

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



## OUR NEXT MEETING

**Marrickville Road history walk  
with Laurel & Bob Horton  
Saturday 22 May 2-4 pm**

Meet outside Marrickville Town Hall at 1.45 for 2 pm start. Numbers limited. Bookings essential but pay on day. Cost \$5. Ring Richard 9557 3823 or email MHS (address back page).



*Schweikert's Garage Marrickville Road 1936 (Marrickville Library Services Local Studies Images Database)*

Explore the history of Marrickville Road through buildings, remnants of buildings, old photographs and newspaper reports of the times. **Laurel and Bob Horton** are members of the Society and of the St Peters Church Cooks River History Group. Laurel is the church historian with Bob as chief researcher. History talks and walks are a means to promote their area. The group has published books and produced DVDs on various historical topics.

**Telstra Communications Museum  
12 Kitchener Parade Bankstown  
Tuesday 18 May 10 am-noon**

Meet at exit of Bankstown Station by 9.45 am for short walk to museum. Film to precede guided tour. Free admission, but gold coin donation appreciated. Lunch at reasonable rates at adjacent Bankstown RSL. Ian 9558 2682 for commuting info or enquiries.

The NSW Division of the Telecommunication Society of Australia's Historical Section collects, maintains and preserves historical photographs, artefacts and memorabilia. This collection reflects over 150 years of telegraphic and telephonic history including the iconic machine that advised by phone "at the third stroke it will be . . ."

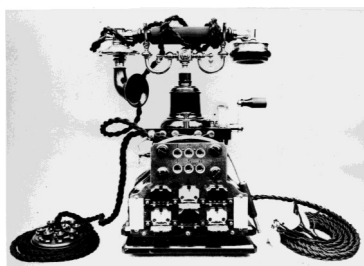


Photo courtesy Telstra Museum

**2010 Marrickville Medal:** For the first time in 16 years two Medals were awarded, both to houses. Full report inside

## WHERE TO FROM HERE?

### The future of Marrickville Heritage Society

June is the month of the Society's AGM, when the year's reports are delivered and the incumbent office bearers and committee stand down. Now is the time for a 'call to arms' for members to step up, take a position on the new committee, and take a share in the running of the Society for the coming year.

We make this request every year, usually in June, but this time it's a plea. Some of us who have 'fronted' the Society for more years than we care to count are getting worn out and need to take a back seat on committee. Some are stepping down altogether. This means, we hope, someone from existing committee ranks will be prepared to take on the role of President, as it would be unrealistic to expect that of anyone in their first term on committee. **We need new committee members.**

Committee participation is interesting and rewarding. The time commitment is the first Monday evening every month (except January) and as many 'fourth Saturday' meetings as you can manage. In between, lend a hand by organising a speaker, or an outing, or a function, or helping out in any way that interests you. There are many projects we could tackle, and doubtless more we have not thought about. The committee works easily and well, as long as we have hands on deck. Can you help? Will you help? The Society's future wellbeing depends on its members. To find out more talk to Richard on 9557 3823 or Lorraine on 9550 6608.

### Newtown's Trocadero: new lease of life

Opened in April 1889 as a skating rink, the Trocadero at 69-77 King Street Newtown suffered years of neglect until conservation took place in recent years (refer March 2006 newsletter). It has housed varied entertainments such as a dance hall, a picture palace and boxing, as well as many businesses including auctions, motor body building and second hand furniture. The Society toured the Trocadero in November 2006.

On 29 March, Fuel International, a special effects studio, moved into the Trocadero to begin a new era in the building's life. Member **Bob Parkinson**, who is providing research for the building's new occupants, notes it is fitting and exciting that this iconic heritage-listed King Street building is once more home for the entertainment business.

## OUR LAST MEETING

### Grace Karskens: What sort of colony?

In the introduction to her book, *The Colony: A history of early Sydney*, **Grace Karskens** writes that, "like novelists, I am keenly aware that the people of whom I am writing experienced Sydney emotionally and sensually, as well as intellectually and practically." Indeed the picture that Grace painted of the founding of Sydney in her talk on Saturday 24 April at Marrickville Town Hall was very human indeed, and one recognisable to this day in the conflict of interests that drive decisions in Sydney and NSW.

