

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



HISTORY WEEK 16-24 SEPTEMBER

## OUR NEXT MEETING

**BATS & BRICKS AT SYDNEY  
OLYMPIC PARK, HOMEBUSH  
SATURDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 9.15 am**

Meet opposite Petersham Town Hall 9.15 for 9.30 am sharp departure. Return about 4 pm. Advise if you decide to cancel. BYO lunch or purchase on site. Cost (pay on day) \$20 members, \$25 non members includes morning tea & museum entry. Booking essential. Ring Sue 9519 9980.

Redevelopment of the area now known as Sydney Olympic Park began in the 1980s when a private business park, the Australia Centre, the State Sports Centre and Bicentennial Park were established. With the closure of Homebush Abattoir and the NSW Brickworks in the late 1980s the remainder of the site was opened up for renewal. In September 1995 a master plan was established for the development of Sydney Olympic Park enabling Sydney to be the proud host of the 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games.



Brickpit ring walk ([www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au](http://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au))

We will visit the Hall of Champions (with its comprehensive display of Games photographs, medals, old programmes, and other memorabilia relating to local sports identities like Fanny Durack, Ilse & John Konrads, and Jeff Fenech) and The Australian Tennis Museum hosted by Joanne Sippel who will show some historic tennis films. Also a unique chance to walk through the players tunnel on to centre court.

Another highlight will be the elevated circular brickpit ring walk with its birds eye views, interpretive boards and audio of noises and voices of the industry. This ring walk was a 2006 National Trust Heritage Award Winner. Lunch at the splendid Walter Liberty Vernon building, and a walk, if time, around the Haslams Creek Wetlands.

## AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE MAGAZINE

Accompanying this month's newsletter will be a brochure advertising the new *Australian Heritage Magazine*, which is of high quality and is available at very reasonable rates. Subscription details are provided but the magazine is also available at some newsagents. Members are assured that no members' details have been provided to AHM, which has generously subsidised this distribution of the newsletter.

## INITIAL MHS EMAIL-OUT

As foreshadowed on our annual MHS fee renewal slip, where we sought members' email addresses, we recently sent our first global email from the president. This went to over a hundred member households. This occasional email-out is not replacing the newsletter, but is intended to serve as a reminder about forthcoming events, notify activities too late for newsletter inclusion or to advise of significant current matters of heritage concern.

No private email addresses are revealed in the email-out. Anyone wishing to be included can notify their address to the MHS email address on bottom of back page or to Richard on <[pemell@tpg.com.au](mailto:pemell@tpg.com.au)>. We can remove or change an address at any time.

## MARRICKVILLE FESTIVAL

The society will have its usual stall at the annual Marrickville Festival on **Sunday 17 September from 11 am** along Marrickville Road. The Marrickville Heritage Promotions Committee will also have a heritage stall. Visual displays at both. We hope to see you there.

## MHS GARAGE SALE

The Society will be holding a garage sale on **Saturday 21 October from 9 am** at 70 Hopetoun Street Newtown. If you have any retro or classic items to donate (no electricals or junk please) ring Sue on 9519 9980 to arrange collection or drop-off. Put this in your diary and call in on the day. Plenty of parking and near 412 bus route.

**KEEP THE NATIONAL ART SCHOOL AT  
DARLINGHURST & INDEPENDENT!**



## OUR LAST MEETING - 26 AUGUST LAUREL HORTON ON STANLEY HOWARD

We were enthralled by an entertaining presentation by **Laurel and Bob Horton** of extracts and asides to her book, *Stanley: A Young Man's Colonial Experience*. Laurel is the historian of St Peters Anglican Church, Cooks River, and her description of the eight years of research and discovery that started with an obscure dedication on a stained glass window in the church confirms that good historians need also to be wily and persistent detectives.

Stanley Howard became tubercular after almost completing his degree at Cambridge, and in 1872, for the good of his health, he sailed for Australia. From that moment he recorded his everyday existence in letters to his family in England. He was curate at St Peters Cooks River for three years, but he also travelled extensively around eastern Australia (until 1878) and his letters are delightful and detailed, providing a unique insight into 19th century Australian life.

While Laurel guided us along the path of Stanley's travels from Melbourne to North Queensland, Bob read us his letters in a suitably bemused and affectionate tone of voice. Stanley's descriptions of St Peters and surroundings were particularly evocative. It certainly was another era, with omnibuses running every 20 minutes to the City for a sixpence, and views out over the beautiful lakes and mangroves of Botany Bay. His descriptions 'of being introduced to an earthquake' and the effects of a violent hail storm ('I never knew what hail was until today') are reminders of how savage Europeans must have found our land and weather.

