

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



OUR NEXT MEETING SYDNEY HARBOUR CRUISE

Saturday 25 March 10 am sharp
Bookings & prepayment to MHS essential

Ferry leaves Man O'War steps east of the Opera House. Returning around 2 pm. Cost \$40 per person, \$30 concession, kids 7-15 \$10, under 7 free. Prepayment required by 17 March. Lorraine 8565 6511 in working hours.

Our private charter aboard the *M.V. James McCabe* includes 4-hour cruise of the harbour and Parramatta River, morning tea, lunch and expert commentary by author and historian Greg Blaxell.

COOKS RIVER FESTIVAL

Sunday 9 April 12-5 pm
Steel Park Illawarra Rd Marrickville

After a ten year break the Cooks River Festival has been reinstated. The festival aims to celebrate the natural environment and promote the principles of environmental and cultural sustainability. Attractions will include information stalls, displays, demonstrations, workshops and talks. MHS will have a stall at the festival.



THE TROCADERO SKATING RINK, KING-STREET, NEWTOWN.

Trocadero, King Street Newtown
from the 'Illustrated Sydney News' 25 July 1889
(Courtesy of NSW Public Library & Robert Parkinson's report)

Update on Trocadero in Newtown on back page

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES

Sunday 2 April Heritage Bicycle Rides
Newtown 10 am-12 noon Marrickville 2-4 pm
Free, easy guided rides. First through Newtown, Stanmore and Petersham from Newtown Neighbourhood Centre. Second from Marrickville Park, corner Frazer St and Livingstone Rd. Bookings essential 9294 5900.

Wednesday 5 April 6-8.30 pm
Petersham Town Hall Crystal Street
Presentation of Marrickville Medal for Conservation & the Heritage Promotions Special Achievement Award

Free. All MHS members and friends welcome. See below for details re Peoples Choice Award.
Enquiries 9335 2114

3-13 April 9 am-6 pm
Petersham Town Hall foyer
Notable Lives

A planned series of plaques and an exhibition will commemorate those notable people who have lived in this area and their contribution to it, the colony and the nation.

Free. Enquiries 9559 5502

11-13 April 10 am- 4 pm
Petersham Town Hall foyer
Industries of Marrickville: An Exhibition of Historical Photographs

Exploring 100 years of local industrial development from the late 19th century.

Free. Enquiries 9335 2287

PEOPLES CHOICE AWARD FOR MARRICKVILLE MEDAL

Leading up to the presentation of the Marrickville Medal on 5 April, members of the public can access Council's website <www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au> and register their vote for the Medal from the seven nominations, which will be outlined in detail on the site. For

HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Join MHS now and your membership will be paid until the end of May 2007. Send a cheque to Marrickville Heritage Society with your name(s), address & phone number(s) to address below. Includes monthly newsletter, journal *Heritage* and monthly talk or outing. Concession \$12, individual or joint concession \$20, household or organization \$28. Ring Richard on 9557 3823 for a brochure or further information.

MEMORY OF THE WORLD

www.amw.org.au

Documentary heritage reflects the diversity of peoples, languages and cultures. It is the mirror of the world and its memory. But this memory is fragile and every day irreplaceable parts disappear forever.

Founded in 1992, and active in over 60 countries, the UNESCO Memory of the World program is designed to guard against this collective amnesia by preserving valuable archive holdings and library collections around the world and ensuring their wide availability, particularly through the use of technology.

The *Australian Memory of the World* program was founded in December 2000 and has been active within Australia and internationally since its formation. The Australian Memory of the World program has succeeded in increasing its public profile and has gained a solid reputation nationally and internationally.

Its major activities and achievements are: 1) establishing an Australian register that has 19 inscriptions (including four added on 20 February 2006); 2) initiating a search for lost and missing documentary heritage; 3) holding workshops; 4) producing an online instructional manual to assist in applying for entry onto the Australian Register; 5) supporting the revitalization of the Memory of the World Committee in the Asia-Pacific Region; 6) actively participating in the International Program.