Sydney was planned by London to be a penal colony, a place to correct the bad behaviour of the mostly lower classes. Convicts were supposed to be allocated 30 acres, and to farm it for survival. But from the outset, Grace argues, Sydney became a colony, not a gaol.

No money was sent with the First Fleet, and no system of governance was provided for. The Governor had full delegation of powers from London to carry out its orders, and yet why wasn't Sydney the horrible penal colony of legend? Simply put, the people of the First Fleet, both convict and free, had no inclination, interest or indeed any great experience of rural life. The free settlers, Macarthur and his ilk, were true colonials, and were interested only in making their fortune, as were many of the officers. Sydney was merely a place to exploit, and a penal station was not in their interests.

Grace delightfully explained how all those city bred convicts were not interested in being farmers, but instead clustered around Sydney town, providing the market for the sale of rum, food and any other item of consumption that could be made or obtained. Sydney was a social place, a place to live. This local market solidified Sydney as a town, and Sydney became a place of incredible social transformation.

With a ratio of one woman to three men, women's ability to pick and choose a partner allowed women great power over men, both as partners and providers of children, and also as economic players themselves. Women convicts often ran boarding houses where male convicts lived, and that gave them economic independence from men in a way never experienced before. The local courts upheld women's rights to property and women with children also had state support if required. It was "no picnic", with women vulnerable to sexual assault, but by and large the lot of women in those early days was a marked improvement on the life from whence they'd come.

It is interesting indeed that the colony's early years seem in some senses so modern. Not only was the role of women so different from that back in England, but from the 1790s the Gadigal people, the original people of Sydney, came back to Sydney Cove to live, and Sydney became a multicultural town, where, not always equally, Australian and European lived a new life together, sharing, learning and changing.

The dynamism of those early years came to life in Grace's words, and the past seemed somewhat less imposing and more human. That story, not so much of terror, as emphasised in Robert Hughes' *The Fatal Shore*, but of opportunity, change and politics is indeed a very human story. One could almost touch it. Many thanks to Grace for her fresh and perceptive insights into the early years of the colony.

Colin Hesse



Robert Hutchinson thanks guest speaker Grace Karskens at Marrickville Town Hall talk (photo: Diane McCarthy)

### Marrickville Medal Award 2010: Heritage, pride and progress

Petersham Town Hall was, on the evening of 14 April, the grand heritage setting for Marrickville Council's hosting of the annual presentation of the Marrickville Medal and Special Achievement Award. The surroundings were enhanced by photographic displays of the properties nominated for the Medal, and of trams in the Marrickville area prepared by Marrickville Historian **Chrys Meader**.

Awarded for outstanding architectural conservation work in the Marrickville Council Area, the Medal is a prestigious recognition of property owners' pride, commitment and achievements in restoring and preserving buildings, thus ensuring their ongoing contribution to the streetscapes that are fundamental to the character of our area. The Special Achievement Award is presented to an individual in the community who has contributed significantly to the promotion of history and heritage conservation in the Marrickville area.

Heritage is not only about buildings. Pride in our local heritage, and how the fabric of our community is woven around it, evolved as a theme for the evening. **Phemie Bostock**, in her welcome to the traditional land of the Cadigal people, spoke of the return of life and health to Cooks River, congratulated the people of Marrickville for their efforts to achieve this and urged ongoing respect and care of the environment for future generations.

**Mayor Sam Iskandar** extended a warm welcome to distinguished guests including guest speaker **Hector Abrahams**, **Sylvia Hale** MLC, Deputy Mayor **Fiona Byrne**, councillors, Council's General Manager and Council staff, Council's Heritage Promotions Committee, members of the community including



Marrickville Heritage Society, and entrants for the Medal Award. Mayor Iskandar outlined the history of the Marrickville Medal, part of an annual statewide Heritage Festival organised by the National Trust of Australia (NSW), commenced

25 Garnet Street  
Dulwich Hill: People's  
Choice Award Winner



30 years ago to 'lead and educate the community, to celebrate our culture, and to develop awareness of the ongoing need to conserve our heritage'. Marrickville Council has distinctions for innovation in the area of heritage. The Heritage Study, Fox and Associates, 1986 was the first of its kind commissioned by a local government authority in NSW, and the Marrickville Medal was one of the first awards of its kind in NSW. The 2010 Medal was the 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive award.

