

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



## OUR NEXT MEETING

### COACH TRIP TO HISTORIC WALLSEND

Saturday 26 September 7.30 am sharp departure

Meet at 7.15 am Petersham Town Hall. Expected return by 6.30 pm. We can arrange pick-ups to town hall with adequate notice. Cost \$50 (covers coach, morning and afternoon teas, lunch, tours and walks led by local heritage guides). Bookings and prepayment essential. Advise if you have to cancel. Book and pay soon as few seats left. Ring Diane 9588 4930 or email <diane.mccarthy@optusnet.com.au>.

Named after a place in Durham, England, Wallsend was settled in the 1830s and grew as a mining town, following the establishment of the Newcastle-Wallsend Coal Company's first coal mine in 1860, soon becoming a prosperous town. Commercial buildings and shops were established with the arrival of British miners. In the 1860s the village of Plattsburg, west of Wallsend, was settled, and in 1915 the councils of Plattsburg and Wallsend amalgamated.



*Part of market square Wallsend featuring the 1888 rotunda, portion of mural and bust of the town's first mayor (photo: Allan Eastham)*

Facilitated by Wallsend area resident and MHS member, **Geoff Hassall** (formerly of Tempe) and his fellow Wallsend Heritage Group members, we will get an overview of the district including a visit to the mining ghost town of Minmi. Guided walking tours will reveal some 'hidden gems' of historic Wallsend; we'll inspect the mudstone St Luke's Anglican Church (1880) and the Russian Orthodox Church of St Nicholas, with lunch in the old Colliery Inn.

**MARRICKVILLE ROAD FESTIVAL** is on Sunday 27 September from 11 am. MHS will have a stall. Come along.

**2009 IS THE INTERNATIONAL  
YEAR OF THE GORILLA**

## DRAFT LEP & HERITAGE

As Scott MacArthur outlined in our July 2009 newsletter, changes to state legislation managing heritage is destined to make heritage conservation more difficult especially where the state approach is endorsed at the local government level. Marrickville Council has a mixed track record in relation to heritage conservation. The 1986 Fox Heritage Study commissioned by Marrickville Council was one of the first of its kind in local government in the state. The study identified 236 individual Heritage Items which were listed and protected in the Heritage Local Environment Plan (LEP). The Conservation Areas were only given draft status.

In 1997 Tropman & Tropman Architects were commissioned to undertake a Heritage Study Review with a particular emphasis on identifying Ethnic Items and rationalising the Conservation Areas. With widespread community consultation, the review took three years and identified a further 391 individual items. It also shrank and consolidated the Conservation Areas, identified areas of potential archaeological interest and identified Character Areas throughout the LGA.

After that the process faltered for some years until the end of 2003 when Council resolved to defer the listing of all proposed 391 individual items identified by Tropman & Tropman. In effect Council ignored the recommendations of this comprehensive report and left most of the LGA without heritage protection, wasting well over \$100,000 of ratepayers' money and years of work by Council officers and the consultants. The recommendations concerning the conservation ethnic heritage items were also ignored in the process.

In May 2009 Marrickville Council submitted a working draft LEP to the Dept of Planning for Review which on its return went before Council on 1 September. The Draft LEP is expected to be on public exhibition later this year. Currently the PS 9 documentation (over 200 pages) can be viewed online on Council's website.

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## MHS WEBSITE RE-STARTING SOON

Members may recall that in September 2001 we launched the Society's website which ran until July 2003. It was a well designed site which gained MHS greater exposure, but websites were then quite costly, and it became unviable.

The Society is planning to reinstitute a website soon with many of the earlier features, but also links to other groups, information about non MHS activities and the opportunity for greater member and user input and interaction. And, it will be free!

## OUR LAST MEETING

### Rural Fences: Australian settlement history and technology with Dr John Pickard

*I read the news today oh boy / Four thousand holes in Blackburn Lancashire / And though the holes were rather small / They had to count them all / Now they know how many holes it take to fill the Albert Hall.*

So sang *The Beatles* in 1967. But how many kilometres of fences does it take to fill Sydney Opera House? Okay, that's a silly question, but while we know that in 1890 there was about 2.7 million kilometres of fencing in Australia, it seems no-one knows how much fencing we have in 2009.

