

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



OUR NEXT MEETING

**Heritage Colour Schemes For
Australian Houses 1880s-1930s**

With Michael McCowage

Saturday 24 February 10 for 10.30 am

Herb Greedy Hall, 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville

Of all the work we do on our old houses, the colour scheme usually provides the greatest visual impact – good or bad! **Michael McCowage** will show 'before and after' images of his work and cover the research and reinstatement of original and early colour schemes. He will show slides of early paint colour charts, surviving original decoration, old houses photographed around the time of their construction, and other interesting sources of research.



Michael McCowage is a heritage consultant, who illustrated Ian Evans's award-winning book *Caring for Old Houses* and assisted Ian with *More Colour Schemes for Old Houses*. He has appeared on national radio and television and is a regular speaker on the conservation of old Australian buildings. He previously addressed the Society in March 1991. An original example of Michael's illustrative work appears above.

OTHER HERITAGE FESTIVAL EVENTS

Sunday 4 March 10 am

• **Unveiling of the Henry Lawson Plaque: Petersham Railway Station** (opposite Regent Street)

Henry Lawson struck the keynote of his poem, *Faces in the Street*, on Petersham Railway Station. A plaque to Lawson will be unveiled as the first in a series of commemorative plaques throughout the Marrickville LGA. Morning tea will be served afterwards in the foyer of Petersham Town Hall. Further information on 9335 2287.

• **Heritage Bike Ride from Petersham RSL Club, Regent Street** (starts right after plaque unveiling)

This free bike ride will venture through Petersham, Stanmore, Camperdown, Newtown and Enmore, with an emphasis on sites connected to the literary and cultural history of those suburbs. The ride will be accompanied by guides from the Heritage Promotions Committee and the Marrickville and South Sydney Bike Group (MASSBUG). Riders need a roadworthy bike, helmet, water and sunscreen. Ends about 1 pm at Petersham Bowling Club, Brighton Street Petersham. Further information on 9335 2152.

Saturday 17 March Old Lace in Old O'Connell Town – Walk with MHS: details in March newsletter

NATIONAL TRUST HERITAGE FESTIVAL 3-18 MARCH 2007

The National Trust's Heritage Festival is in its 27th year and is one of the longest running community initiatives in NSW. The theme is *Places in Context: Cultural & Natural Landscapes*. Marrickville Council's Heritage Promotions Committee has again organised a program of events.

Wednesday 7 March

4-6 pm Vicars Exhibition: Petersham Town Hall

Did you or a member of your family work at Vicars Woollen Mills in Victoria Road, Marrickville? This exhibition explores the history of the mill from its establishment in 1893 to its closure in 1976 and the conversion of the site to the Marrickville Metro shopping complex. Most of the photographs have come from the private collection of John Vicars, the last member of the Vicars family to manage the mill, which was one of the most important industries, not only in Marrickville, but in Australia. John Vicars, a MHS member, will speak about his time at the mill. Further information on 9335 2287.

After the exhibition stay for the presentation of the prestigious Marrickville Medal.

**6.30-9 pm Marrickville Medal presentation
in Petersham Town Hall**

The Marrickville Medal for Conservation is awarded for commercial/industrial/public works or for residential works which were completed in 2006. The keynote speaker will be **Jack Munday**.

The **Heritage Promotions Special Achievement Award** will be presented to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to help, maintain, promote and understand Marrickville's heritage.

Everyone is welcome. Light refreshments will be served. Further information on 9335 2114.

AN AUSTRALIA DAY SCENARIO

Scene: 26 January 1788. Sydney Cove. Soldiers, sailors and convicts are swarming ashore.

Governor Phillip: As Governor of the territory of New South Wales, I wish to claim this . . .

A council inspector interrupts: Excuse me. Whad-dayouse lot think you're doing?

Governor Phillip: Ah, a native. My man, we have traversed the world's oceans to establish a colony on this distant shore. See, we have raised the Union Flag and are about to claim this land for England.