**Peter Olive**, Marrickville councillor and chair of Council's Heritage Promotions Committee, which organises this event each year, was Master of Ceremonies. A long time champion of the heritage cause, Peter is both passionate and articulate about it: 'Most people in Marrickville and the Inner West really appreciate our period houses and buildings. But there are pressures from the State Government and developers who want increased density without adequate heritage protection. I encourage everyone to tell the politicians that you want Marrickville's period houses protected.'

Guest speaker, **Hector Abrahams**, accomplished heritage and conservation architect, and the first convenor of the Heritage Promotions Committee, has a strong connection to Marrickville. As a student, he collaborated on fieldwork for the Fox and Associates Heritage Study. Hector spoke of Marrickville as a place to live, the importance of its heritage and the need for its future residents, governors and developers to understand its past and work with it, not against it.

Hector said it is easy to see why our heritage is valuable: our streets, major buildings and most housing are 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, creating a neighbourly 'intimate environment for traditional urban living in close connection with the street'. He said its good architecture and public gardens, like no other part of Sydney, all help make Marrickville a good place to live, and it is that way because of its history. Today, the need is to open our eyes and exercise 'informed and flexible thinking' for new developments, so that change can happen well.

The Special Achievement Award was presented to **Barbara Le Maistre**, a member of the Heritage Promotions Committee, a former Marrickville Heritage Society member and its inaugural president. In accepting the award, Barbara acknowledged the contribution of individuals and groups over many years of her association with local heritage.



*Barbara Le Maistre receives Special Achievement Award certificate from Mayor Sam Iskandar*

Medal judges were **Catherine Macarthur, Silas Clifford-Smith and Peter Heimanis**.

Catherine presented images of each of the 12 nominated properties together with judges' comments on how each property met the judging criteria. The range of properties was diverse, as were the approaches to restoration and conservation adopted by the entrants, and the judges clearly had a challenging task.



*51 Cavendish Street Stanmore: joint Medal winner*

Two Medals were awarded jointly — one to an innovative combination of conservation and building extension at 3 **Eliza Street Newtown**; the other to a carefully restored and gracious two-storey house at 51 **Cavendish Street Stanmore**. Both projects demonstrated long term commitment by their owners, with discreetly added components complementing the original buildings and enhancing their respective streetscapes.

The People's Choice, awarded after online voting via Council's website, was presented to a charmingly



*3 Eliza Street Newtown: joint Medal winner*

restored and extended house at 25 **Garnet Street Dulwich Hill** (see photo on page two).

The Society congratulates both the owners of the award-winning houses and all entrants in this prestigious event. We also congratulate and thank Council for enabling this annual celebration of our community's heritage.

**Mayor Iskandar**

said 'tonight we have an opportunity to celebrate the rich built heritage of the Marrickville Local Government Area, and the individuals who have helped conserve it'. We hope Mayor Iskandar's sentiment is an indicator of Council's ongoing commitment to Marrickville's heritage.

Heritage and pride were in abundance on the night. We look to Council, and State Government, for good governance in managing progress.

(all photos courtesy of Marrickville Council)

**Lorraine Beach**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Tuesday 18 May**

**Telstra Museum Bankstown**

Details on front page

**Saturday 22 May 2-4 pm**

**Marrickville Road history walk  
with Laurel & Bob Horton**

Details on front page

**Saturday 26 June**

**MHS Annual General Meeting**

**Saturday 24 July (morning)**

**Petersham North walk with Geoff Ostling**

**Potteries of Marrickville:  
Fowlers, Diana and Studio Anna  
Marrickville Library  
Tuesday 25 May 6 pm**

As part of Library & Information Week **Robert Hutchinson** from Marrickville Heritage Society will give an illustrated talk on three art potteries that thrived in Marrickville. An opportunity to ask questions and to look at some of the famous pottery that was made locally. Copies of *3 Marrickville Potteries* published by Marrickville Heritage Society and edited by Robert will be on sale. Bookings essential: ring library on 9335 2173.

