner city sanctuary.

**Colleen Burke**

(reproduced with permission of poet)

**Colleen Burke** is a long time resident and poet of Newtown. She has a special relationship with Camperdown Cemetery in the grounds of St Stephen's Anglican Church Newtown. After I told her about the wonderful remnant of original Kangaroo grassland that still remained, miraculously, in part of the cemetery, she wrote this lovely poem about Camperdown Cemetery and the native grassland remnant (and very kindly dedicated it to me). The poem won second prize in the Inner City Literary Life Competition in 2002 and has been included in her latest poetry collection *The odd pagan or two* which was launched at the Carlisle Hotel, Newtown on 30 October 2004. The book (\$16) is available at Better Read Than Dead in Newtown and Gleebooks in Glebe.

**Danie Ondinea** (a past MHS member now living in the Illawarra. Danie was largely instrumental in the establishment of the Friends of Camperdown Cemetery.)

{Drawing of Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda australis*) by Virginia Bear from Doug Benson et al *Missing Jigsaw Pieces* Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney, 1999, p. 13}

## EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST SOUGHT FOR HISTORIC TEMPE TRAM DEPOT SITE

The president of the Bus & Truck Museum, Tempe, has been informally advised by State Transit that Expressions of Interest are being sought to develop the site which houses the Bus & Truck Museum, the Tempe Bus Depot and the Betty Spears Child Care Centre. Nothing is yet known about the likely fate of the 1912 Tram Shed which houses the museum, the office buildings at the front of the site or the recently restored World War I War Memorial; as well as the comprehensive range of vintage transport inside the museum. Watch this space!



## HERITAGE WATCH

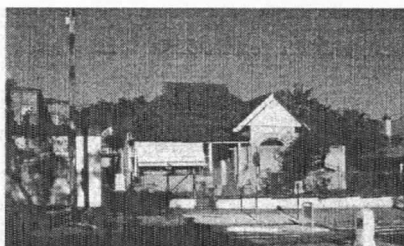
The Maronite Sisters are again seeking to develop their sites near the corner of Challis Avenue and Wardell Road, Dulwich Hill. There are currently three bungalows on the sites, two of which have been significantly modified. The sites are in a Draft Heritage Conservation Area, and in spite of past modifications, these houses are important in defining the residential character of this part of the precinct. The Sisters have previously sought to demolish the houses and use the area for a carpark.

The current proposal is for a residential care facility of 50 beds that will require the demolition of the two most modified houses and the adaptive reuse of the most intact existing house. The Society applauds the retention and reuse of the existing house at 210 Wardell Road, but cannot support the demolition of the other houses or the proposed new building in its present form. The new building is much higher than the surrounding houses, and taller even than the highest buildings on the adjoining main campus site, in spite of the ground falling away. The Wardell Road façade of the new building is an unsophisticated two storey institutional building that jars with the adjoining Federation bungalows. Its plain hipped roof and large plain window openings are unsympathetic to the residential character of the surrounding precinct that exhibits a variety of hipped and gabled roofs with interesting windows and doorways.

The Society is also concerned that the Sisters are demolishing the existing house in Challis Avenue, to construct a building of similar size. The Society also questions whether the whole premise for the development is in fact spurious: the DA states that the main campus site *has reached its capacity for aged housing*. So with a planning sleight of hand, the main campus and these three sites are somehow counted as one large site, with the end result being an inappropriately large institutional building squeezed into a heritage residential precinct.

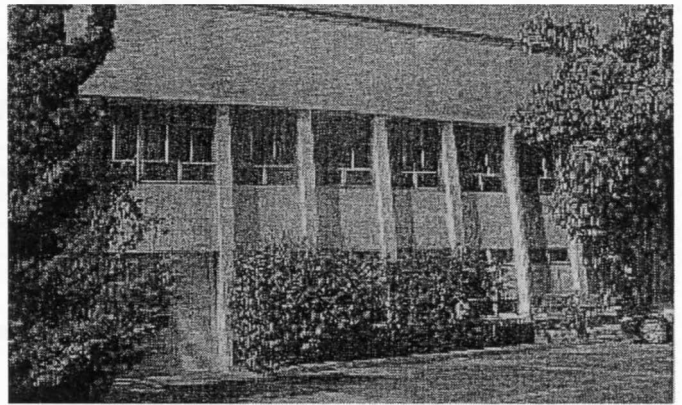


1 Challis Avenue above and 208 Wardell Road, Dulwich Hill below, both slated for demolition (photos from DA on Council's website)



**Note:** Article on *Montlingham*, a house long occupied by the Carmelites and demolished in the 1990s by the Maronite Sisters, to appear in *Heritage 12*.

