

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



**OLD MARRICKVILLE HOSPITAL SITE:
STUDY COMMISSIONED BY COUNCIL
IS CONSIDERED A WASTE OF
RATEPAYER'S MONEY!**

OUR FIRST MEETING IN 2008
Show and Tell
Saturday 23 February 10.30 am
Herb Greedy Hall Marrickville

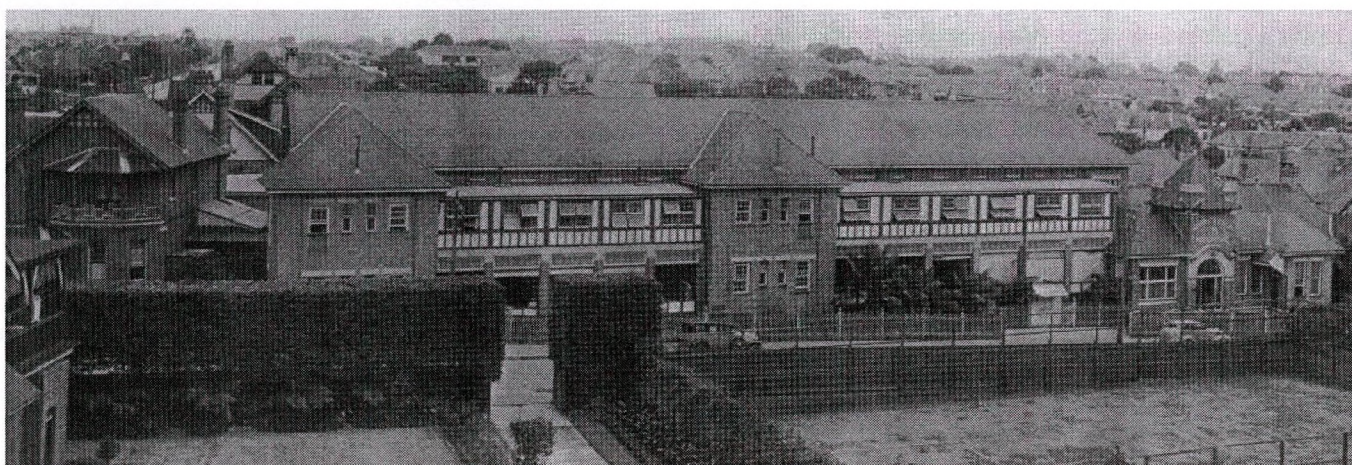
The resolution passed by the Labor and Independent councillors at the council meeting of 20 November was extremely disappointing from my point of view as both a ratepayer and President of the Marrickville Heritage Society. Council has committed to commissioning a study from a private consultant to investigate the maximal development on this important site, if heritage constraints are ignored — a "clear-felled, green field" site.

As a ratepayer I object to this as we are lead to understand that this "clear-felled" option will never actually be implemented — at least one of the Labor Party councillors who supported this motion stated that they would not support the demolition of the hospital building. Why then commission an expensive report, that we ratepayers will pay for, to investigate a non-option? Of course, once a feasibility study finds that retaining the heritage buildings will cost the Council \$X million in foregone development opportunity, extreme political pressure will be brought to realise the site's "full potential", with anyone not supporting the demolition of the heritage buildings being accused of financial irresponsibility.

From a heritage perspective, the contention that "heritage" constraints are all that are preventing Council from turning the site into a "golden egg-laying goose" is fallacious. Heritage listings are a constraint on development as much as floor space ratios, height limits, solar access controls and zoning. Deliberately ignoring any of these constraints will produce a solution that cannot be legally supported. Specifically, council should not be wasting money-paying consultants to develop proposals to demolish heritage items that have already been identified as worthy of retention by others of their consultants; especially where the Minister, Frank Sartor, has shown, with the former Coptic Church in Sydenham, that he is willing to step in and prevent Council from demolishing their heritage listed buildings.

I used to think that Council had, at the least, ethical and moral responsibilities to comply with their own development controls, if only to serve as a model for other developers in our LGA. This delusion was destroyed at that meeting.

Scott MacArthur, President



*Marrickville District Hospital (Lilydale St frontage) in 1930s; building alterations since; hospital closed 1991.
(Marrickville Council History & Archive Centre)*

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Clare & Steve Jasek, Camperdown; Yvonne Preston & Myrddin Phillips, Enmore; Eileen Jones, Lewisham; Pat Grimshaw, Marcelle Rodgers, both of Newtown; Phillip Morgan & Makoto Narita, Petersham; Pamela Kidd, Stanmore; Hilary Dwyer, Earlwood; Laurel Peters, Westlake, Qld.

