

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE



MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN

## OUR NEXT MEETING

**Darlinghurst Gaol/National Art School &  
St John's Anglican Church Darlinghurst  
SATURDAY 27 MAY**

Morning gaol/NAS tour (meet Forbes St entrance) 9.45 for 10 am start followed by slide show 11.30 am for both morning and afternoon tours. Afternoon gaol/NAS tour 1 pm (meet Burton St gate by 11.20 am for slides). Cost \$10 members, \$12 non members. Pay at start of tour. Bookings are essential—ring Richard 9557 3823. Advise if you decide to cancel. Church tours: 10.15 am & 12.30 pm (approx.).

The former gaol complex contains the National Art School and the Sydney Institute of Technology East Sydney. Nearest station Kings Cross. Any Bondi or Bronte bus from Liverpool St near Elizabeth St to Taylor Square; 15-20 minute walk up Liverpool & Oxford Sts from Museum Station.

Deborah Beck (artist, NAS art lecturer, MHS member and author of *Hope in Hell: A History of Darlinghurst Gaol and the National Art School*) will lead a tour of the site and studios, and show slides of the bushrangers, murderers, politicians and poets who were incarcerated. Learn about the brutal and fascinating history of the buildings where the NAS is now housed, and about the significant artists associated with the site.

*Forbes Street gaol gates c.1877  
(National Art School archives)*



Nearby is the 1858 Gothic style **St John's Anglican Church** 120 Darlinghurst Road Darlinghurst. Architects Gould & Hilling; later additions designed by Edmund Blacket and sons Cyril and Arthur. Featured are the still-used *Dunbar* bell and a marble *Dunbar* memorial. MHS member Robert Parkinson will play the 1885 organ during the guided tour led by verger, Laurie Alexander. Tour free but a gold coin donation appreciated for refreshments. Tour times above.

## THE FUTURE OF MARRICKVILLE'S HERITAGE STARTS NOW!

At our meeting on 22 April, Vince Connell, Council's Planning Services Manager, provided a briefing on Council's Urban Strategy document. Council is seeking community input into the Urban Strategy it is developing as the first stage in the revision and updating of its Local Environmental Plan (LEP) that the state government has directed.

Our LGA is part of a group of southern Sydney Councils that the state government has directed will need to accommodate up to 35,000 more dwellings in the next 35 years. Council's Urban Strategy will provide a primary planning framework that will allow it to mount a convincing argument to the government as to what increase in dwellings is possible in our LGA. Given that frantic levels of property redevelopment and gentrification of the area over the last decade have seen the population of our LGA actually decline (according to the Australian Census), while dwelling numbers have increased, the reasons for pursuing further redevelopment are unclear. This apparent redevelopment for its own sake will see our feebly protected Conservation Areas and heritage items come under intense redevelopment pressure.

The Society will be preparing a formal submission on the Urban Strategy to Council. However, Council needs to be strongly reminded that the Society represents hundreds of members that want the cultural heritage of our area protected. All members are encouraged to write to Council to make an individual submission—a short note or an essay—that our heritage is important and should be protected.

By email: [urbanstrategy@marrickville.nsw.gov.au](mailto:urbanstrategy@marrickville.nsw.gov.au)  
By fax: 9335 2029 marked 'Attention: Urban Strategy'  
By mail to: Urban Strategy, Planning Services,  
Marrickville Council, PO Box 14, Petersham 2049

Write now—the future of Marrickville's heritage is in our hands (with pens or keyboards)!

Scott MacArthur

## HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Send a cheque or money order made out to Marrickville Heritage Society with your name(s), address & phone number(s). Address below. For a brochure or further information ring Diane 9588 4930. Membership includes monthly newsletter, journal *Heritage* and monthly talk or outing. Concession \$12, individual or joint concession \$20, household or organisation \$28. Join now and your membership will be paid until the end of May 2007.

**Inaugural Special Achievement Award  
for Heritage to Lu Bell: see inside.**



## OUR LAST MEETING

### The Brickmakers & The Austral Brick Company Ltd of St Peters

The humble brick made for an interesting talk by **Ron Ringer** on Saturday 22 April. The *Scarborough* of the First Fleet had 5000 bricks on board. Brickmaking commenced in the settlement of Sydney, but by the 1830s the area around Brickfield Hill had become a hot bed of crime, so land was sought to the south and west of the city. Sands Directory between 1858 and 1920 listed 39 brickworks in Alexandria, 53 in Marrickville, 21 in Newtown, 48 in St Peters and 19 in Waterloo. The land at St Peters was soft clay with deep hard shale. The Austral Brick Company was founded here in 1908 and it later bought the Bedford Brick Works in what is now Sydney Park. Austral continued to operate during the Great Depression, providing employment at reduced wages, but stockpiling with an eye to the future.

