

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.



DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN

## OUR NEXT MEETING

**Saturday 25 November**  
**Trocadero 69-77 King Street Newtown &**  
**Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Museum**  
**10.30 am & 12 noon (two tours each activity)**

For Trocadero meet at King St entrance for free guided tour with Scott MacArthur. For museum meet at main entrance to former King George V Hospital, Missenden Rd Camperdown for guided tour with Helen Croll. Museum tour \$5 (pay on day). Bookings for both tours essential: Richard on 9557 3823. If leaving message give name and phone & specify preferred tour time. Advise if you need to cancel. 7-10 minute walk between venues.



Since opening in 1889 as the extravagantly named **Trocadero** and Academie de Musique, this wonderful and rare example of a Victorian Flemish style commercial building and roller skating rink has been a Newtown landmark. The elaborate amusement hall survived over a century of changes and neglect to the point where its fading charms were in danger of disappearing under dirt, damp and pigeon droppings. Now this grand old lady of King Street has had a dramatic facelift, with among other works, repairs and repainting of the facade and shopfronts (photo: Anthony Browell).

**Scott MacArthur**, project architect for the restoration work and MHS president, will lead a tour of the building to inspect its hidden architectural features.

## FEES OUTSTANDING?

A reminder slip should be attached to the November newsletter for any member whose fees appear to be outstanding. Fees are \$12 concession, \$20 individual or joint concession, \$28 family or organisation. Send cheque or money order with renewal slip. Queries treasurer Stuart 9560 8070. Address below.

## Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Museum (meeting details opposite)

The collection of historic material now held in the **RPA Museum and Archives** has been acquired over the hospital's 124 year existence and contains registers with the names of all the 12,000 (plus) nurses who have trained at RPA as well as a vast collection of photographs of the hospital and staff. There is a large collection of surgical instruments, nursing equipment and nursing badges, both army & civilian. The museum is in operating theatres in the former King George V Maternity Hospital.

**Helen Croll** has had a distinguished career in the nursing profession – general nurse training at RPAH in 1947 and obstetrics course at King George V. She has been a volunteer worker in the Museum of Nursing since 1983. She wrote *A History of Nursing at RPAH 1932-1982: The Second Fifty Years* (2000). Somehow Helen found time for marriage and four children.

## ANNUAL POT LUCK XMAS DINNER

**SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER 6 FOR 6.30 PM**

This year's dinner will be in the beautifully restored 1880s terrace of members Anna and Tony of Dulwich Hill, who will conduct tours around the house. Prior to dinner will be a talk from Kingsclear Books, publisher of *Pictorial History: Marrickville* (more details back page) which will be available to members at a discount rate on this night only. BYO. Plenty of parking. Bookings Pat 9559 6684 (from 8 am) for address and to advise what food you will bring.

The **Draft Marrickville Urban Strategy** will be on display until 15 December at Marrickville Council's website [www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au](http://www.marrickville.nsw.gov.au), local libraries and Citizens' Service Centre. Written submissions are due 15 December and should be marked 'Urban Strategy' and emailed [urbanstrategy@marrickville.nsw.gov.au](mailto:urbanstrategy@marrickville.nsw.gov.au) or by fax 9335 2029 or posted to Marrickville Council PO Box 14 Petersham 2049.

November meeting details in local newspapers or contact Heather Pearce (Community Solutions) on [heather@sydney.net](mailto:heather@sydney.net) or 9818 2684. It's not necessary to attend a meeting located in area where you live

**Certificate of Achievement** was awarded to **Angela Phippen** at recent RAHS Conference. See report inside plus report on this year's annual RAHS conference.

## RAHS CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT AWARDED TO ANGELA PHIPPEN

At this year's RAHS annual conference at Hornsby on 14-15 October **Angela Phippen** was awarded a Certificate of Achievement following a nomination by MHS. The citation reads:

*For her acclaimed contribution to the intellectual and social life of Marrickville Heritage Society and its community.*

Angela joined Marrickville Heritage Society in 1992 and joined the executive committee in 1994. She was vice president to John Zinsmeester 1995-97, and acted as president when John was too ill to carry on in the first half of 1997. She was also vice president 2004-05.