During the research for the book, Laurel was able to make two significant connections to the present. She discovered that her great, great grandparents, the Hoppits, were employed as servants at St Peters Rectory. Her great, great grandfather, Ebenezer, even features in a Stanley letter about an errant cow. Laurel also determined that Elizabeth Howard, the great, great grandmother of our Prime Minister, was buried in the graveyard of St Peters Cooks River. While not a relation of Stanley Howard, Elizabeth's son Jesse and his wife Ellen and family met Stanley and are mentioned in a couple of his letters.\*

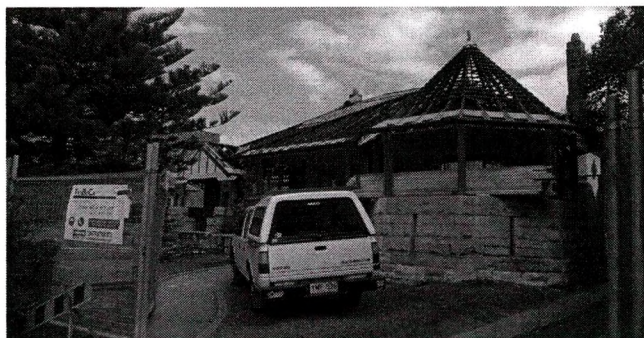
Historians can help us to find these direct personal connections to the past that obviously enhance the perceived importance and relevance of any associated buildings and places. Laurel has also used the letters of Stanley Howard to show that even though the buildings and landscapes of our area and country have changed in 120 years, the people, with their manners, foibles, successes and failures, really have not changed at all.

Scott MacArthur

\* Clarifying the lineage, Elizabeth Howard's son Jesse married Ellen; their son Walter Herbert Howard married Jane Falconer Jackson; their son Lyall Howard married Mona Kell; one of their sons is John Winston Howard PM. Laurel sent a copy of her book to John Howard who responded saying he appreciated her thoughtfulness and was looking forward to reading the book. Book available from 9558 7504.

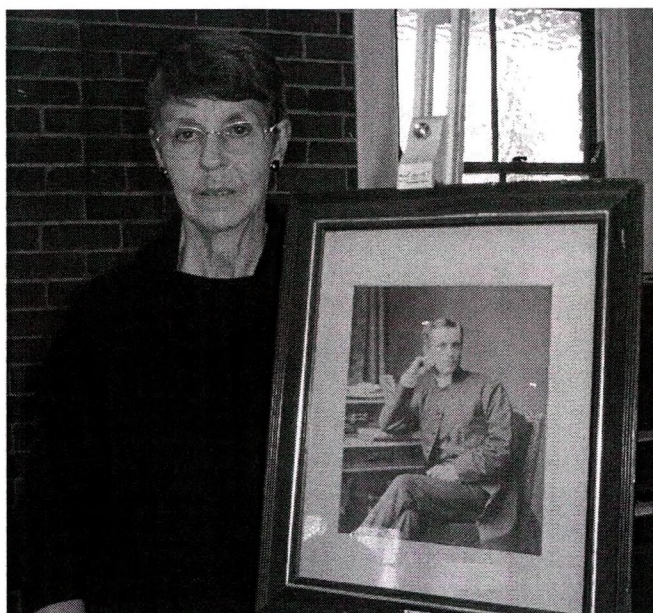
## THE GUNYAH, MARRICKVILLE

It seems that *The Gunyah* at 398 Marrickville Road, Marrickville has been saved from demolition but not from misguided reconstruction. The owners had lodged several applications to council in the last year for the demolition of the house to replace it with an appalling two-storey fake-Federation mansion over an underground carpark (as reported in our August 2005 newsletter). It appears that the owners were finally convinced by council that demolition of this excellent example of the Californian bungalow style would not be approved.



Council has subsequently approved some limited alteration and additional works, including a ramp to improve access. Unfortunately, council has also approved the replacement of the original slate roofing tiles with black concrete tiles. The slates are probably from Wales and their subtle weathered 'purple heather' colour and texture are an essential component of the charm and character of *The Gunyah*. No doubt the extra expense of using slate tiles was the excuse used to justify this poor decision. Repairing the original roofing or using several of the reasonably priced Welsh slate substitutes (either natural or synthetic) would have achieved a far more acceptable result for a similar outlay by the owner. While the house has been saved, the new tiles are an intrusion that will detract from its appearance.