(from Aust'n Memory of the World Fact Sheet 17/2/06)

VALUABLE FIND IN A ST PETERS CHURCH: WHAT IS A PENNY WORTH?

Quite a lot, it seems, when it is a very special one. A fine example of a 1930 penny was sold in early March at Downies Australian Coin Auctions. According to the catalogue the coin was "recently found in a St. Peters church in NSW". It does not state which church, but I am sure the price realised will have everyone keeping an eye out for rich finds! Estimated at \$20,000 the penny sold for \$22,500 plus buyer's premium. Lesser examples of 1930 pennies brought \$18,100 and \$13,500 plus buyer's premium.



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Peter Cousens

AUTUMN TRIVIA QUESTION

"Enmore High where he found himself late in January 1932, was a different kind of school from Petersham Intermediate. It was a temporary school of the Great Depression, set up that same month to provide for a surplus of boys who had decided to continue their secondary schooling into the senior years largely because they were unable to find work. ... It was set up in an old trades school built at the turn of the century in Metropolitan Road, a depressing enough place at first sight."

This passage comes from an autobiographical classic. Who wrote it and what is the title? Richard 9557 3823 or pemell@tpg.com.au .

THE PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION

The Australian Government has requested that the Productivity Commission investigate the existing system for the managing of cultural heritage at all levels of government in Australia.

The commission has delivered a draft report for comment that found that while the structure of laws and bureaucracy was generally sound, it finds that an unfair burden falls on owners of private properties that are heritage listed. It wants to restrict listing of private properties to those where the owner agrees and where there is funding for conservation provided by the listing body.

This system would require much more money to be available for conservation at all levels of government, but particularly at Local Government level where there is little or none available at the moment. Unless new funding sources were to become available, very few private properties could be listed at the local level.

Given that 'heritage' has a low profile and priority with most councils, only dedicated or tied funding from an outside agency could be certain of reaching the heritage properties without being directed to other council works.

Britain's Heritage Lotteries seem to be a successful way shifting large amounts of 'public' money into public and private heritage and cultural projects for a general community benefit, in the way of our defunct Opera House lottery. Perhaps a gambling heritage tax? Alternatively, existing rate relief and tax exemptions for conservation works could be extended, but certainly at the local government level this would still require more funding to be made available.

This also ignores the fact that there are heritage property owners that don't want to save their properties and can't wait to burn and bulldoze them. Development pressures are intense in many areas including Marrickville.

If the community good can only be protected by councils establishing a 'heritage agreement' that preserves a threatened heritage item and in turn funds conservation works, then the public purse is going to need a whole lot of supplementation. Conservation funding in these circumstances begins to seem like compensation for lost development opportunities.

Conservation areas, heritage items and development control plans are all about identifying the special qualities and features that give our suburbs identity and amenity, and protecting them for current and future generations.

Other planning rules like floor space ratio and building height restrictions are accepted constraints on development that all developers have to work with or around. If a building owner can't make his/her development viable within these constraints, then it is a commercial decision to not proceed, not an opportunity to demand compensation. Our governments don't buy-off every property owner that feels aggrieved by a planning rule. Heritage constraints should be accorded the same status.

The commission has apparently not addressed the issue of who financially benefits from the increase in value of a heritage property after it is conserved with public money? Does the owner keep all or some of any capital gain when they sell? Is the public funding repaid, as is the case with some existing State Government heritage loans?

Scott MacArthur

MURAL CLARIFICATION

An apology to **Joan Francis** who, in the February newsletter, was misquoted regarding her mural identification at Keith Sutton's house. Joan believes the female figure in uniform with the round hat is **Selma Schleicher** or her sister **Mary Schleicher**. According to Cable & Judd's *Sydney Anglicans* (1987), Selma was made a deaconess in Germany while Mary was the first woman in Australia "set apart" to work as a deaconess in 1886. Mary worked for many years at St Stephens Newtown.



Mural house owner, **Keith Sutton**, will continue his investigations on the mural and the artist, E C Press; meanwhile watch this space! (copyright & photo: Keith Sutton).