Council inspector: I don't care how far you've come. If you haven't got council approval paperwork, you can go home.

Governor Phillip: Paperwork?

Council inspector: For starters, a permit for that flag-pole. A license for a major public gathering. Public liability insurance. And what's with all the tents?

Governor Phillip: Err, well, they're our rude accommodations, until we can build some permanent dwellings.

Council inspector: You can forget the tents because this area isn't zoned for camping. And as for houses, I need to see building permits.

Governor Phillip: My good chap, you must realise we're the vanguard of a great enterprise in the building of nations.

Council inspector: Where's your local environment plan, environmental impact study, community submissions and Aboriginal community consultations?

Governor Phillip: We thought this land was terra nullius. Our enterprise can't be held up by all this bureaucracy.

Council inspector: Sure mate. By the way, when the bloke from Waterways spots those ships, he'll be after you like a shot.

Governor Phillip: Methinks we need to find a way to fast-track our approvals.

Council inspector: You mean some anonymous donations?

Governor Phillip: No, I'm sure the smoke and flame from our ships' guns will soon change your tune.

Council inspector: A fireworks display? Why didn't you say so? You can get away with anything for a fireworks display. Give me a hand roping off the best possie.

(from *Dry Rot*, *Sunday Telegraph*, January 2006 – exact date unknown)



BUILDINGS AT POSSIBLE RISK

William Grant of Marrickville had a letter published in the *Daily Telegraph* on 25 January stating: "The historic **Henson Park Hotel** is to be razed. The iconic and spiritual home of the famous Newtown Jets, their many supporters and generations of local patrons will be sold, stripped of its license and placed in developers' hands. The management group of the pub has placed a submission with Marrickville Council to transfer the gaming license to a premises smack bang in the middle of a busy shopping centre, on one of Sydney's tightest bottlenecks . . . One of the last surviving pubs with original art deco architecture and interior will be lost forever."



Henson Park Hotel, corner of Illawarra Rd & Chapel St Marrickville, newly-built in 1936 and described as one of the best hotels in the metropolitan area from 'History of the Municipality of Marrickville 1861-1936' (1936)

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A DA has been lodged with council regarding **Reiby Hall** at 37 Station Street Newtown "to undertake internal and external alterations to the existing dwelling house to create a community facility for the unincorporated Newtown RSL sub-branch." Is this the beginning of the death knell for this 1905 hall (formerly a gospel hall and adjacent to the former Reiby House) used since 1995 as a yoga centre?

Two to watch!

POT LUCK XMAS DINNER

The house of **Anna and Tony Breinl** in Dulwich Hill was a wonderful setting for our annual Pot Luck Xmas dinner on Saturday 9 December. The large lush garden was matched by the stunning restoration of their two storey house through which we were given guided tours. The occasion was further distinguished by having historian, Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker, author of *Pictorial History Marrickville* and publisher, Catherine Warne from Kingsclear Books discuss this long-awaited book. It was well received and many copies were sold (see back page review).

Members brought the usual delicious array of food and the ambience was most convivial. A great team effort of organisation, but special thanks to Susan Hicks and Joyce Roy for their help on the night; Pat Mullen for her coordination; Robert Hutchinson for donating one of his Xmas cakes and port for the lucky door prize, won by Stuart Grigg; and Anna and Tony for being such splendid hosts.

Richard Blair

From his balcony Tony Breinl snapped members in his lush gardens at Pot Luck Xmas Dinner

MHS MEMBERS HONoured

Congratulations to **Norman McVicker** OAM who on 3 January was presented with "the NSW Government Community Service Award for his contribution to local and national history" – the highest award the State can give. Norman has voluntarily written local and Australian history for the Mudgee community in the *Mudgee Guardian* for the past 17 years with over 900 columns. He was awarded the OAM in June 2003.