Scott MacArthur



Laurel Horton with framed photograph of Stanley Howard  
(photo: Mark Matheson)



## HG PALMERS SIGN REVEALED

The recent demolition of the ANZ Bank building on the corner of Marrickville Road and Silver Street Marrickville has revealed this old painted sign for HG Palmers. As television was introduced in Australia in 1956, the sign (white letters on red background) is probably from the late 1950s. Member **Ann Fenton** emailed "I walked past one evening and stopped to make out the words. When HG Palmer computed in my brain I got a lovely flash of recognition – a name I'd totally forgotten about, but buried in my subconscious, like Bebarfalds, Beard Watson, Chic Salons etc. It made my day!" (Photo: Mark Matheson)



## DUNBAR FOLK OPERA

MHS member **Bob Thompson** reports from Armidale that "earlier this year we saw a performance at the regional art museum of a locally written folk opera *Dunbar* which takes the form of a descendant of James Johnston encountering his ghost. It's written as a 'short verse drama in the style of Japanese Noh theatre'. We enjoyed it and I believe there was some talk of it being performed in Sydney in 2007."

Bob says the show lasts about half an hour with three or four singing roles, a choir and several musicians. The composer is seeking funding to enable them to move the cast and production crew to Sydney for a weekend of performances at the time of the Dunbar wreck sesquicentenary in August 2007.

The sesquicentenary is likely to be widely embraced. The Dunbar anchor at The Gap, Watsons Bay would be an ideal setting for such a folk opera. Locally, the sombre surrounds of the Dunbar memorial at Camperdown Cemetery, would also seem ideal; as well as the adjacent St Stephens Anglican Church in Newtown. St Stephens rector, the Rev. Peter Rodgers is enthused at the prospect.

## SPRING TRIVIA QUESTION

Around 1898 Henry Lawson declared this person had made "a bigger splash in three months than any other Australian writer had begun to make in a hundred years." Name the person and a connection with our local area. Richard <pemell@tpg.com.au> or 9557 3823.

## IN REMEMBRANCE

We regret the recent passing of **Mary Nilsson**, founding President of the Art Deco Society of NSW. Current president, Jennifer Hill said "the best way to remember Mary is to continue the tradition she established, to educate people about the period and advocate for the protection of its lasting monuments and achievements." An interior designer by profession, Mary wrote *Decorating Australian Houses* (1987) and co-edited *Art Deco in Australia: Sunrise Over the Pacific* (2001). She was guest speaker at our MHS meeting *Art Deco Sydney* in October 1991.

**Vic Patrick** changed his name from Victor Patrick Lucca and was an Australian lightweight boxing champion of the 1940s losing only four out of well over 50 fights. He trained at Ern McQuillan's gym in Holt Street Newtown and lived in Newtown and later at 2 Bourne Street Marrickville, on the corner of Edinburgh Road. He became a prominent boxing referee and hotelier, once owning the Victoria Hotel in Marrickville. He died on 11 August aged 86.

We also note the passing of **Harry Diehl** who died aged 79 in Fort Walton Beach, Florida, USA on 2 July. Harry was the husband of Maureen Diehl, who, long term members will recall, joined our society in 1993 when Honorary Supervisor of the War Graves in the Azores, where lies airman Warrant Officer Neville Ryan RAAF of Marrickville.

The resourcefulness of one of our members is demonstrated by **Shirley Doolan** who produced a list of transcriptions she had made about ten years ago of the memorials inside Ultimo's St Barnabas Anglican Church, almost destroyed by fire in May (see June newsletter). Copies were forwarded to the Rev. Robert Forsyth, Bishop of South Sydney, who has expressed his appreciation. Great foresight, Shirley!



From member **David Buick**: "Some years ago I bought four Kauri pine pew ends from a Newtown junk shop and recently used them to make the table and stool in my enclosed photo. I have always wondered which church they came from and hope that someone in the society will recognise them. Can you help?" David 9557 5799. (Editor's note to David: Are you taking orders?)



## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

**Saturday 23 September**

**Bats & Bricks at Sydney Olympic Park**  
Details on front page

**Saturday 21 October**

**Garage sale:** details on front page

**Saturday 28 October**

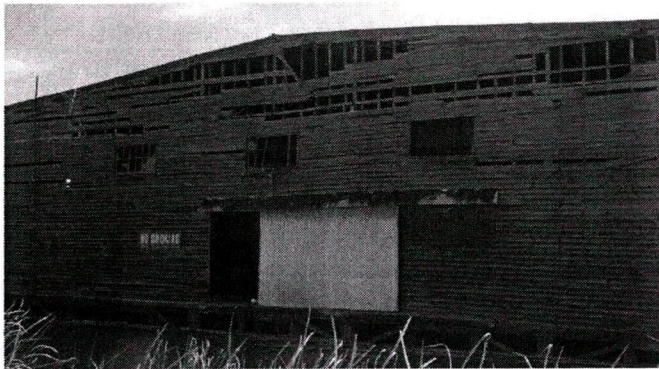
**Paul Storm: *Australiana in Architecture***

**Saturday 25 November**

**Tour of restored Trocadero Newtown**

## SHEA'S CREEK WOOLSHEDS

The few remaining World War II timber woolsheds along the Alexandra Canal are fast disappearing from neglect and fire. The NSW Heritage Office notes that the "Shea's Creek Woolsheds in Alexandria are historically significant as examples of temporary wartime wool storage facilities. This is demonstrated in their prefabricated, lightweight structure that was designed according to the dimensions of a wool bale in the 1940s."



*Woolshed damaged but not destroyed! (Scott MacArthur)*

The last of the woolsheds on the Marrickville side of the canal were demolished in the last decade, and those on the (now) City of Sydney side are falling into ruin behind a screen of warehouses along Bourke Road. However, recently one of these warehouses was demolished, and three of the woolsheds can now be seen from the road, despite very recent news reports of two 'rickety old' Alexandria woolsheds being destroyed by fire. Luckily these three survive, but they are in an obviously fragile and vulnerable condition. As the NSW Heritage Office has already identified how important these buildings are, it is time for them to be listed on the State Heritage Register and protected under the provisions of the Heritage Act.

**Scott MacArthur**

**Wade House**, near the corner of Booth Street and Pyrmont Bridge Road, Camperdown was part of the former Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children. It has just been demolished. More on this anon.

**PRESIDENT** Scott 9559 5736

**HERITAGE WATCH** Scott 9559 5736

**TREASURER** Stuart 9560 8070

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR** Richard 9557 3823

## TEMPE WALK

**Saturday 14 October 2-4 pm**

Join the St Peters Cooks River History Group on a tour of Tempe. Relive the past through the history of its people and places. Tour free but numbers limited & bookings essential 9558 7504.

## RIVERLIFE COOKS RIVER TOURS

Limited spaces. Bookings: Council 9335 2222

**Sunday 10 September 10 am-12.30 pm**

Walking tour along river from Steel Park

**Saturday 16 September 10 am-1 pm**

Cycle tour along river from Tempe Station carpark

**Saturday 23 September 10 am-12 noon**

Walking tour from Dulwich Hill Station along river to Tempe Station

## SHIPPING HOUSE NAMES IN SYDENHAM

Between George and Yelverton Streets, Sydenham is a series of six houses, 206-216 Unwins Bridge Road, called in sequence: Misima, Makambo, Matunga, Mindini, Mambare and Marsina. These names first appeared in the Sands Street Directory in 1920; all name plates are still intact, except for 212 (Mindini), which has been renamed. They were all the names of ships of the Burns Philp Line operating to the north of Australia, but were originally names of islands, rivers or villages in Papua New Guinea and New Britain. Thanks to **Diane McCarthy**, who reported and researched the find, with input from **Iain Carolin**, **Shirley Hilyard**, **Bill Conroy** and **Richard Blair**.

## ORIGINAL HOUSE NAME RESTORED

**Ken Swinbourne** says when he bought his house in Challis Avenue Dulwich Hill (venue for our 2003 Pot Luck Xmas Dinner) among the debris he found under the house was an old brass house name *Mill Haven*. Years later when researching his house, Ken found in the rate books it had been called *Swansea*, the name painted on the leadlight panel above the front door. However, prior to 1910, it was called *Mill Haven*. "The change coincided with the sale of the house to a Mr Jones who presumably named the house after his home town. The original name plate had lain under the house for about 80 years and been buried under the layers of rubbish where I had fortunately found it. It is now polished and mounted at the front of the house again."



## ALL ARTS Bookshop & Gallery

All Arts Bookshop has moved to St Peters and we specialise in collectors reference books on ceramics, the decorative arts, collectables, Australian art, tribal arts, colonial artists, architecture, etc.

Come in and browse

**Nobody matches our range & service**

**10% discount to MHS members**

**90 May Street St Peters**

**email: [books@allarts.com.au](mailto:books@allarts.com.au)**

**9519 1655**

**0416 036 093**

**Open Thurs/Fri/Sat 10 am-5 pm. Tues by appt.**