

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



2008 is the Year of the Scout and
the centenary of Australian Scouting

OUR NEXT MEETING

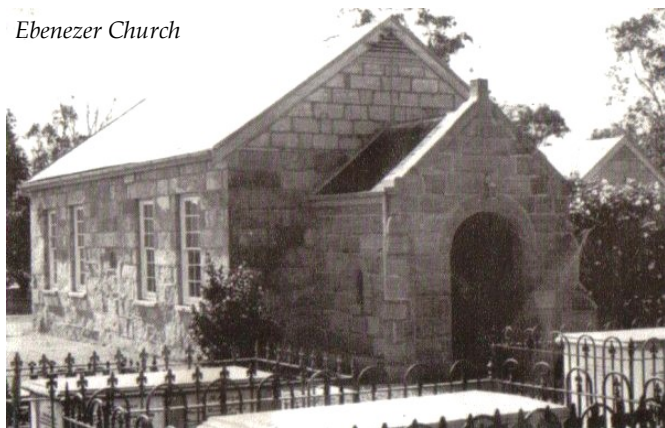
Wilberforce and Ebenezer

Saturday 26 July 9 am sharp departure

Meet 8.45 am Petersham Town Hall, Crystal Street. Expected return by 6 pm. Local lifts home possible by arrangement. Cost \$45 (pay on the day) includes coach, entry fees & guides, morning tea, lunch and mid afternoon winetasting + talk at Tizzana. Guests welcome. Bookings essential. Advise if you have to cancel. Phone Lorraine 9550 6608 (be sure to leave a message with your name and phone number) or email lbeach@iprimus.com.au.

On 6 December 1810 Governor Lachlan Macquarie presided over an historic meal where he established his five towns - Windsor, Richmond, Castlereagh, Pitt Town and Wilberforce, named after English MP and philanthropist, William Wilberforce. **Wilberforce** has retained the precise grid-system layout of the town and many significant historic sites including Rose Cottage (c. 1811 regarded as Australia's oldest timber slab house situated on its original site), Australiana Pioneer Village (officially closed to the public) and St John's Church (1859, designed by Edmund Blacket) and schoolhouse (1820).

Ebenezer Church



Nearby **Ebenezer**, beautifully situated on the Hawkesbury River, was established in the first years of the 19th century and contains Ebenezer Church (1809, the first Presbyterian church and the oldest church building in Australia still used for public worship) with its colonial graveyard; the oldest existing school building (c. 1817); and Tizzana Winery (1887), established by Dr Thomas Fiaschi (in memory of whom stands the bronze boar outside Sydney Hospital).

The **New Theatre** raised enough funds to pay for the first stage of the City of Sydney Council order (Fire Safety Upgrade) and the works have been undertaken. Donors included the state government (\$20,000) and several individual MHS members. Funds still needed for a Disability Access Upgrade.

OUR LAST MEETING

WHO'S WHO ON THE EXECUTIVE

President **Scott MacArthur** welcomed members to the Society's 24th Annual General Meeting on Saturday 28 June at Herb Greedy Hall, Marrickville. Scott presented the President's report and the Heritage Watch report. The treasurer's financial report was distributed (in the absence of our treasurer **Stuart Grigg**). Newsletter editor, **Richard Blair**, presented the newsletter report; journal editor, **Mark Matheson**, the report on the progress of *Heritage 13*; and essay competition convenor, **Keith Sutton**, the report on the recently completed essay competition.

Returning officer **Bill Tarrant** then declared all positions vacant. Elected were: president, **Scott MacArthur**; vice presidents, **Lorraine Beach** and **Richard Blair**; treasurer, **Stuart Grigg**; secretary, **Beau Winter**; assistant secretary, **Robert Hutchinson**; committee members, **Di Beckett**, **Sonia Lavery**, **Mark Matheson**, **Sue Miller**, **Ian Phillips** and **Vivien Wherry**. We welcome Beau, Di, Sonia and Vivien to the committee. Stepping down from committee were **Keith Sutton**, **Rowena Ward** and **Nancy MacAlpine**. Keith had been on the committee since 2005 and was a vice president for the past two years, sometimes presiding over our Saturday meetings; Keith devised the Essay Competition. Rowena was a valued committee member for the past two years and will remain involved with the Place Names Project. Nancy became secretary a year ago and acquitted herself well in this important post. See President's report for further comments.

After the formalities we partook of minestrone, pea and ham and pumpkin soup (prepared by **Lorraine Beach** and **Ian Phillips**), paté and fruit cake (**Robert Hutchinson**), freshly-brewed coffee (**Ian Rumsey**), with kitchen back-up from **Wendy Dyson**, **Audrey Furney** and **Ellie Zinsmeester**.