But what do we fence, why, what is it's impact and what does fencing show us about the history of country Australia? There is usually more than one answer to most of the questions **Dr John Pickard**, at our meeting on Saturday 22 August, passionately and entertainingly asked us. Sadly perhaps, it seems what drove construction of much rural fencing, the various rabbit and dog proof fences that criss-crossed states, was a triumph of optimism over effect. In short, as John said, they 'didn't work, couldn't work'.



*Ken Swinbourne and Iain Carolin listen intently to John Pickard describing the finer points of a chock-and-block fence (photo: Lorraine Beach)*

John was able to demonstrate that pretty much every rabbit proof fence was a failure because we simply didn't appreciate that rabbits could climb fences, or indeed that they were already on the other side of the fence before it was built. It seems we're slow learners when it comes to control of feral animals, as a more recent proposal to build a cane toad proof fence across the Cobourg Peninsula (in Arnhem Land) seemed to ignore that cane toads *can* swim! While the cane toad's march westward continues, at least no money was wasted on a cane toad fence.

John's illustrated talk traversed the continent, from east to west, from north to south, and yes the fences do run out in the desert, and from wood to metal. The ingenuity of fence builders was astonishing, as fences were constructed to deal with letting water flow through and still keep animals in or out. Some fences were so over-engineered, that while what they protected has long gone, such as some railway lines in South Australia, the fence still stands. In the Queensland/NSW border area three generations of fences stand (more or less) with their stories of different aims, construction techniques, technology and politics.

Old fences can measure erosion, and John showed us a startling picture of a 100-year-old fence almost

buried by earth washed or blown from surrounding hills thus demonstrating the damage of bad land use strategies over that period of time.

John's graphic story of fences in Australia mixed political failure, environmental blindness, unwarranted optimism for farming dry land Australia with development of Australia's industrial capacity, ingenuity and a lot of hard work building all those fences. John Pickard deserves a wide hearing for this story, and let's hope that the mistakes that John describes in the past are not continued in to the future. Let us also hope that John's plea for us to conserve and note our historic fences is heard.

John's illustrated glossary of rural fences is at [www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/03\\_index.htm#G-1](http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/03_index.htm#G-1)

**Colin Hesse**

**Notes** John described fence music where recordings have been made by running a bow over a wire fence.

At the talk was member **Iain Carolin** whose father **Roger Carolin** was Associate Professor of Botany at Sydney University for about 30 years. Among his students was John Pickard. Roger co-wrote *Flora of the Sydney Region* whose fifth edition was recently published. Roger also co-wrote earlier editions of this definitive work and other botanical books. – **Editor**

## HERITAGE WATCH

Remember the demolition of much of **Sydenham** in the mid 1990s? Well, buildings are to return. Council has approved a DA for the State Emergency Service to build on two lots along **Railway Road**, opposite the former Coptic Church and on either side of **Stonehaven** (1889) a rare survivor of those Sydenham demolitions.

\* \* \* \* \*

At a public meeting organised by *Saving Our Trees* in **Mackey Park Marrickville** on 28 August, and in the wake of strong, vocal community support, the Mayor of Marrickville, Sam Iskandar, reversed his party's earlier decision and will now support the retention of the two large fig trees that had been under threat.

\* \* \* \* \*

In 2004 a DA was unsuccessfully lodged and refused to demolish buildings at the so-called gateway to **Dulwich Hill (362-372 New Canterbury Road and 3-5 Herbert Street)** for a massive seven storey development. But now the developer has gained council approval to demolish these same buildings for 'an iconic' four storey development. Among buildings to be demolished are (as described by Scott MacArthur in April 2004 newsletter) "the 1880s Victorian Filigree commercial terrace with Spanish Mission overlay to the Art Deco *Silverdale* flats" (5 Herbert Street).

Okay, not as gigantic as the original proposal, but another step in a trend towards Dulwich Hill shopping centre becoming as indistinguishable in appearance as any other locality. Council's Heritage & Urban Design Advisor stated 'In principle, demolition of the existing buildings on the site, particularly the Victorian Free Classical/Spanish Mission building and the intact Art Deco flat building is not a concept that is supported on heritage grounds and it is disappointing that the proposal has no regard for their retention'. But remember, it will be 'iconic' and a 'gateway', which clearly makes the development acceptable!

## 2009 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER REPORT

(abridged from report presented at AGM)

MHS is now 25 years old, but it doesn't hurt to remind ourselves that we as a heritage society differ from an historical society, in that as well as recording, promoting and having regard for our local history, we monitor and advocate on behalf of buildings and heritage precincts under threat. Scott MacArthur has continued in that advocacy role and the June issue carried articles on the Winged Victory and Colchester Hall both in Marrickville and the former Enmore School.