*Angela Phippen receives award from Ian Jack, President of RAHS on 15 October (photo: Kylie Rees)*

In 1994 Angela initiated and coordinated the Marrickville Remembers project. This was an oral history project with well over 100 interviews conducted by 20-30 interviewers in 1995-96. It culminated in a publication, *Marrickville Remembers 1939-1945* (1997) which Angela co-edited with Harold Welsh.

Later she initiated the War Memorials project, which resulted in *The War Memorials of St Peters Municipality Sydney, New South Wales* (2002). This professional publication includes an index of 60 pages demonstrating the large numbers of service men and women who came from the St Peters, Sydenham and Tempe area.

She also conducted interviews in a later MHS oral history project (c. 1998-2001). For several years she coordinated both the society's stall at Marrickville festivals and our annual pot luck dinners. Angela took minutes at committee meetings for two years and was an active committee member before stepping down this year.

Though the weather gods deemed that the day of the MHS garage sale on 21 October was the windiest and coldest day of the month, the event was most successful with lots of members turning up to browse and to buy. Many thanks to all who assisted by way of donation, preparation or by helping on the day, but above all, to **Sue Miller** who hosted the sale and did a substantial part of the work.

## 2006 RAHS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

*Roads, Rates & Records: Governing the Neighbourhood* was the theme for this year's conference on 14-15 October, to celebrate 150 years of state government and 100 years of local government. It was held at Hornsby, which as Hornsby Shire Council, was incorporated in 1906. To celebrate, a plaque was unveiled on a small cottage that had served as council chambers until the current chambers were built.

As usual, there was a full program, with papers ranging from using state and local government records to grand buildings to impress a community; women in local government, featuring our Lilian Fowler, to the Braidwood Story – the fight of the local community to save a shire's heritage; discovering local council rate books to exploring civic symbols; heraldry and quasi-heraldry – how granted coats of arms have changed to little more than corporate logos.

MHS President, **Scott MacArthur** accepted a cultural grant of \$500 for Marrickville Heritage Society towards our next journal and **Angela Phippen** was awarded a RAHS Certificate of Achievement for her time and dedication to MHS (see separate report). A steady sale of our publications was handled by our president **Scott MacArthur**, **Ian Rumsey**, **Rowena Ward** and **Robert Hutchinson**, who was renominated to the affiliated society's committee of the RAHS for the coming year. Thanks to all the staff and volunteers for making this such a successful weekend. We can all look forward to the 2007 conference in Canberra.

**Robert Hutchinson**



*Ian Jack presents Scott MacArthur with a cheque for \$500 RAHS Cultural Grant towards the Society's next heritage journal (photo: Kylie Rees)*

## THE NEW 31 CAMDEN STREET NEWTOWN

Once the driveway from Camden Street into historic *Ferndale* in Kent Lane, some years ago the strip was sold off and in 2003 Marrickville Council granted approval to build a dwelling on this narrow driveway. Following representations, the Heritage Office imposed a three month Interim Heritage Order, which was later lifted with the DA approval allowed to stand. Now, building works are well advanced for arguably the narrowest residence in Newtown!



## OUR LAST MEETING

### AUSTRALIANA IN THE APPLIED ARTS WITH PAUL STORM

On Saturday 28 October we welcomed more than 50 members, including some new faces, to again enjoy the inimitable style of **Paul Storm** (who in July 2005 led us on a walking tour of decorative tiles on the façades of houses in Newtown, Petersham and Stanmore). This time, Paul shared some of the treasures, and their stories, of his lifetime of collecting “stuff” – from his early boyhood rummaging on the local tip to a 30 year career of collecting, including the once commonplace pilfering from houses in the process of demolition. Both of these activities are lost to present day collectors, leading us to wonder whether many fine pieces are being lost permanently.

From the 1880s onwards Australian artists and artisans, mostly in Sydney, developed an Australiana theme, with favoured designs including native flora, fauna, Aboriginal design elements and, occasionally, Aboriginal people. Waratahs, flannel flowers, koalas, gumnuts, kangaroos, kookaburras, wattle – these items were unmistakably Australian and the populace embraced them as the art form flourished.