In the 2007 Australia Day Honours the OAM (General Division) was awarded to both **Lesley Muir** and her husband **Brian Madden**, both MHS members and well known statewide in local history circles. Lesley's award was "for service to

recording and preserving local history, particularly in the Canterbury District." Brian's award was "for service to the community through the recording and preservation of local history and as an executive member of historical societies." Both have written a number of historical



works and have often addressed MHS and conducted walking tours. (Photo of Lesley Muir on Cooks River walk 26/4/03 by Mark Matheson; photo of Brian Madden from *St George & Sutherland Shire Leader* 17/8/04 at the launch of *Kingsgrove: The First Two Hundred Years*, co-written by Brian with Ron Hill.)

Among other recipients we congratulate are **Gary Blaschke** "for service to sport through the Disabled Surfers Association of Australia, and to the environment;" Gary led our walk through the Chullora Wetlands last July; and **Peter Watts** whose award was "for leadership in the conservation and preservation of Australian heritage, chiefly with the Historic Houses Trust of NSW and the Australian Garden History Society, and to the Arts."

The State Government has abandoned plans to merge the **National Art School** at the former Darlinghurst Gaol with the College of Fine Arts UNSW. A committee will be established to determine the future of the historic school.

Geoff Ostling still has vacancies on his 14-29 April privately-run Historical Tour of Turkey tour incl. Dawn Service at Anzac Cove advertised in December newsletter. Info & bookings 9568 3029 or 0425 359 264.

IN MEMORIAM

In our June 2006 newsletter we reported on MHS member **William (Bill) Edwin Hamnett** having turned 100 years old on 24 April 2006. Bill died on 28 October after a short illness. He spent most of his early life in the Marrickville area attending Chapel Street Public and Fort Street High Schools; he worked in local companies before becoming a successful businessman. Our condolences go to his family, and his sister Hilda York, a long term MHS member.

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We note the passing of **Judith Baldwin** late of Dulwich Hill on 16 January. Judith had been a MHS member since 1998. Our condolences to Judith's husband Graham, also a member, and their family.

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Our condolences also go to the family of **Kevin John Berry** who died on 7 December aged 61 after a long illness. Kevin was raised in Warburton Street Marrickville and attended De La Salle College, Marrickville. He became Australia's foremost butterfly swimmer representing Australia in both the 1960 Rome and 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games when he won the 200 metres butterfly in world record time and came third in the medley relay. He won three gold medals at the 1962 Perth Commonwealth Games and in his career broke 12 individual world records.

He later became a well known press photographer, pictorial editor of the Sydney Morning Herald and head of ABC Sport. He was inducted into the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1980. In 1998 Kevin wrote *2000 Things You Didn't Know About the Olympic Games* and in April 2000 he was a guest speaker during a Heritage Festival event at Newington College jointly organised by MHS and the Heritage Promotions Committee.

SUMMER TRIVIA ANSWER

Liberty Street Enmore is the only known example of a street in the Marrickville LGA where the numbers on either side of the street run in opposite directions. On the western side the low even numbers start at the railway end; on the eastern side the low odd numbers start at the Stanmore Road end. This apparent anomaly existed as far back as the 1890s according to Sands Directories. It was probably associated with poor coordination between the former Newtown and Petersham Councils as the boundary was down the middle of the street. The eastern side has housing along the entire length whilst on the western side there are only about 6-10 dwellings.

Liberty Street was so-called because it was used by travellers in carriages wanting to avoid the toll bars in King Street Newtown. The original toll bar was near Forbes Street and later a second was erected at Newtown Bridge. Both were abolished in 1882.

Precisely ten years ago in the February 1997 MHS newsletter a more detailed explanation about the name Liberty Street was given apropos the same trivia question. With a correct answer neither time, it seems this trivia question has taken its toll!

Richard Blair

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

Saturday 24 February

**Heritage Colour Schemes for Australian Houses
1880s-1930s: with Michael McCowage**

Details on front page

Saturday 17 March

Old Lace in Old O'Connell Town

(Week early due to NSW State Election 24 March)

BRIDGING SYDNEY

This exhibition at the Museum of Sydney on the corner of Bridge & Phillip Streets celebrates the 75th anniversary of the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in March 1932. Exhibition runs until 29 April and museum is open daily 9.30 am to 5 pm.