Technology used in the 1850s gold rush was adapted to brickmaking, which ranged from small backyard operations to large industrial sites. Brickmaking was a dirty, labour-intensive business. Ron showed some brickmaking implements such as a roughcast wooden mould for casting bricks and a device for making the frog: the shallow indent on the brick's top surface.

Ron gave biographical details of two key brickmakers, William King Dawes and Edwin Spackman, who worked at the Austral Brick Company. They worked hard, were churchmen, masons and well known for their philanthropy. Dawes was a "saint and a sinner" and a photo of him caused much comment. A building bearing his name is still on Princes Highway.

One fascinating slide was a painting of St Peters Church Cooks River which was stylised in the manner of the English countryside, not surprising as most residents were English immigrants.

Injecting a touch of whimsy, Ron spotted a brick in the Holy Trinity Church at Lochinvar in the Hunter Valley, inscribed with "on the vag". Ron suspects that the brickmaker, the carrier and the bricklayer must have all been in on the joke (see below).

Thanks to Ron for his lively, informative talk. His book on brickmakers, the Austral Brick Company and Brickworks Limited is due for publication in 2007.

**Diane McCarthy**

**Note:** Ron drew attention to two of the few books written on our brick history, namely Warwick Gemmell *And So We Graft from Six to Six: The Brickmakers of New South Wales* (1986), and Nora Peek & Chris Pratten *Working the Clays: The Brickmakers of the Ashfield District* (1996).

The Macquarie Dictionary cites "on the vag" as an obsolete expression. **Paul Roy** advises that "according to GA Wilkes *Dictionary of Australian Colloquialisms* this phrase means 'According to the provisions of the Vagrancy Act', in other words, homeless. The term was used by TE Argles (1877) in *The Pilgrim*, by CJ Dennis (1916) in *The Moods of Ginger* and by KS Prichard (1959) in *N'Goola*."

Paul suspects "the Church recognised the implication that the Church was a sanctuary and preserved the inscription."

## MARRICKVILLE MEDAL EVENING

The Marrickville Medal and several other awards were presented at a ceremony at Petersham Town Hall on Wednesday 5 April. MC was Mayor of Marrickville **Sam Byrne** and Guest of Honour was the **Hon. Tom Uren**, former federal Labor MP and minister in the Whitlam Government. Member for Marrickville, the **Hon. Carmel Tebbutt**, MP was also present. Tom named the four greatest challenges facing society: a) social equity; b) race and racism; c) war and peace; and d) the environment. Of all these, the most important challenge is the environment.



Tom Uren, Kon Vourtzoumis (Silos site architect Tonkin Zulaikha Greer) & Sam Byrne (photo: William Newell)

Tom presented the awards. As reported in April, the 2006 Marrickville Medal for Conservation was for the adaptive reuse of the Newtown Silos (formerly Crago Flour Mill) for apartments (The Silos also won two EnergyAustralia National Trust Heritage Awards: the major Energy Management Award and the Adaptive Reuse Award). The inaugural **Peoples' Choice Award** went to **Dib El-Ters**, owner/builder of the former hostel at 8 Warren Road Marrickville. Clearly voters agreed with the judges' view regarding "the energy and dedication of the new owners, with the whole family getting involved in the tracking down of second hand chimney pieces, and the repair and replacement of damaged materials and surfaces." The response to the online voting was said to be excellent.

Another first was the inaugural presentation of the **Special Achievement Award for heritage conservation** to Florence (known as Lu) Bell. See separate report. There was a slide presentation and photographic display of all the Medal entries. Also on show was an impressive display of prominent people or sites – Maybanke Anderson, Caroline Chisholm, Sir Hugh Dixon, Dame Mary Gilmore, Jack Lang, Henry Lawson, James McGowen, William Paling, Mary Reiby, Sir Alexander Stuart, John Webster's New Town Store and William Wentworth. Each of this people at some stage lived and/or worked locally and most made their mark nationally.

The success of these events was due mainly to the efforts of Marrickville Council's Heritage Promotions Committee comprising Cr Fiona Byrne, Vince Connell, Roger Hazard, Robin Hedditch (Heritage & Urban Design Advisor), Robert Hutchinson, Scott MacArthur, Mark Matheson, Chrys Meader, Cr Peter Olive and Glenn Wardman.

**Richard Blair**



## FLORENCE (LU) BELL WINS HERITAGE SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

In presenting this inaugural award on 5 April Mayor Sam Byrne said "this award is designed to acknowledge the outstanding work of a person in conserving and protecting Marrickville's heritage. We received six nominations, and it's gratifying to realise just how hardworking and dedicated are many people in Marrickville. So the decision of the judges was difficult."