HOUSE NAMES

Sarnia 94 Renwick Street Marrickville

Sarnia was occupied by Richard Guille, schoolmaster at St Peters Church of England School. In 1881, when it became St Peters Public School, he remained as headmaster. He occupied *Sarnia* in 1886 and lived there until his death in 1918. One of his daughters was still living in the house in the 1920s.

Investigation of the house name revealed that *Sarnia* was the Roman name for the Channel Island of Guernsey and Guille's ancestors came from that island. Guille, his family and the school, are mentioned extensively in the book 'Stanley'*. In 1876, at the inquiry into child labour in the brickyards, Guille passed on information, via James Cook, who was a brickmaker giving evidence there.

Laurel Horton

* *Stanley: A young man's colonial experience* – Rev. Stanley Howard writing to his family in England 1872-1878 edited by Laurel Horton, St Peters Publications, 2005 cited in October 2005 newsletter. Available through Laurel 9558 7504: \$30 + p&h.

OUR LAST MEETING AUSTRALIANS ON HOLIDAY

On 25 February our speaker, **Richard White**, came dressed in typical Australian holiday mode – open-neck short-sleeved patterned beach shirt, shorts and sandals. This was most appropriate because of his topic and no one likes holidays more than Australians.

It can even be said that the foundation of modern Australia was the result of a 'rich man's holiday' because, unlike other 18th century British aristocrats, Sir Joseph Banks at the age of 25, was not interested in the conventional Grand Tour of European cities. Instead he wanted to 'circumnavigate the globe'. He joined Captain Cook's 1769 expedition to Tahiti to observe the Transit of Venus, which was followed by the mapping of New Zealand and the east coast of Australia. As well as his luggage, Banks brought to the confined spaces of the *Endeavour* five servants and two greyhounds! Few Australians take servants these days but many take their dogs on holidays with them.

Eighteen years after that eventful voyage and after the death of Cook, it was Banks who pressed the British government for the establishment of a penal settlement at Botany Bay. Banks also described the idyllic life on Tahiti and in the 19th century, the Pacific Islands became the perfect holiday destination of the very rich. This island tradition continues today with exotic holidays to Bali and Vanuatu.

Australian place names include British and European holiday resorts: Cheltenham, Brighton, Scarborough, Sans Souci, Tunbridge, Windsor, Sandringham and many more.

The development of railways and steamships in the second half of the 19th century allowed rich people to holiday at destinations for a 'regular stretch of time'; the Blue Mountains and the Illawarra became popular with splendid hotels, guest houses and 'resorts' providing a 'holiday atmosphere'. Of course, these holidays were only for well-to-do Australians. The poor just kept working throughout the year with public holidays on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Good Friday.

In the 1940s the McKell Labor government in NSW led the world by legislating for one week's *paid* holidays for *every* worker *every* year. In the 1950s it became two weeks, in the 1960s three weeks and in the 1970s four weeks. As a result, the holiday became available for everyone, many who planned and saved all year. It became a regular topic of conversation: where to go and what to do. The weekend also developed from *just* Sunday to Saturday *and* Sunday.

Australian workers were granted Long Service Leave for ten years or more in the same job and until recently, compulsory retirement so that the holiday becomes a time of life. Retired couples touring Australia in caravans or campervans are sometimes called 'grey nomads'. Retirement had become one long holiday and retirement villages were established at former holiday destinations at coastal and mountain resorts, with exotic names like 'Paradise Gardens', so the holiday tradition could continue.

Although recent legislation has attempted to limit the automatic availability of some holidays, those enjoyed by politicians have not changed. This year the Federal parliament is closing down for an extra three weeks holiday so parliamentarians can attend the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne. Australians just love their holidays!

Geoff Ostling

Note Richard White's *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia*, Pluto 2005 \$32.95 is available at bookshops.