RiverLife Cooks River Tours

**Free but limited spaces. Bookings essential:
Marrickville Council 9335 2222 for venue.**

Sunday 18 February 10-11.30 am

Bridge to Bridge for children (roughly 5-11) & adults. Investigate environment, local history & identify trees and birds. Children must be with a parent/guardian.

Saturday 3 March 10-11.30 am

A Child's Day by the River

Imagine being a child by the river 300 years ago. What could the river have looked like? What things could you have done here?

Sunday 4 March 10 am-12 noon

(also on Sunday 22 April)

Cooks River Clearwater Revival. Learn about human impact on the course and flows of the river in this bicycle tour from Canterbury to South Strathfield.

Sunday 4 March 10 am-12.30 pm

Let's Sketch Together on Cooks River. Bring own art material – dry or water based media only – no solvents. Sketch pad, chair or mat.

COOKS RIVER FORUM

The Cooks River Valley Association has organised this forum for anyone interested in the health and welfare of the Cooks River. The forum will be attended by local state and federal members who will field questions. **Saturday 24 February** at 1 pm at the Canterbury-Hurlstone Park RSL Club.

COOKS RIVER COMMITTEE

Marrickville Council is calling for nominations from individuals who would like to participate on the **Marrickville Cooks River Committee**, which aims to improve the environment of the Cooks River and raise awareness amongst the community of its value as a natural system. Meetings are every three months in the evening. Membership is voluntary and appointments are for two years. For more information ring Manager Environment Services on 9335 2198. Expressions of interest required by Friday 2 March.

PRESIDENT Scott 9559 5736

HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736

TREASURER Stuart 9560 8070

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823

PICTORIAL HISTORY MARRICKVILLE

The latest in the pictorial series of Kingsclear Books examines the eleven suburbs in the Marrickville LGA as is eye-catching as ever. These books are designed to provide a brief historical background and memories of earlier eras, largely with a view to encouraging readers to look further into local history. The photos are supplemented with text written by historian, Anne-Maree Whitaker. Much of the photographic material was provided by the Marrickville Council History & Archive Centre.

Included are streetscapes, shops, houses, factories, mills, cinemas, shops, brickpits, processions and churches. A shot of a dairy on the corner of Carrington Road and Ruby Street Marrickville reminds us that dairies still abounded just a century ago, whilst in 1932, Girl Guides assembled in the grounds of the Abergeldie estate in Dulwich Hill. We are also reminded of more recent events such as the night in April 1990 "when the night sky over St Peters was lit up by blinding white fireballs . . . [following] an explosion . . . at the Boral LPG distribution depot in Burrows Road"; also of demonstrators against the opening of the Third Runway in 1995 and the subsequent mass demolition of houses in Sydenham.

The book is further enhanced by two sections new to the pictorial history series – one on architectural styles and the other titled *Tracing Your House History* with reference to a range of state and local resources, including the Marrickville Heritage Society, giving its purpose and contact details. A bibliography, a Marrickville chronology and an index round out the book.

However, some errors of fact have been found. On page 60, we read in the lower photo caption of a tram said to be going along Unwins Bridge Road Sydenham past the demolished Rex Cinema in 1923 – in fact the tram is in Railway Road in 1954 and the cinema building still exists, though not as a cinema. Also, the mistake is perpetuated that Annette Kellerman was born in Silver Street Marrickville (p. 30), a fact not verified by Annette's birth certificate, which indicates she was born in Darlinghurst; the Kellermans did later live in Silver Street (see August 2005 newsletter).

The book is \$24.95, but is available to MHS members for \$22 (or \$22.50 at All Arts Bookshop at 90 May Street St Peters). Postage \$7 extra for NSW residents.

Richard Blair