Using the Society's email address we send out regular global emails to members on email. This is done blind such that no one knows who the other recipients are. Global emailing advantages such members by keeping them up to speed on a variety of matters and providing another means of liaising with the committee. Age is no barrier nor does one need to be especially computer literate or own a computer to have an email address: local libraries are ideal for utilising email services at little or no cost. It is anticipated the Society will soon reinstitute a website, enabling more new members to join and provide further means for communication.

In addition to those events in the past year Scott's report has cited, other talks included Stephen Szabo on Heraldry in Australia with local examples; Allen Madden on the history and cultural aspects of the Aboriginal peoples of this area; and Lesley Muir presenting vintage photos of Sydney in the 1860s and 1870s. Apart from the Braidwood weekend, other outings included a coach excursion to Ebenezer and Wilberforce including the wonderful Australiana Pioneer Village currently under threat of sale and development; walks along Cooks River with Joy Berville and Wolli Creek with Peter Stevens; an Aboriginal Cultural Harbour cruise; and Ted Green's walk around some backstreets of North Sydney.

Members who died during the last year were Joyce Allen, Joyce Carey, Tony Miller, Molly Mitchell, Frances Muller and Sheila Swain. Also, I'd like to acknowledge Dorothy Skinner, a long time resident of Marrickville and formerly a regular attendee of MHS meetings, who is still with us, but is now in a nursing home.

Now to thank and acknowledge those who have assisted in producing and delivering our monthly newsletter. Firstly, everyone on the committee has contributed but, in particular our secretary, Vivien Wherry who has diligently kept me and other committee members up with incoming mail needing early follow up; Ian Phillips has continued to co-facilitate the local newsletter deliveries and provide general technical and other advice; whilst Lorraine Beach has assisted in ways too numerous to describe. Beyond the committee I can continue to count on the inveterate Shirley Hilyard as proof-reader and associate newsletter editor; Diane McCarthy for producing all the member address labels for envelopes, always on time; and membership secretary, Pamela Stewart, a quiet achiever who continues to despatch postal newsletters and maintain membership records.

Then we have the drivers who mobilise Ian two or three times a year: thanks to Tony Breinl, Diane McCarthy, Graeme Napier, Pamela Stewart and Keith Sutton. And, as always, thank you all those who literally bring the news to your door — Lu Bell, Richard Blair, Maree Blanchard, John Blattmann, Tricia Blombery & Stuart Grigg, Nigel Butterley, June Cameron & Ken Turner, Iain Carolin, Peter Cousens, Fred Ellis, Rosemary Fallon, Audrey Furney, Barbara Gibbons, Bob Hayes, Shirley Hilyard, Hilary Morrissey, Allan Outlaw, Ian Phillips, Peter Robertson, Pamela Stewart, Ken Swinbourne and June West; with occasional backup from Di Beckett, Chris King, Graeme Napier, Corinne O'Loughlin, Ann Petersen, Keith Sutton and Coralie Wickers.

I also acknowledge the World of Print in Broadway which hasn't increased our printing costs in the six years we've been using them. Finally may I thank all contributors to the newsletter, plus all those who have given feedback either by email or by including a note with their annual fees.

**Richard Blair**

## DRAFT LEP & HERITAGE

(Continued from front page)

The proposed LEP has significantly less heritage protection than the existing LEP: the proposed Draft Heritage Conservation Areas in the Marrickville LGA have been virtually halved. This reduction in heritage protection is of extreme concern for the Society and this LEP is such that the state government is giving considerable encouragement to property owners to develop their properties. This will put pressure on those heritage-worthy buildings that unfortunately fall outside the proposed heritage conservation areas or are not heritage items. The changes to the state legislation will mean greater areas without protection, thereby putting more houses of heritage significance at greater risk of inappropriate redevelopment or quick demolition.

The state government's State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes), or Codes SEPP (see July 2009 newsletter) are a real threat to the built heritage and traditional streetscapes in the LGA. Changes to floor space ratio calculations give further incentive to developers to maximise the return on their property and disregard the value of any existing period buildings on their land.

The Draft LEP is not light reading. It no doubt has many positives and much material unrelated to heritage conservation. **But be aware, that our built heritage is now at much greater risk than ever.** The Society will endeavour to notify members when the Draft LEP is to appear for public display and comment.