To join Society, ring Richard 9557 3823 for a brochure

The President, Scott MacArthur, and members of the executive committee wish all Marrickville Heritage Society members and their families a Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year.

OUR LAST MEETING

A Walk in Abbotsford with Ted Green

On the showery, misty Federal Election Day morning of 24 November, walkers arrived by car, bus, bicycle and RiverCat and assembled at Werrell Reserve, Abbotsford with our guide, MHS member **Ted Green**, who acknowledged the Wangal clan as the original inhabitants of the area.

Werrell Reserve, named after Mervyn Werrell, Drummoyne Mayor (1953-55), was the site of the Abbotsford saltwater/tidal swimming pool, which operated from 1907 until the 1950s and whose stone walls are still visible. A boatshed has stood on the site since 1908. At Abbotsford Wharf a punt service was established to carry people, horses and carriages across the Parramatta River to Bedlam Point. The ferry operators, a married couple, were on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week! *Oh, that was a service.* The early punts were eventually replaced by bridges that allowed trams and private vehicle crossings. The Bedlam ferry was superseded by the "old" Gladesville Bridge in 1881.

On to Battersea Park with its wonderful stone terraces. This was the site of another saltwater swimming pool built by J Cashman in 1910. The park of most significance was Quarantine Reserve which was gazetted by the Commonwealth Government in 1920 to house a new Animal Quarantine Station. The site was chosen because of direct access via Parramatta River transport and was "out of town". Many of the structures associated with the Quarantine Station have been retained on site as a park dedicated in 1981.

Henry Lawson Park was dedicated in 1938 in honour of Henry who spent his last days living in the district. (He died in 1922 in a house in Great North Road opposite Abbotsford Public School.) We paused in the park for a drink and a slice of Ted's fruit cake. By way of a Marrickville connection, Newington College has a rowing club nearby and students were doing calisthenics there. Ted paid due homage to Henry Searle, a late 19th century champion sculler closely associated with the river and the area.

Notable houses included the wonderful Chatham House (1912), now divided into dwellings, and Abbotsford House (1878), also a private home, with its large curtilage and retained water feature. Tasteful home units surround the property, where Nestlé's chocolates were manufactured for many decades. Thanks to **Ted Green** for his great commentary and to **Sue Miller** for coordinating the outing.

Diane McCarthy

Note: The walk was largely based on the Abbotsford walking brochure prepared by the City of Canada Bay Library Service; additional input from MHS member Joan Francis.

MARRICKVILLE METRO 20 YEARS OLD

Some still regard shopping malls as anathema to shopping strips, but Marrickville Metro (all one level) would be one of the more user-friendly malls in Sydney. From a heritage viewpoint, ongoing preservation of the old Mill House (c. 1860) is commended. An article remembering Vicars Woollen Mill, long time site custodians, will appear in the forthcoming *Heritage* 13.

EDWARD GRAYNDLER MLC

With matters political finally receding voters residing in the electorate of Grayndler (the safest federal Labor seat in NSW), may have wondered who the electorate is named after? It was **Edward Grayndler** (1867-1943) OBE who was a politician, trade unionist and briefly a travelling salesman. He was a NSW MLC (1921-34, 1936-43) and was sufficiently regarded by the Labor dominated federal governments of the 1940s to have the electorate of Grayndler named in his honour in 1948. Any local connection? He lived much of his life in Canterbury (in the Grayndler electorate) though he died in Melbourne and was buried there. He was survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters. Anthony Albanese, newly-appointed Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Transport and Regional Development, and Minister for Local Government, has held the seat of Grayndler since 1996.

(Source: *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 9, Melbourne University Press 1983, pp. 86-87.)



Edward Grayndler in 1931

(photographer unknown © National Library of Australia)

125TH ANNIVERSARIES

- Fourteen years after the attempted assassination of Prince Alfred, second son of Queen Victoria, at Clontarf in Sydney, a hospital was opened in his honour. Planned as a teaching hospital for medical students at the University of Sydney and as a training school for nurses, Prince Alfred Hospital in Camperdown was officially opened on 25 September 1882. In 1903 it became known as the **Royal Prince Alfred Hospital** or **RPA**. A commemorative 150-page book with 350 photographs, *Royal Prince Alfred: 125 Year Anniversary* is available from RPA for \$45 (plus \$10 p&h).

- Also opening in 1882 was **Camdenville Public School** tucked away in Laura Street Newtown. Celebrations were held there on 30 November. As a reminder of former nearby schools, Camdenville School houses war memorial and school achievement award boards from Enmore Public School (closed in 1956) and Enmore High School (closed 1989).