**Pottery Demonstration by Jean Hartman  
Marrickville Library  
Wednesday 26 May from 11 am**

Local artist and MHS member **Jean Hartman** will conduct free pottery demonstrations. Come and watch a local potter at work. Ask questions while enjoying the demonstrations and morning tea.

### **Riverlife Cooks River Interpretive Tours**

**Saturday 22 May 9.30 am** from Tempe Station: Bilingual (English and Mandarin) tour of Cooks River for an historical discovery of the role Cooks River has played in Sydney's early history and modern times. About three hours long.

**Saturday 22 May 5 pm** from Brighton Avenue bridge at Mildura Reserve Campsie. Cooks River Night Walk: Observe evening wildlife and views of the riverbanks. Bring a torch. About two hours long.

**Saturday 29 May 2 pm** from Canterbury Railway Station: Heritage walk taking participants on a local history tour of buildings and sites along Cooks River.

All tours are led by trained local volunteer guides for free but spaces are limited. **Bookings essential:** Strathfield Council on 9748 9999.

For further details on the Riverlife program contact David Kuhn at Strathfield Council on 9748 9963 or david.kuhn@strathfield.nsw.gov.au .

The May newsletter was produced  
in collaboration with vice president Lorraine Beach

## **Tempe Park Methodist Church Sydenham (more recently known as the Coptic Church)**

We know the church by the above two names, but MHS member **Bob Parkinson**, during research for a project he is working on, turned up two items in the *Newtown Chronicle* in 1901 showing it also had a third name. On 26 October 1901: "Owing to a large increase in the population of Tempe Park — the result of the tram service — it has become necessary to provide better accommodation for the worshippers of the local Wesleyan Church, and the work of erecting a large and ornate building on the site of the old church has been commenced by Mr Gillett, contractor."

On 1 November 1901: "Last Saturday afternoon a very large concourse of people assembled to witness the laying of the four foundation stones of a new Wesleyan Church at Tempe Park." Methodism was inaugurated in the district 18 years earlier by open-air preaching, leading to the building of a small church. "Twice the building was enlarged under the stress of necessity, yet for years the accommodation was utterly inadequate for the growing requirements of the place — hence the movement to erect a very large and beautiful church." The Rev. Adin Parsons, a former minister of the circuit, was the architect. The cost of building the church was put at £1100 excluding labour and materials given gratuitously — a far cry indeed from Council's current day estimate of \$2.3 million for repairs.

Further on the future of the church, Bishop Brian Iverach of the Anglican Catholic Church addressed our 24 April meeting. The Bishop's enthusiasm and faith that the church will survive, be restored and flourish again as an important community resource is the most positive attitude encountered since demolition was recently mooted by Council.

**Lorraine Beach**

## **Vale to Michael Pearce**

We regret the passing of **Michael Pearce** of Marrickville who died on 28 April. A member of the Society since 1986 he is remembered as a gentle and affable man who attended occasional meetings. It is understood he had retired from his career in the Commonwealth Public Service. Michael was a member of the Lewisham Latin Mass community with a particular interest in church history and traditional liturgy.

He had a long term involvement with the Maternal Heart of Mary Chapel, Lewisham (1927) in the grounds of the former Lewisham Hospital. In an article Michael wrote for the Society's October 1995 newsletter he indicated that some urgent maintenance was needed for this "superb Romanesque style chapel . . . one of the most important and most beautiful buildings in the district". Acting on advice from Michael, representations were made to the National Trust who conveyed the significance of the building to the owners (the St Vincent de Paul Society). This resulted in a DA to Council for urgently needed work to upgrade the chapel. Thank you Michael.

**PRESIDENT** Richard 9557 3823  
**TREASURER** Diane 9588 4930  
**HERITAGE WATCH** Di 9590 3455  
**NEWSLETTER** Richard 9557 3823