

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



## OUR NEXT MEETING

### SHOW AND TELL

Saturday 23 February

10 am morning tea for 10.30

Herb Greedy Hall 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville

Show & Tell is a chance for members and friends to share some recently, or not-so-recently, acquired treasure and give some insight into what it is, how it was acquired and why it is valued. Prizes to be awarded. Perhaps you have a mystery object apropos *The Collectors*. Our MC is Robert Hutchinson. Come early and partake of morning tea and a chat. By the way, anyone know the plural of Show and Tell?



Two curios



## DEMISE OF THE BULLETIN

*The Bulletin* was first published on 31 January 1880 and the final edition was dated 29 January 2008 (Issue No. 6705), 128 years later. The announcement to terminate this iconic weekly national paper was made on 24 January, and it sold out very quickly. Whilst the news apparently came as little surprise to insiders, the paper's content suggested business as usual and page 43 is devoted entirely to "Subscribe Now". However, the description of "souvenir issue" on the front page may have been ominous.

As has been widely reported the closure was due to the serious fall in circulation and profits coupled with the universal trend towards up-to-the-minute online news. *The Bulletin* had been running at a loss for years, a fact that did not seem to bother the late Kerry Packer, who somewhat appreciated the traditions and honoured his father, Sir Frank Packer, whose Australian Consolidated Press (ACP) had acquired *The Bulletin* in 1960 when the previous proprietors were also operating at a financial loss. Once James Packer sold the family media empire, including ACP and the Nine Network to CVC Asia Pacific some months ago to focus on other enterprises, it seemed likely to many that the end was near for *The Bulletin*. There have been some noises that *The Bulletin* might continue either as a monthly paper or in some sort of online format (see "The Bulletin & The First & Last Linked", p. 3).

## CLEANUP AUSTRALIA - SUNDAY 2 MARCH

## NEW THEATRE UNDER THREAT

Not for the first time Newtown's New Theatre, which celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year, is under threat of closure. It needs \$70,000 for work required to comply with fire safety and disabled access standards. This non-profit theatre receives no government grants or funding and depends primarily on voluntary labour. Its admission charges are kept low and it has plays performed continuously. Lyn Collingwood addressed the Society last August. **New Theatre is calling for donations from the public.** New Theatre is at 542 King Street Newtown and the administrator is Luke Rogers who can be contacted on 9519 3403.

## ESSAY COMPETITION IT'S NOT TOO LATE . . .

. . . to enter our essay competition. Your essay must be nonfiction, connected in some way to Marrickville Local Government Area (see above for the suburbs) and should be between 1500 and 5000 words. The subject range is flexible: family histories, the history of shops, streets, stories of personalities of the area, social activities (such as the activities of clubs) - in other words, whatever subject you choose.

So grab an entry form today! Remember, first prize is \$1000, second is \$500 and third is \$250. For entry forms and more details, contact Essay Competition Convenor, Keith Sutton on 9564 6948 or 0408 169 721 or by email [ksconsulting@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ksconsulting@optusnet.com.au). The competition closes at 5 pm on Friday 29 February.

## 2008 MARRICKVILLE MEDAL

The Heritage Festival is 5-20 April with the theme, 'Our Place'. Details of local activities will be in March newsletter. Marrickville Council invites anyone who has carried out quality architectural, conservation or restoration works in the past three years to nominate their property for the **Marrickville Medal**, regardless of the magnitude of their project. The ceremony also includes the presentation of a People's Choice Award and a Special Achievement Award, the latter given to an individual in the community who has made substantial contributions to the promotion of history and heritage in the Marrickville LGA. The Marrickville Medal Award presentations will be held on Wednesday 16 April at 6 pm. Further information from Council's Heritage and Urban Design Advisor Vanessa Holtham on 9335 2114 or from council's website under planning and development/heritage.

## CURRENTLY ON THE MARKET

1) The *Inner West Courier* (29/1/08) lists the long established Marrickville Community Health Centre at **159 Livingstone Road Marrickville** which is being sold on behalf on the NSW Dept. of Health. **Penston Hall** (1910) was built for the Chown family of the metalwork company Chown Bros & Mulholland. Marrickville District Hospital bought the building in 1929 for use as a nurses home before it became the Marrickville CHC. Following submissions by the Marrickville Heritage Society's Classifications Committee, *Penston Hall* was classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and included in its Register.