*Paul Storm displays a section from an elaborate ballroom ceiling rose, rescued from the oblivion by demolition of 'Kirnbank' at Arncliffe (photo: Scott MacArthur)*

Was this inspired by a liking for kitsch, was it the outcome of nationalistic fervour, or was it stimulated by something else? The Australiana trend preceded Federation and endured until about WWII, after which it virtually disappeared. Interestingly, we saw an example of Australiana on a school book from the late 1890s already bearing a reference to federalism and a likeness closely resembling what was to become, just a few years later, our Australian coat of arms.

The output, particularly in the applied arts, was astonishingly profuse and varied – decorations on tiles, ceramics, glassware, pokerwork breadboards and the like, shopfronts, advertising materials, book

covers, postcards, early Kooka stoves, doorknobs, acid etching in glass, architectural features as diverse as sculpture on public buildings, decorative plaster ceilings and stained glass. The quality range was as wide as the objects produced, from pokerwork by amateurs to the most exquisitely crafted and delicate pieces.

Paul's lifelong interest in acid-etching glass led him to a longstanding connection with one of Sydney's iconic buildings that exhibits, we learned, a vast wealth of Australiana – Sydney Town Hall. We saw the fruits of his days of laboriously taking rubbings from the many panes of the building's etched glass.

At the conclusion of our very entertaining meeting we were urged to go home and reassess what we've got, notice some of the things that Paul has noticed and learn to recognise, appreciate and preserve what emerged from this brief but prolific period of the arts that demonstrates an undeniably Australian origin. Our sincere thanks to Paul Storm for his warm and witty presentation, and for again generously sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm. Thanks also to Robert Hutchinson who brought pieces from his own collection to complement Paul's exhibits.

**Lorraine Beach**

### NEIL RANKIN'S BIRDS OF WOLLI VALLEY

In 1989 **Neil Rankin**, known as 'the Birdman of Wolli Creek' published *Birds of Wolli Creek* which was the result of years of collecting daily records of the bird species of the Wolli Valley coupled with earlier records of the pioneer ornithologist Arnold McGill. Neil, a former teacher, school inspector and keen conservationist, was an active member of the Wolli Creek Preservation Society up until his death in 2001. The WCPS has revised and expanded Neil's work and the second edition was launched at Turrella Reserve on Sunday 15 October. **Linda Burney** MP represented **Bob Debus**, Minister for the Environment, and notable naturalist and broadcaster **John Dengate** launched the book (and also wrote the foreword) calling the revised work a "very significant achievement".

Others closely involved with the book, who spoke were **Peter Stevens**, **Gavin Gatenby** and **Danie Ondinea**. Danie collated considerable data to supplement Neil's findings. **Mark Matheson** did the layout. The book "summarises many decades of birdwatching in the Wolli Valley, the last major area of bushland in Sydney's inner south-west. The valley is one of the few areas in Australia with such long-term records." The book is a steal for \$10 (plus \$2 p&h if posted). Send \$12 cheque to WCPS, PO Box 270 Earlwood 2206 or obtain from MHS for \$10 at our meetings.

MHS extends its best wishes to the **Hon Barry O'Keefe AM QC** who retires this month after 15 years as president of the National Trust. The Summer edition of *National Trust Magazine* contains a tribute to Barry's contribution with an article *An inestimable debt of gratitude*. MHS is affiliated with the National Trust.

## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

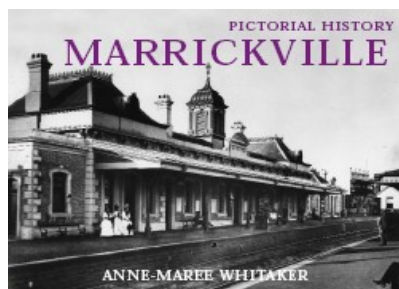
**Sunday 12 November from about 10 am**  
**Stall at St Stephens Church Newtown**  
(part of Newtown Festival)