Richard Blair

Any jam makers out there? The 100-year-old orange tree of our inveterate 'heritage marmalade' maker, **Margaret Sinclair**, has not produced this year, so if anyone would like to have their own jam session for our forthcoming Marrickville (7 September) and Newtown (9 November) festival stalls, that would be appreciated. Just remember that labelling regulations require ingredients to be specified on labels; we can also organise labelling and provide jars.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2007-08

At the end of my second year as President, I would like to thank all the members of the current executive committee who have helped keep the Society on track in a busy and challenging year. A special thanks goes to **Nancy MacAlpine** who successfully undertook the role of Secretary at the 2007 AGM. Nancy is now moving on to new challenges away from the Committee and I wish her the very best. **Keith Sutton**, who has been such a valuable contributor to the Committee in so many ways is also stepping down in what is a great loss for the Society. Keith was the driving force behind our extremely successful Essay Competition and we are grateful that he wants to continue to help the Society with publishing of the entries in a special journal. And **Rowena Ward**, who has been a forthright voice for commonsense on the Committee, is also stepping down this year. I thank Nancy, Rowena and Keith for their enthusiasm and support of the Society over the years.

It has been an interesting year with terrific excursions and walks. **Mark Matheson** took us on a fascinating Illustrated Walk Through Old St Peters. We had an excellent tour of the Mint and the library of the Historic Houses Trust with curator **Robert Griffin**. **Sue Miller** and **Ted Green** escorted us around Abbotsford in November and we joined forces with **Randwick & District Historical Society** for a bus trip around their area and the Prince Henry Hospital Nursing & Medical Museum. Our annual Pot Luck Dinner was a wonderful evening at Reiby Hall; we saw all the work Tom and Jerry had done to restore the Hall, and heard their plans for the future of the Hall as an important community facility.

We were also favoured with some very interesting talks. With its subject's future in the balance, *Words Can Be Bullets: a political history of New Theatre* with new member and Essay Competition runner-up, **Lyn Collingwood**, was very topical. *Resurrect the dead: Recent archaeology at Camperdown Memorial Rest Park* with **Denis Gojak** was a fascinating and slightly morbid exploration of Newtown's corpses. And the talk from **Dr Peter Orlovich** on *Place Names in NSW* is going to generate a research project for the Society to investigate the names of our streets and parks. Our latest *Show and Tell* was also a great success, with some moving personal stories and a huge variety of interesting – and sometimes very valuable – objects.

The Council's Marrickville Medal for Conservation was a great success this year, and I represented the Society on the jury. There were a record number of entries and the standard of the entries was exceptional, particularly of the residential alterations and additions. A highlight of the presentation ceremony was **Richard Blair** receiving a Special Achievement Award for his long-term commitment to protecting and promoting heritage in our area, most notably through his long-time editorship of the Society newsletter. This was probably the high point of the Society's relationship with Council in the past year.

We made submissions to Council in relation to their proposals for Enmore Park Pool and the old Marrickville Hospital that, in spite of heritage listings, could result in the Park being overdeveloped and all of the hospital buildings being demolished. Council failed to notify us of the proposal to redevelop the Carrington Road Pye factory, and then approved the demolition of all buildings without any requirement for investigating if its basement rooms were Second World War air-raid bunkers.

The coming year holds some real challenges for the Society. Council is still in the process of developing its new Local Environmental Plan (LEP). Council will need to

commission a new heritage study, and the Society will be seeking a role in its formulation.

At the same time, the fall-out from the changes at state level to the planning laws and the Heritage Office will start to take effect and it is widely feared that many unlisted heritage properties could be lost under this new 'mums and dads fuss-free development' regimen.

As always, the Committee relies on our members to let us know about developments in the local government area, as Council and developers are not to be relied on to let us know what they are doing, or doing what they said they would!

Scott MacArthur President

BYE BYE BUNKERS AT OLD PYE SITE

The DA to develop the **former Pye site at 49 Carrington Road Marrickville** is before the Land & Environment Court. Following a Court conference by the Commissioner with residents and an initial hearing, the matter has been deferred until 4 August pending receipt of further information on traffic counts, vehicular access and car parking spaces on the site.



(photo: Scott MacArthur)

A separate DA to demolish all buildings on the site was previously approved. It seems this DA was approved by Council apparently without knowledge of the existence of the so-called "bunkers" (or underground chambers; see report in April newsletter). When or why these bunkers were built is unclear and a search of council records failed to substantiate claims by former site employees that a plaque had been installed or that a mayor had officially opened the bunkers. It is unfortunate that no formal recording could be made of these chambers prior to demolition.