*Penston Hall from Raine & Horne ad Inner West Courier 29/1/08, p. 107*

The MHS October 1993 newsletter states this "large two storey brick house is an exuberant example of the Federation Queen Anne style and is a fine example of an Edwardian gentleman's residence and stables. It features stretcher bond brickwork, Marseilles tiled roof, bay window, carved wooden posts, Art Nouveau leadlight windows and panels, tessellated tiles and a pair of original urns on pedestals . . . An inspection by the Classifications Committee revealed the interior features to be substantially intact."

2) At the other end of the spectrum, but associated with an even earlier building, is arguably the smallest new terrace in Marrickville LGA at **31 Camden Street Newtown**. As recently advertised in *The Glebe* and cited in this newsletter (April and May 2003, when an Interim Heritage Order was imposed on the site, Sep. 2003 and Nov. 2006) it is described as a "two-storey brick terrace with huge sun drenched grassy back-yard" and it features an "oversized master bedroom". One might query these descriptors upon inspection! The site was originally a driveway off Camden Street Newtown into the grounds of *Ferndale*, which was also classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW) on the recommendation of the Society's Classifications Committee in 1995 (Dec. 1995 newsletter). *Ferndale* (c. 1869) is believed to have been a remnant villa of the 1886 Ferndale Estate subdivision.

3) Out west is *Glenfield*, described by Jonathan Chancellor (*Title Deeds, Domain*, p. 2H, *Sydney Morning Herald* 2/2/2008) as "the Georgian colonial residence at Casula deemed to be the most important house surviving from the Macquarie era, [which] has been put up for sale by the Historic Houses Trust . . . most of its original features and outbuildings are still intact." Built in 1817 by Dr Charles Throsby, the house (below) remained in his family until the 1920s when it was sold to the Leacock family. The HHT bought it in 2002 and has restored it. The asking price is \$1.8 million.



**From Shirley Hilyard:** Have you been following the exploits of our local Stanmore hero **Major George Johnston** in the press? Two hundred years ago on 26 January 1808 he led a contingent of the Rum Corps from the barracks in Wynyard Square up Bridge Street to the sound of the band playing *The British Grenadiers*. Their destination was Government House to arrest and depose **Governor William Bligh**. By evening Bligh was under house arrest and George Johnston of Annandale Farm became administrator of NSW.

## HURSTVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WINDS UP

It is a sad event when a sister society like ours is disbanded. In the 31 years of the Hurstville Historical Society, it achieved much including establishing the Centennial Bakery Museum in 1988 which operated for some years before having to hand the building over to council. The museum was established by volunteers including Dr Joan Hatton, Jean Jehan, June Lane and Hazel Blair, who were all at various times, members of MHS. The society published 27 monographs, including an historical tour map, ran a regular newsletter, collected books, pamphlets and photographs and placed 64 historical markers throughout Hurstville. All most commendable! The society's collection has been passed on to the St George Regional Museum, Hurstville.

The reasons for disbanding the HHS are not clear, but *The Leader* (3/1/08) reported "the society had about 20 members when it was wound up". It is recalled that the forerunner to our society, Marrickville Historical Society, was wound up for similar reasons, though Marrickville Heritage Society began within a few years. Whilst membership of MHS remains strong, complacency must not be allowed to take over.

## SUMMER TRIVIA ANSWER THE FIRST AND LAST HOTEL

Several MHS members with long memories correctly identified this building as the **First and Last Hotel** on the corner of Albert and Phillip Streets at Circular Quay. They were **Rod Cox, Shirley Hilyard, Graham Hunt, Graeme Napier, Bob Parkinson, Susan Pinson, Ron Smith, Dorothy Sullivan, Ken Swinbourne and Peter Witt**. An alternate answer was given by **Peter Smith**, who said it was the Dewar's Building. His source was the map attached to his *Guide to Sydney & Pleasure Resorts of NS Wales* (wholly set up and printed by John Sands Ltd.). Peter says the publication bears no date but the recorded history suggests it is 1928/29.