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

Saturday 25 March

Harbour Cruise

Booking details front page

Saturday 22 April

Ron Ringer: Brickmakers' lives

(a Heritage Festival event)

Saturday 27 May

Darlinghurst Gaol tour with Deborah Beck

Saturday 24 June

Annual General Meeting

St Peters Cooks River Church & Cemetery Tour Sunday 9 April 2-3 pm

As part of the 2006 Heritage Festival, guided tour of St Peters Anglican Church and historic cemetery on Princes Highway, St Peters. Gold coin donation. Bookings essential 9558 7504.

HISTORY CENTRE'S VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

If you want to learn more about Marrickville's history and have a few hours to spare on a Tuesday to work on an exciting local history project, contact Chrys Meader on 9335 2287 to book into an information session on Wednesday 15 March, 11.30 am-1 pm at the Function Room, Administration Centre 2 Fisher Street Petersham.

RIVERLIFE INTERPETATIVE TOURS

Marrickville Council is conducting several free guided walking tours in March and April focusing on Cooks River. **Limited spaces; bookings through council on 9335 2222.**

- *Children's Walking Tour* Sunday 12 March, 9-11.15 am from Steel Park Café. For children and parents.
- *Cooks River Sweet and Sour History and Photo Tour* Sunday 19 March, 10 am-12 noon from The Sugar Mill, Hutton St footbridge, Canterbury.
- *Tales of Tempe* Sunday 2 April, 9.30 am-12 noon from Kendrick Park Tempe.
- *Cooks River: Past, Present & Future* Saturday 8 April, 2- 4.30 pm from Tempe Station Car Park.
- *Discovering Your Neighbourhood* Sunday 23 April, 9 am-12 noon from Tempe Station Car Park.
- *Cooks River: Past, Present & Future* Saturday 29 April, 2- 4.30pm from Tempe Station Car Park.
- *Human Impacts on the Cooks River* Sunday 30 April, 9 am-12 noon from Tempe Station Car Park.

.PRESIDENT Lorraine 8565 6511

.TREASURER Stuart 9560 8070

.HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823

TROCADERO HALL WORKS KING STREET NORTH, NEWTOWN

The Properts Building was built circa 1889 as a purpose built roller skating rink to be known as the 'Trocadero and Academie de Musique'. When built it was reputed to be the largest and most elegant rink in Australia. The hall was remarkable for its retractable roof and exposed wrought-iron trusses. The building had its own generator for electric lighting, and boasted a billiard room, hairdressing salons, baths, oyster saloons, fountains and a café Française. The complex to a large degree still consists of the original main hall and basement fronting onto Campbell Street, and a three storey commercial/residential building fronting onto King Street. These two sections are linked by a two storey vestibule with service spaces to each side.

With the demise in popularity of roller skating early in the 20th century the building went through a series of changes of use and internal building modifications. Probably the most prominent was that of a vehicle body shop operated by Properts Motor Body Co. Limited. This tenant, and later owner, gave rise to the property's commonly known name.

Moore Theological College purchased the building in 1974 and for many years the building was used as a second hand furniture outlet. Since that ceased, the college has maintained the complex pending the completion of the college's overall facility master planning and a decision being made on the adaptive reuse of the facility to comply with the master plan. Properts Building was listed by the National Trust of NSW (1995), entered on the State Heritage Register under the NSW Heritage Act (March 2000), and identified as a Heritage Item under South Sydney Council Amending LEP 2000 (July 2000). An extensive history of the building has been prepared by Robert Parkinson and is available from the Sydney Archives Newtown Project website <<http://www.sydneymarchivesinfo/Essays>>.



*Trocadero hall trusses before current work started
(photo: Scott MacArthur)*

Since 2004, the NSW Heritage Office has requested that a series of works be undertaken on the building to conserve its fabric. The college is addressing a number of items of work that have been highlighted by the Heritage Office. Specifically, works are under way to repair the sheet steel roofing over the hall and King Street buildings and the reinstatement of the original slate roofing tiles to the King Street mansard roof. The wrought-iron roof trusses are in excellent condition after almost 120 years, and require hardly any repair work. On the King Street façade, masonry cracks and failed lintels are to be repaired and the façade will be repainted. One of the missing shopfronts will be reconstructed and the remaining originals will be restored. The college is considering adaptive reuse options.

Scott MacArthur