A network of similar bunkers is said to extend from the Pye site under and across Carrington Road to other sites and across Warren Road to under the Art Deco building opposite. If this is so, then all may not be lost!

The *Sydney Morning Herald's* obituary (23/6/08) described **General Sir Francis (Frank) Hassett** (1918-2008) as "one of Australia's greatest soldiers. As well as serving with distinction in World War II and the Malaya Emergency, he commanded with daring the army's greatest battlefield action in the Korean War. . . . By the age of 23 he was the Australian Army's youngest lieutenant-colonel. Three decades later he held the highest military post, the chief of the Australian Defence Staff." He died on 11 June. He was born in Marrickville and attended Canterbury Boys High School before entering the Royal Military College, Duntroon in 1938.

ATLAS OF THE SUBURBS OF SYDNEY

Between 1886 and 1889 the mapping firm Higinbotham & Robinson produced a series of maps of the municipalities of Sydney. In about 1889 they were published as the "Atlas of the Suburbs of Sydney". This publication is a valuable resource for local history as municipal and ward boundaries are defined, streets are named and civic buildings such as town halls and post offices, hotels and parks are often identified.

Coloured reproductions on art paper of these maps (Alexandria, Camperdown, Darlington, Glebe, Macdonaldtown, Newtown, Redfern and Waterloo) are on sale through City of Sydney libraries (Glebe, Haymarket, Newtown, Ultimo and Waterloo) for \$4 (A3) and \$8 (A2). Many of these suburbs were in the Parish of Petersham.

Dunbar 1857: Disaster on our doorstep

Coinciding with last year's 150th anniversary commemorations of the wreck of the *Dunbar* was this book published by the Australian National Maritime Museum and written by one of its curators, Kieran Hosty. Initially delayed, this attractively designed book is now available. As well as giving an informed account of the shipwreck and its aftermath, it presents a detailed outline, not only of the memorabilia, monuments and memorials, but of some of the retrieved items in the ANMM *Dunbar* collection – containing thousands of salvaged and preserved artefacts.

The book contains the full passenger and crew list, the reproduction of James Fryer's contemporary 1857 narrative of the Wreck, and numerous photographs, including some taken during the commemorations in August 2007. Available (\$30) at the Maritime Museum or at Stephens Church, 189 Church Street Newtown (9557 2043 or tours@ststephens.org.au).

DAVID STRATTON IN PETERSHAM

Film guru/critic **David Stratton** was destined for a life in grocery retail as his forebear James Stratton had founded a grocery company in 1824 in Wiltshire, UK. David's early working years in England and Australia were in this area, but in his autobiography, *I Peed on Fellini: Recollections of a life in film* (William Heinemann 2008) David charts his early cinematic interest, inspired by his maternal grandmother, through to how his burgeoning hobby developed into a career in film criticism, broadcasting and teaching plus a lengthy stint as Director of the Sydney Film Festival.

In 1963 David emigrated to Australia as a 'ten-pound Pom' intending to return. While working in a grocery warehouse in Botany he and his then wife and baby lived 'for a few months in a flat above a G&G store on the corner of New Canterbury Road and Crystal Street' Petersham. He described it as 'rundown but bearable'. As these corner buildings are a pub and a former bank, it is more likely he actually lived at the same intersection, but on the corner of Stanmore Road and Shaw Street (opposite the former Petersham police station) which is now a real estate agency.

HISTORY SERVICES NSW WEBSITE

History Services NSW (www.historyservices.com.au) has built up specialised research databases from various historical records, indexes and publications on the history and heritage of NSW and its inhabitants (including Tasmania, Victoria and Queensland prior to their establishment as separate states) prior to Federation in 1901. For a low cost fee (\$25-30 each), *History Services NSW* will do a search of a

particular database for a person of interest and provide a 'Result of Search'. This contains a summary of the information available on the nominated person and is indexed to the original source. Applicants receive the 'Result of Search' by email and are guaranteed a quick response.

The information available from *History Services NSW* assists people undertaking family history or local history research. It will suit first-time genealogists or more advanced researchers. The range of information is said to be not available in a summary format from any other source. Databases currently available for searches on: convicts (over 85 000, 1788-1849), hotel & liquor licenses, gold mining companies & investors, local government petitioners, government contracts & contractors, mail delivery contracts & contractors, inventions & inventors, auctioneers. Considerable information is held in the various databases on the

Email to Editor

I noticed the other day that the demolition of part of the St Vincent de Paul (old Lewisham Hospital) site has revealed the **Maternal Heart of Mary Chapel in Lewisham**. You can now see the Chapel's facade and lovely stained glass windows from West Street and Petersham Park. Makes a much nicer vista than the building that was there.