**Saturday 25 November**  
**Trocadero Newtown & RPA Museum**

**Saturday 9 December**  
**Pot Luck Xmas Dinner & Pictorial History:**  
**Marrickville presentation**

### PICTORIAL HISTORY: MARRICKVILLE

Marrickville was the home of the Cadigal people. By the middle of the nineteenth century wealthy settlers established nurseries, orchards, dairies and market gardens to supply Sydney's needs. Brickworks were established to build stylish houses along the railway lines. Businessmen such as Thomas Holt and the Hordern family chose to settle in this convenient area close to busy Newtown and the city but with fresh air and a



Petersham Railway Station

*Pictorial History: Marrickville* by Anne-Maree Whitaker (published by Kingsclear Books) will be available in December. RRP \$24.95. A pre-dinner talk about this long-awaited publication will be held at our pot luck dinner on 9 December when members can obtain their discounted copy. Booking details on front page.

view of Botany Bay in some cases. By the middle of the twentieth century Marrickville became home to people arriving from overseas and today it is one of the most diverse multicultural areas in Sydney.

**St Peters Church, Cooks River** (187 Princes Highway) will celebrate the centenary of the old rectory on Saturday 2 December 1.30-4.30 pm. The foundation stone of the rectory was laid by Archbishop William Saumarez Smith on 1 December 1906.

Members are welcome to attend celebrations which will include children's games of the Edwardian era such as hoops, quoits and marbles, an historical display of 1906 newspaper events and ads and afternoon tea on the verandah. At 2.30 an entertainment will be staged called *It happened in 1906* featuring literature, music and events of the day. Dress fashion will be recreated. Enquiries 9558 7504 or <www.cooksriver.net>.

### SENIORS STORY TELLING PROJECT

An exhibition featuring 'a collection of interviews and photographs from mature aged people' who reside or have resided in St Peters, Sydenham and Tempe is on at St Peters Library, 39 Unwins Bridge Road Sydenham until Tuesday 28 November in library hours. The exhibition was launched on 31 October at St Peters Town Hall. Stories include those of Laurel Horton and Ros Torrent, both MHS members; former member Florence Duke, now aged 101; and Ken Holt, ex Marrickville councillor. Norman McVicker's Pocket Playhouse also features. The project (promoted in April newsletter) was completed by the STS Community Centre with funding from Marrickville Council. Enquiries Rhonda 9519 7463 (Monday-Wednesday).

## 536 PARRAMATTA ROAD PETERSHAM

Catherine Vivian ran a fancy goods shop at this address from 1907 to 1930. When she first appears here in the Sands Directory, her husband Edwin is also shown as running a newsagency here; but within a few years Catherine alone is shown as running the fancy goods shop. The store was located on the southern side of Parramatta Road between Railway and Palace Streets. In 1920 her immediate neighbours included Rose's Drapery, Grant's Furniture Shop and Davis the tailor.

One side of the store, it seems, was given over to general goods and hardware items, whilst lollies and toys were amongst items on the other side. In the late teens and early 1920s, a large doll graced the shopfront window – a magnificent doll about three feet high with golden hair, it proved quite an attraction for passing children. Catherine always appeared in the store wearing a large black protective sateen apron over her dress. A flight of stairs led to the living quarters upstairs.

In the early years of the 1914-18 war, Catherine's grandson, Aubrey,\* then aged about six, could recall standing on the upstairs balcony watching troops marching off to the war along Parramatta Road. Family members waved to the soldiers who waved back. Again, in November 1918, whilst attending a local silent picture theatre with his father, Aubrey saw a notice come up on the screen about the Armistice and ceasefire. He and his father went outside the theatre. News had travelled quickly, and years later he recalled people scurrying about and cheering the news; some young lads were marching around banging metal garbage tin lids together in celebration.



An enclosed courtyard was out the back of the shop. Crystal Street Public School (now TAFE) was a short walk away, and in 1916 Fort Street Boys High moved from Observatory Hill in The Rocks to Taverners Hill Petersham when Mr Kilgour was principal. In the years around 1920, the local Boy Scouts troop would

march past on Friday evenings. In the lead-up to Christmas each year, Catherine would put on a spread of food for her suppliers. This was her 'thank you' to them for their services each year (above: 1920s photo of Catherine Vivian in rear courtyard).

**Richard Snedden**

\* Richard's father Aubrey later worked at office of Diane Pottery (see July newsletter)

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