## Former Penfolds Building Tempe



Demolition and refurbishment works on this landmark building at 634-726 Princes Highway Tempe are well underway. The building is listed under the Marrickville Heritage LEP, but this did not stop a previous Council from approving the destruction of the façade of the building for the installation of floor to ceiling windows. The framing concrete window ledge and brick spandrel panels that were a critical component of the façade composition have been removed and have been replaced with fixed plate glass. The justification for the works at the time of the approval was that it was going to be a car dealership. The visibility of the showroom was so restricted by the window ledge that the tenancy was unviable. The car dealership has not eventuated, but the works have proceeded under this false premise.

Obviously, the proposed white goods retailer will not be relying on passing trade from the speeding cars on the Princes Highway. Apart from the loss of heritage value, this is also a loss of something fine from our neighbourhood. It is *tabloid* architecture: reducing elegant complexity to unchallenging pap for the sake of commercial gain. The developer may not have the cultural background to know what they have done, but the architect – just like a Murdoch journalist – has no such excuse.

Scott MacArthur



**Note** This action was foreshadowed in newsletter report of June 2001. This is the site of the villa *The Poffle* which stood behind here from 1837 to c. 1950. The huge Penfolds wine barrel that dominated the streetscape to the right of tower from 1959 was relocated or demolished in 1995. Contrasting photos show loss of character. Lower photo: Scott MacArthur.



## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

**Saturday 27 November**  
**Members' Show & Tell**

**Saturday 4 December**  
**Annual Xmas Pot Luck Dinner**

**Tuesday 14 December**  
**Launch of *Heritage 12***

All details on front page

## FOUNDERS' DAY AT MASTERTOUC

The Mastertouch Piano Roll Company celebrates its 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary this month. Founders' Day is on **Sunday 14 November** 11 am–3.30 pm. 308 Stanmore Road Petersham. Activities will include roll recording demonstrations, tours of the roll and box factories, organ recital and the Mastertouch Story told by Barclay Wright. Refreshments provided. Admission by donation \$5 or more which will help establish the Mastertouch Piano Roll Museum and perpetuate the manufacture of piano rolls. All members welcome.

## RAHS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Scott MacArthur and I represented MHS at the Royal Australian Historical Society Conference, which was held in rooms at Blacktown City Council on 23-24 October. Titled *Keeping History*, the conference was a mixture of lectures and site visits which included: Grantham Heritage Precinct, Prospect House, St Bartholomew's Church and Cemetery at Prospect, a walking tour of Mt Druitt and a visit to the historic house, *The Oaks*, at Oakhurst.

It was appropriate that there were so many site visits because the major theme of this conference was the *experience* of history: looking, feeling and touching it and being able to communicate that to an audience, whether that be in a lecture, visiting a museum or on a walking tour. Heather Nicholls' presentation at the Saturday night dinner about the Cobb and Co. Heritage Trail reinforced this theme.

Many of the lectures dealt with organisational aspects of running a society and/or a museum because, within the last few years, several societies have lost data and knowledge when key personnel either moved away or died. Succession planning, organising society archives and planning your society's future were also examined.

Angela Phippen



*MHS members on verandah at 'Horsley' on 25 September* From left front row: Daphne Grange, Patrick Malabar, Ros Torrent, Margaret Broadfoot, Sue Miller, Dalyce Ryan, Diane McCarthy, Ken Swinbourne, Keith Robinson, Lois Korendijk, Hillary Goldsmith, John Waterstreet; second: Frank Smith, Robert Hutchinson, Jan Garaty, Keith Sutton, Barry Korendijk; third: Graeme Napier, Ron Job, Alex Oonagh Redmond, David Cunningham, Pauline Mikkelsen (with cap), Angela Phippen, Richard Blair, Nancy MacAlpine, Sally Shand, Tuulia Anttonen, Joan Francis, Margaret Sinclair, Fred Ellis; back seated: Barbara Forsyth, Helen Kerfoot; back standing: Ted Green, Joyce Roy, Paul Roy, Fay Young, Mervyn Young, Audrey Furney, Geoff Francis, Ros Hunt, Graham Hunt (photo: Sue Hutchinson).

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