Jennifer O'Callaghan

Editor's note: This 1927 interwar Romanesque style church edifice is one of the LGA's best kept secrets. Enjoy the vista while you can as the St Vincent de Paul Society is to build on this vacant site.

WINTER TRIVIA QUESTION

This fencing is in Dulwich Hill. Where is it and what is its significance? (Richard 9557 3823)



CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

Saturday 26 July

Wilberforce & Ebenezer by coach

Details on front page

Saturday 23 August

Stephen Szabo on Heraldry in Australia, with examples from the Marrickville LGA

Saturday 27 September

Wolli Creek & Cooks River walks

ESSAY COMPETITION REPORT

Just over a month ago, I had the privilege and pleasure of announcing the results of the Society's inaugural essay competition and providing a synopsis of all the entries received. I also noted that this competition could not have proceeded without the support of the Executive Committee and the outstanding work from Lorraine Beach and Richard Blair. The administrative work involved in such a venture is onerous and the results could not possibly have been achieved without their wisdom and commitment. I also commend the judges for their dedication and thoughtfulness in assessing the 23 entries and arriving at their judgments. Not an easy task, given the very high quality of the entries received.

I'm now pleased to report that members have reacted enthusiastically to the results of the competition and have made numerous representations to the Executive Committee to have the essays published. One of our entrants, Rosalind Torrent, said: 'It was a great idea to run the essay competition. *It gave me a purpose to write* and no doubt it has given the Society a wealth of interesting local material.' Ros is quite right: her thoughts sum up the whole concept of the competition. The essays have drawn out a wide range of previously untold stories about the people and events related to our local government area and we owe it to our members to ensure that that history is not lost to future generations.

So, at your Society's Executive Committee's last meeting (after the award day), it was resolved to publish all the essays in one volume, and a three-person subcommittee has been appointed to begin the publishing process. It will be up to the incoming Committee to ratify the previous Executive's decision. I might add that the publishing process will be an intense one, because the total number of words of all essays is around 75 000 and most essay contributors provided numerous photos, illustrations, etc some of which will be included with the essays in the publication. I might note that the essays were judged on the written material, not on the amount or quality of any illustrations provided.

In terms of the rules that applied to this inaugural competition, there may be some modifications for the next competition. Your judges have made certain recommendations which will be considered by the next Essay Competition subcommittee.

Keith Sutton

**National Art School Gallery, Forbes Street
Darlinghurst (corner Burton Street)**

Lines of Fire: Armed Forces to Art School

10 July-13 August 10am-4pm (closed Sundays)

This exhibition brings together two worlds perceived to be diametrically opposed: the constraints of army life and the creative freedom of the artists' life. Some of the artists later made a significant contribution to Australian art.

Dear Mr MHS Newsletter Editor

Thanks very much for the recent issue of the Newsletter, with outlines of all the Essay Competition entries. What an interesting variety. The précis of Lyn Collingwood's essay on *Charles Abel and his food empire* prompted some possibly contentious reflections by me on Marrickville's profile – or lack of it. I was born and bred on the Lower North Shore, but it was not until I came to live in the inner-west in my early twenties that I felt that I was 'home'. Nevertheless, I believe that Marrickville exists in some sort of topographical fold because, when setting out on a journey, no matter where you begin or where you are heading, you need never go through Marrickville to get there. This is possibly why inhabitants of other parts of Sydney seem to know so little about the suburb, or even where it is.

When I was young Marrickville came to the wider public's attention for just two reasons. Firstly there was Marrickville Margarine, which was a well known brand; and secondly there was an incident highly publicised by the tabloids, when British actor Warren Mitchell (Alf Garnett in the TV comedy series *Till Death Do Us Part*) was kicked out of Marrickville RSL after a contretemps with his audience.

Megan Hicks

NEW GM AT MARRICKVILLE COUNCIL

After five years at the helm **Candy Nay** (at right) is stepping down as General Manager of Marrickville Council. During that time Marrickville Council has won several awards including public sector Employer of Choice award at the 2006 Australian HR Awards whilst Candy recently received the inaugural Ministers' Award for Women in Local Government – Urban category. This award recognises women who have made significant contributions to local government.



Joining Marrickville Council in 1992 Candy became Director Corporate Services in 1993.



Candy's replacement is **Kim Anson**, who has been GM of Waverley Council for the past seven years, having worked at that council for 17 years. The Society wishes Candy all the best and welcomes Kim.

Member **Trina** (9560 2853) of Stanmore has some surplus cast iron balcony panels for sale at below cost.

PRESIDENT Scott 9559 5736

HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736

TREASURER Stuart 9560 8070

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823