"Our winner is well known to many people here tonight and I'm sure everyone will agree she is a deserving recipient. I'd like to present the 2006 Special Achievement Award to **Florence Bell**. This award is given in recognition of her untiring efforts to keep alive the memory of the victims of the 1945 air crash at Petersham TAFE."

"In May 1945 a Royal Air Force Mosquito aircraft exploded in the sky over Petersham. The two pilots were killed and their bodies fell into the grounds of Petersham Public School, now Petersham TAFE.\* At the time, Florence was a student at the school and since then, she has been diligent in keeping alive the memory of those killed and keeping in contact with their families."

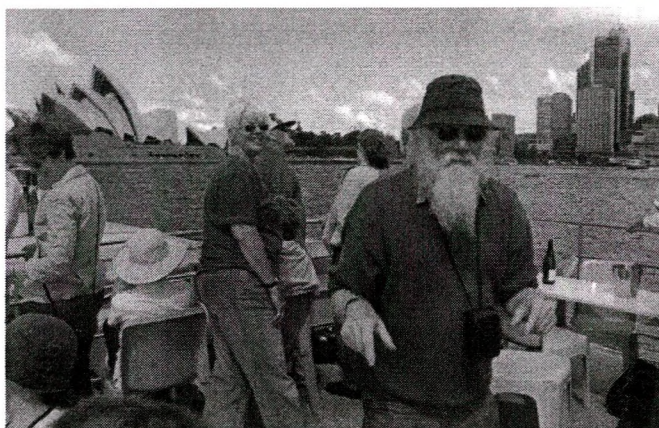


Lorraine Beach and Florence (Lu) Bell, winner of inaugural Special Achievement Award (photo: Scott MacArthur)

"She has become a guardian of the site and the memorials erected to the memories of the dead. She has donated a large amount of material to the Marrickville Local History Collection and has organised anniversary services and arranged visits by the families. She has been assisted in this work by Petersham TAFE and Petersham RSL, and her work over many years represents a dedicated effort and commitment far beyond what would normally be expected."

The Society congratulates Florence (known to most MHS members as Lu) for her achievement and fully endorses the judges' decision. Lu's efforts have been duly acknowledged in several past newsletters. Lu, who has lived in Petersham all her life, is a founding member of the Society and one of our longest serving newsletter runners. At our 22 April meeting, our president, Lorraine Beach announced Lu's proud achievement award.

\* Only one body landed in the school grounds; the other landed in a nearby railway goods yard.



Scott MacArthur's photograph was taken on our Sydney Harbour cruise on 25 March. Nancy MacAlpine is standing on left, Lorraine Beach in centre looks back and Robert Hutchinson is in foreground. Among several submitted captions: **Diane McCarthy** alliteratively suggests *The painter, the president and the pottery collector*; **Cliff Wherry** weighs in with *Leo thinks he's a boat!*; the abridged version of **Lisa Moore's** wordy caption reads *Donning the latest in fashionable attire, Robert Hutchinson, the epitome of heritage, turns his back in disgust after losing a game of paper, scissors, rock to Lorraine Beach who appears happy and relieved that she can go back to that glass of cold chardonnay.*

However, the winner of the bottle of wine is . . . **Vikki Butler** whose caption reads *I feel about this small, I could have sworn it's the Anzac Bridge we just went under. So, Vikki, red or white?*

## HERITAGE TOURS ON BICYCLE

On Sunday 2 April, as a Heritage Week event, in glorious autumnal weather two looped bicycle rides were conducted. About 25 morning cyclists commenced at the former Newtown Town Hall and gently meandered through Camperdown, Stanmore and Petersham (north of the railway). The afternoon delight by about 15 riders, started from Marrickville Park through Marrickville, Enmore and Newtown (south of railway).

Commentary was by the informed **Glenn Wardman** (Marrickville Council Local Studies Officer) who supplied maps outlining over 30 points of interest. A variety of heritage-inquisitive velocipedists included some from afar (e.g. Oatley and overseas), some ab initio, some teenagers, some septuagenarians, some councillors; some riders were experienced, while others had dusted their bikes from years of sedation.

Cycling proved to be a pleasant way to thread so many diverse sights and people together. The ride production was an amalgam of Marrickville Heritage Promotions Committee and the local bicycle group (MASSBUG). Hopefully the scope can be expanded and the information medium developed, to enable ad hoc "self-propelled" heritage sorties, by perambulation, for those with more energy and time.

Ian Phillips

Note: See Riverlife tours for bike event on 20 May



## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

**Saturday 27 May**  
**Darlinghurst Gaol/NAS tour &**  
**St Johns Anglican Church Darlinghurst**  
Details on front page

**Saturday 24 June**  
**Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 22 July**  
**Burwood tour & Chullora Wetlands**

Jazz concert featuring jazz singer **Sandie White** on Sunday 28th May 4.30 pm at **St Peters Anglican Church** 187 Princes Highway, St Peters. Entry by donation to Church Music Fund (which includes a light meal). Visitors welcome to stay for 7 pm Evening Service with guest speaker **Phil Nicholson**, Overseas Missionary Fellowship, Taiwan. [www.cooksriver.net](http://www.cooksriver.net) Enquiries 9557 3795 (ah).