In a stroke of monumental good sense a stretch of Hickson Road (between the Munn Street overbridge and the Napoleon Street intersection) in The Rocks has been formally renamed **The Hungry Mile**. The name is a permanent reminder of where men looked for work on the wharves during the Great Depression.

After member **Lyn Collingwood** completed her book on the history of Camdenville School, Newtown in the early 1980s, she gave several oral history tapes to the school. On Lyn's suggestion, MHS approached the school, which has passed the tapes on to the Society. Member, **Bob Horton**, has undertaken to transfer the tapes to disc. A good team effort! What next Lyn?



## SPRING TRIVIA QUESTION

Give the name and location of this Marrickville LGA church? The tramlines are a clue as to its whereabouts and when the photo was taken. Contact Richard on 9557 3823 or the MHS email address on back page.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Saturday 26 September**  
**Coach trip to Historic Wallsend**  
Details on front page

**Saturday 24 October**  
**David Levell's Tour to Hell**

**Saturday 28 November**  
**Alan Croker talk on Joinery**

### **Marrickville Meander with Laurel Horton** **Sunday 20 September 1.30 pm**

This walk organised by the National Trust is \$30 but includes afternoon tea. Other details were in August newsletter. Bookings Ron 0418 112 018.

### **Wednesday 4 November 1 pm** **Three Marrickville Potteries** **History House 133 Macquarie St Sydney**

Local historian and MHS vice president **Robert Hutchinson** will give an illustrated talk about the three famous Marrickville potteries: Diana Pottery, Fowlers Pottery and Studio Anna. Robert will also talk about the people who worked there. Cost \$5 for RAHS & Affiliated Society members, \$7 non RAHS members. Bookings essential with RAHS on 9247

The Society congratulates the **Wolli Creek Preservation Society** (MHS member) for winning the Biodiversity Conservation Award under the 2009 Keep Australia Beautiful Sustainable Cities Program for their project *A haven for biodiversity and conservation*.



### **SOLDIER'S CARS FOR HIRE**

This sign in black letters on a yellow background has been uncovered on the side of the (shop) building at 502 Marrickville Road Dulwich Hill. According to Sands Directory in 1930 F Schweikert & Sons Motor Garage was at this address (the same garage where the Captain Cook themed motorised float was created in 1932 for the Sydney Harbour Bridge opening celebrations: see March 2007 newsletter). No entry has been found for 'Soldier's Cars' in Sands Directory. Does it refer to cars formerly owned by the army? Was there a family named Soldier? Could anyone with information please ring Richard on 9557 3823 or email MHS (address below).



## **WHEELS IN MOTION**

*Wheels in Motion*, a documentary of 'a journey to save Sydney's buses' had its premier public screenings on 1 September at the *Dendy Newtown*. Fittingly, patrons also had the opportunity to ride on one of two double-decker buses from the Tempe Depot to the cinema. As we motored up King Street, many along the pavement enthusiastically hailed the spectacle, though few would ever have hailed a ride on a double-decker. Those who have, will recall the gentle grunt of these machines or maybe if on a bike, found the rear grab-rail a temptation to enhance uphill mobility.

Due to the unexpected response, the Sydney Bus Museum arranged for a second screening on the night. The film shows all manner of buses, their retrieval from demise and the dedicated restoration. It also presents the ongoing plight to shelter museum assets for perpetuity. The whole experience was a transport of nostalgia and as quoted in the film, 'what's wrong with that?' The film runs for only 28 minutes, but the DVD, contains footage of vintage buses, interview out-takes, bus restoration, archival photos and Sydney Bus Museum events. Produced by local filmmaker Philip Myers and directed by Jillian Bartlett, with funding from Marrickville Council, the film was dedicated to the late Lori Short who fought for the museum and other Tempe-related issues. The website address is <[www.vintagebus.com.au](http://www.vintagebus.com.au)>.

**Ian Phillips**

## **RAHS STATE HISTORY CONFERENCE**

31 October & 1 November in Armidale with the theme *Layers in the Historic Landscape*. Conference fees are \$100 for members of RAHS or of affiliated societies such as MHS. Members can attend at their own expense. Among the speakers is vice president Robert Hutchinson who will talk on reading photographs. For more information and booking forms ring Royal Australian Historical Society on 9247 8001.

When is a waratah not a waratah?  
This is the burning question apropos  
the new design for the state government  
logo, which is thought by some  
to more closely resemble a lotus!



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