SOME UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY WORKS: THE DARLINGTON CAMPUS & THE CHANGING FACE OF CITY ROAD

No building or houses next to an educational facility, airport or shopping complex can be guaranteed long term tenure. With the expansion of the University of Sydney from the 1960s, much of residential Darlington disappeared. Some remnant thoroughfares remain and part of Maze Crescent was previously the extension of Darlington Road which linked up with the Cleveland Street and City Road intersection.

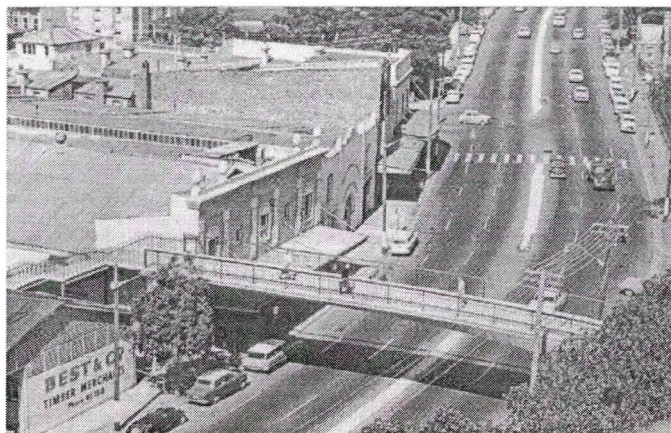
The sole surviving Darlington public building within the university grounds is the Old Darlington School (c. 1877-78) designed by George Mansfield. The building is "heritage listed under the City of Sydney Local Environment Plan as it contributes significantly to the overall character of the original Darlington campus". The University is undertaking conservation work on the façade and slate roof of the Old Darlington School; it involves using slate roofing from Newfoundland, "copper sheathed roof vents, sandstone moulds and chimney stones from the NSW Dept. of Commerce reserve". Extensive damage caused by white ants has been remedied. According to the university's website, the complex will "continue as a venue for events, concerts and exhibitions in 2008". The school's war memorial pillars are also being retained.

The green space surrounding the school is currently in a state of upheaval and is being re-landscaped. It is planned to build "a new natural amphitheatre . . . surrounded by a grove of lemon-scented eucalypts". Other new features are a new wetland and bio-retention filter, improved lighting and seating. However many staff feel they have been overlooked in the consultation process, some contamination has been found on the site, valued trees may be lost and green areas are to be replaced by paving blocks.

In 2006 the iconic City Road tin sheds had their date with the bulldozers. These sheds (originally four) which stood to the east of the City Road footbridge, apparently dated from the early 1940s when they were used "to grind lenses for the sights of naval guns" and were later CSIRO laboratory annexes. From 1967, Lloyd Rees taught art and art history to Architecture students there and around 1970 they became the Tin Sheds Art Workshops. In 1988 the Tin Sheds Gallery was founded in the adjacent building that had in turn been a sweets factory, car repair workshop, wind tunnel testing laboratory and director's studio. Since demolition and in recognition of their significance, the new Tin Sheds Gallery opened next door at 148 City Road in the refurbished Wilkinson Building, so the Art tradition in that vicinity continues.

Under construction on the tin sheds site is a large student centre. The 1966 City Road footbridge (named after Keith J Murray, who headed the committee which recommended the university be expanded into Darlington) was recently demolished, but will be replaced by a new footbridge linking the student centre with the main campus in 2008.

How many of us remember the configuration of buildings which preceded the Wentworth Building on the corner of City Road and Butlin Avenue (formerly Codrington Street all the way from Wilson Street)? The



above late 1960s photo shows how this City Road streetscape has changed — "the Surryville Dance Hall, just beyond the footbridge with the Lalla-Rookh Hotel on the corner", all demolished in the early 1970s for the Wentworth Building, completed in 1972. (Sources: University of Sydney website; Therese Kenyon *Under a Hot Tin Roof: Art, passion and politics at the Tin Sheds Art Workshop* State Library of NSW Press & Power Publications, 1995; Bruce Williams *Liberal Education and Useful Knowledge: A brief history of the University of Sydney 1850-2000* Chancellor's Committee, University of Sydney, 2002; photo: p. 29 of Williams book.)

Richard Blair

HISTORIC VICTORIA PARK GATES

The City of Sydney and the University of Sydney are working together to return the historic Victoria Park Gates from the University grounds in City Road to their original position near the corner of City and Parramatta Roads.

When the University of Sydney handed the land for Victoria Park to the city in 1939, the sandstone and iron gates which had marked the entrance to the university since 1870 were relocated. Due to a revamp of the City Road entrance by the University of Sydney the gates needed to be moved. Amid community concerns the gates might be lost, it was decided to reinstate them in their original location. The gates originally stood between two stone cottages, the Gatekeeper's cottage on the right, and the Messenger's cottage, which was demolished in 1939.