*Tweddle's Belmore Hotel* (c. 1890; photo: H King from Caroline Mackaness & Caroline Butler-Bowdon *Sydney Then and Now*, Thunder Bay Press 2005, p. 12)

**Graham Hunt's** extensive research on the site ascertained that the original First and Last Hotel was built in 1857. Graham found a newspaper cutting from the *Evening News* of 28 November 1910 with the heading *A 53-Year-Old Hotel Now Being Demolished. The "First and Last" at Circular Quay* by Mary Salmon: The site of the hotel "once formed a cozy nook of the gardens of our first Governors, from Phillip to Gipps, and from it uninterrupted views of the vessels in Sydney Cove were obtained." In 1857 a hotel opened called Clark's Family Hotel. In 1868 Lord Belmore visited the colony, and "it was said that he gave an occasional call in, and brought members of Parliament round [sic] the place," whereupon the publican, Mr Ross, renamed the establishment the Belmore Family Hotel.

"The historic associations of the spot are great, and just below the hotel site was . . . a sort of natural dock in the rocks, used for all the shipping of the port for the first fifty years of the colony's existence." Governor Macquarie landed at this location 100 years ago. Princes Stairs are now located there. It is not clear when the hotel took on the nickname, but it was so named as the hotel was "**the first sighted on arrival and the last seen on leaving.**" A grainy photograph of the original building encompassing both the Phillip and Albert Street frontages makes the building seem grander than it appears above.

Graham also unearthed Lou Magrath's article *Time, Gentlemen, Please: Another piece of Sydney's past is dying* from the *Daily Mirror* (13 April 1981) foreshadowing the likely sale of the site for over \$1.5 million. The article indicated the original hotel was replaced by the

much larger Belmore and was known as the Cutty Sark in 1938 before being formally renamed the First and Last in 1947. Nevertheless it is believed the hotel was always affectionately known as the First and Last. Graham ascertained that a 29 storey residential building and restaurant/bar etc, costing \$10 million, known as The Quay, was completed in June 1985. It is now called the Quay Apartments.

Of interest is the building on the opposite corner of Phillip and Albert Streets which is now the Justice and Police Museum. Also built in 1857, it was originally the Water Police Station and Court and **Dot Sullivan's** grandfather, Charles Sylvester Little, was born there, his father being the officer-in-charge.

Graham also drew attention to this Midnight Oil song (from *Songs at the Bar*) with the words:

For Jimmy Sharman's boxers it's no better if you win.  
Standing in the darkness, lined up waiting for the bell,  
The days are wasted drinking at the First and Last hotel.

**Richard Blair** (with enormous thanks to **Graham Hunt**)



1954 photo of First & Last Hotel with relocation of tram-lines and Circular Quay railway line under construction (from N Boxall collection in David Keenan *City Lines of the Sydney Tramway System*, Transit Press 1991, p. 41)

### *The Bulletin & The First & Last Linked*

In January 1980, the centenary month and year of the foundation of *The Bulletin*, I accompanied my late father Jim Blair, on "a literary pilgrimage" to former sites of *The Bulletin* office and drinking holes with past associations. One such pub was The *First and Last* Hotel, which was one of many pubs in the Circular Quay precinct "where generations of Bulletin bards had rhymed and raged" (Peter Kirkpatrick *The Sea Coast of Bohemia: Literary Life in Sydney's Roaring Twenties*, UQP 1992, p. 152). Ironically this was only a year or two before the *First and Last* was demolished.

One of the short stories my father had published in *The Bulletin* was *Murderers Don't Come Back* which featured a pub named the Last and First, described in the story as "one of the city's oldest hostelrys" and clearly reflective of the famous nickname. The story appeared in *The Bulletin* in 1939, thereby supporting the view that the nickname continued to predominate over the hotel's more formal names. It was indeed the reference in this yarn that inspired the summer trivia question. Now alas, both *Bulletin* and hotel are gone!