Members are welcome to attend a short organ concert (c. 30-40 minutes) at 1 pm on the third Sunday of each month at historic **St Stephen's Anglican Church**, Church St, Newtown. Original 1875 Walker & Sons organ. Various Sydney organists. Donation \$5 suggested.

## RIVERLIFE INTERPRETATIVE TOURS

Marrickville Council has another four free guided Cooks River tours in May. Limited spaces; bookings required 9335 2222 (weekdays).

*Bridges to Bridges* Sunday 7 May 9.30 am to 12 noon from Sugar Mill, Canterbury

*Memoirs of Life on the Cooks River* Saturday 13 May 9 am to 12 noon from Steel Park Café, Marrickville

*A Cycle Tour of the Cooks River* between Tempe and Brighton-le-Sands Saturday 20 May 10 am to 1 pm from Tempe Station Car Park

*Sweet & Sour History & Photo Tour* Sunday 28 May 10 am to 12 noon from Sugar Mill, Canterbury

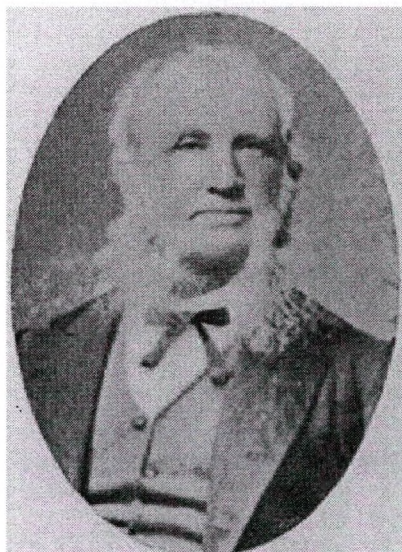
## ANZ BANK SITE MARRICKVILLE

Another decision by Marrickville Council to refuse a DA – on the former ANZ Bank site, corner of Marrickville Road and Alex Trevallion Plaza – has been overturned by the Land & Environment Court. The bank will be replaced by a four-storey building and basement car park with four street-level commercial premises and 15 flats.

The decision demonstrates how existing controls on height and density along Marrickville Road (and all our commercial/retail strips) are inadequate to stop what is still an inappropriately high and dense development. Community/Council protest forced the developer to reduce the proposal by a storey, but it is still too big for this site. The Society opposed the original application (May 2004 newsletter).

## FREDERICK STOKES: CO-FOUNDER OF SYDNEY (MORNING) HERALD

One of the three founders of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which celebrated its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 18 April was **Frederick Michael Stokes**. Born in Surrey and one of 19 children, Stokes, a 26 year old printer, in partnership with Ward Stephens and William McGarvie, first published the *Sydney Herald* as a weekly newspaper. McGarvie sold his share to the other two shortly after; Stokes sold his share to Stephens in 1836, but bought it back again at the end of 1839 becoming sole proprietor. Improved circulation and the surge in advertising enabled Stokes on 1 October 1840 to make the *Sydney Herald* a daily newspaper. However the extra workload took its toll and in 1841 he sold the paper to Charles Kemp and John Fairfax, who in 1842 changed the name to the *Sydney Morning Herald*.



*Sydney Morning Herald co-founder Frederick Stokes*  
(source: *A Century of Journalism: The Sydney Morning Herald 1831-1931 And its Record of Australian Life* John Fairfax & Sons Limited 1931 p 26)

Stokes pursued other business interests including printing, engraving and property. From the late 1870s Stokes and his family lived in *Graythorpe*, a villa estate on Wardell Road Petersham. Stokes continued living there until his death in 1891 aged 88, and family members still lived there at least until the late 1910s. *Graythorpe* at 100 Wardell Road Dulwich Hill has become a forlorn-looking block of flats. Nearby Stoke Avenue honours his memory, though oddly, the "s" was omitted (ironically, adjacent Porter Avenue was originally called Porter's Avenue, named after the brickmaking family).

Richard Blair

The reinstated **Cooks River Festival** held at Steel Park Marrickville on Sunday 9 April celebrated the environment and focused on issues relating to water sustainability. There were displays, demonstrations, talks, workshops, plant giveaways, guided walks, music and esoteric food, plus a range of relevant stalls. The festival had a certain vibrancy and was not a homogenised festival which is indistinguishable from any other. Thanks to Lorraine, Pat and Richard for helping on the stall.

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