A plaque will be placed on the site of the former Messenger's cottage. Using historic evidence, it is planned to reinstate the gates and stone pillars; restore the stone and ironwork; and restore and reconnect the gate lights. There will be minor works to paths and gardens and a recently planted fig tree will be relocated within Victoria Park.

(from City of Sydney signage at site)

Still almost three months to complete your entry for the **MHS Essay Competition**. Essays (1500-5000 words) must be nonfiction and generally relate to Marrickville LGA. No entry fee. As well as the possibility of being published, entrants stand to win cash prizes: \$1000 (winner), \$500 (second) and \$250 (third). Entry forms (containing other specifications) available from convenor Keith Sutton 9564 6948 or 0408 169 721 or by email ksconsulting@optusnet.com.au. Address entries to Essay Competition, Marrickville Heritage Society PO Box 415 Marrickville NSW 1475 to arrive by 5 pm on Friday 29 February 2008.

CEMETERY APPEAL DONATION



During the 150-year commemorations of the Dunbar disaster in August 2007 an appeal was launched for donations to fund restoration of the Dunbar grave and monument at St Stephens Cemetery Newtown and to remove graffiti. The cemetery is maintained by the Camperdown Cemetery Trust, which has limited income. The Dunbar appeal was advertised in the local press and in our August 2007 newsletter. It was decided at a subsequent MHS committee meeting to donate the sum of \$750 to the appeal.

Above photo shows (on left) Marcelle Rodgers, wife of Rev Peter Rodgers, receiving Society's "cheque" of \$750 from MHS committee member Sue Miller at the recent Newtown Festival (photo: Mark Matheson; cheque designer, Nancy MacAlpine).

NEWTOWN FESTIVAL STALL

For the second year running the Society conducted its Newtown Festival stall in the grounds of St Stephens Anglican Church Newtown, away from the "madding crowd" of the ginormous fenced-in festivities. There still seemed to be masses of people streaming into the church complex for concerts, tours and roaming in general. Thanks to stall helpers Sue, Mark, Richard and Keith with back-up from Scott, Ian and Nancy. Thanks also to Rev Peter and Marcelle Rodgers at St Stephens for providing space in the church grounds.

SO LONG NATASHA & GLENN!

We bid farewell to Marrickville Council's Archivist **Natasha Neal** (nee Trpezanovski) and Local Studies Officer **Glenn Wardmann**, who have both left council for career moves. Natasha has moved to the City of Sydney Archives and Glenn to Lake Macquarie City Council. Many MHS members, including the newsletter editor, have found Natasha and Glenn obliging and helpful in their time at council. All the best in the future!

PRESIDENT Scott 9559 5736
HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736
TREASURER Stuart 9560 8070
ESSAY COMPETITION Keith 9564 6948
NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823

2007 XMAS POT LUCK DINNER

The Society had a terrific roll-up at our Xmas Pot Luck Dinner in the refurbished Reiby Hall in Station Street Newtown on Saturday 1 December. MHS President **Scott MacArthur** thanked **Jerry Croucher**, President of Newtown RSL Sub Branch and **Rev Tom Hamilton**, Secretary, for hosting our dinner. Scott presented the sub branch with a pot plant (courtesy **Sue Miller**) and a \$200 donation from the Society as a token of thanks towards the upkeep of the hall and for providing space to store our records and stock.

Tom related the saga of acquiring and renovating the hall, invoked the memory of Mary Reibey, and welcomed members for this and future occasions. **Margaret Sinclair** won the 'lucky chair' prize (Xmas cake, made by **Robert Hutchinson** and a bottle of port). The food, as usual, was both plentiful and delicious. Special thanks to **Lorraine Beach** and her team for coordinating this convivial evening.

IN MEMORIAM

Alma Swanson (nee Clarke), 84, late of Hazelbrook, died on 27 August and had been a MHS member since 1994. Alma grew up in Thornley Street Marrickville and became a Lady Cubmaster at 1st Petersham Scouts for some years before marriage took her to the Blue Mountains in 1952. The Society extends its condolences to Alma's family.

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We note the passing of notable poet, historian and environmentalist **Eric Rolls AM** who died aged 84 on 31 October. Born in Grenfell, Eric received several grants and fellowships, whilst his many books and articles won numerous prizes. Eric and his wife Elaine Van Kempen had been MHS members in the early 1990s when they lived in Stanmore.

SUMMER TRIVIA QUESTION

Name this building in Sydney and its location? (Clue: not in Marrickville LGA.)

Richard pemell@tpg.com.au or 9557 3823.