**Richard Blair**

## CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

**Saturday 23 February 10.30 am**

**Show and Tell**

Details on front page

**Saturday 29 March**

**Prince Henry Hospital Nursing & Medical  
Museum Little Bay and tour of Randwick**

## CENTENARY OF NEWTOWN JETS RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB

In January 2008 Newtown Jets Rugby League Club (previously known as the *Bluebags*) celebrated its centenary. As with determining which was Australia's first Scout group or first surf club, it is not entirely clear which was the first rugby league club. According to Terry Williams' *Out of the Blue: The History of Newtown RLFC* (1993, p. 12) the date on the minutes of the first meeting of the club was 8 January 1908, however he indicates "most league historians feel that the date is wrong and that Glebe, formed on January 9 1908 were [*sic*] the first club formed." A report in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 15 January suggests that the inaugural meeting of the Newtown club was 14 January 1908. Williams points out that there is a "frustrating lack of primary evidence to prove definitely whether the meeting did or didn't take place on the 8th."

In any case Newtown is certainly a foundation club and is the oldest surviving rugby league club, even though their final match in the premier league was played on 28 August 1983, against Canberra at Orana Park in Campbelltown. Newtown became Newtown-Campbelltown and was relegated to a lower division where it has remained, with Henson Park continuing to be the home ground. The Society commends the Newtown Jets on reaching this landmark. Members can learn more about the history in Andy Carr's article *Crash of the Jets in Heritage* 11 (2001).

## WARNE PLACE MARRICKVILLE SITE SET FOR REDEVELOPMENT

In the late 1880s the Webster brothers cut into the hillside and operated a quarry between Thornley and Hampden Streets and Illawarra Road. In the 1930s a stone wall was built in the upper part of the Thornley and Hampden Street ridge alignments and later two halls were built for community use. The site became Warne Place. After years of community protest, heated council debate, reviews, rezoning and due process, this site, across from Steel Park, near Cooks River, has been cleared for redevelopment. The developer gained approval in 2003 for a seven storey apartment building. One to watch!

## VALE NANCE IRVINE

We note the passing of **Nancy Janet (Nance) Irvine** OAM on 26 December 2007 aged 96, late of Glebe and Beecroft. Nance was a well known Sydney personality who wrote several historical books including two on Mary Reibey, whilst her article on Reibey appeared in the 1995 *Heritage* 9, the journal she also launched. She was a MHS member for some years thereafter.

## MARRICKVILLE RSL CLUB CLOSES

Marrickville RSL Club, "The Las Vegas of the Inner West", closed its doors on 31 December 2007. The club was so named because of its cabaret shows and gambling facilities. The colourful neon lights on Illawarra Road have been switched off. Apart from its glitzy entertainment, the club's closure is a great loss to the community as local residents could visit the club for a low-priced meal and a chat. The RSL sponsored a Moon Festival Celebration attended by about 700 Vietnamese in 1987 whilst boxing bouts involving World Champion boxer, the *Marrickville Mauler*, Jeff Fenech, were also held there. The façade of the club in Byrnes Street featured in the film *Dirty Deeds*.

According to Meader, Cashman & Carolan *Marrickville People & Places* (1994, p. 160), "the club had been established in a humble army-type hut in Chalder Street" [Marrickville]. It relocated to a building on the corner of Arthur Street and Illawarra Road, which later became a solicitor's office until its recent demolition for redevelopment. The club moved across the road to 359-367 Illawarra Road Marrickville on 7 December 1968.

As reported in *The Glebe* (17/1/08) "mystery surrounds the closure and imminent sale" of the club. "*The Glebe* understands that financial pressures contributed to the decision to close". An RSL employee said the club would "relocate to other premises in Marrickville", but club officials have declined to comment. It was reported the Marrickville RSL Sub Branch, which is a separate entity, would continue to hold their twice-monthly meetings in the building.

**Diane McCarthy**



Cover of  
Souvenir  
Pictorial  
Folder for  
Marrickville RSL  
Club in  
the 1970s

Among the celebrity deaths this year has been the final checkmate for former world chess supremo **Bobby Fischer** who died on 17 January of kidney failure. He was aged 64, which curiously happens to be the number of squares on a chessboard!

A new member we welcomed in our December newsletter is correctly **Pamela Nance** (of Stanmore), Kidd, having been her maiden name. Sorry Pamela!

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**HERITAGE WATCH** Scott 9559 5736

**TREASURER** Stuart 9560 8070

**ESSAY COMPETITION** Keith 9564 6948

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