

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



OUR NEXT MEETING

Camden and environs by coach

Saturday 24 September 8.45 for 9 am departure

Meet opp. Petersham Town Hall. BYO lunch. Cost \$35. Prepayment & bookings essential. Rosemary 9560 4023. Please advise if you have to cancel.

Camden is a beautiful historic town west of Sydney, named after Lord Camden, the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. He had promised John Macarthur 5000 acres, so when Macarthur finally received the land, he named his property Camden Park in honour of his sponsor. Only after Macarthur's death was some of this land offered for sale, the first lots in 1840. Our first stop is the redeveloped and extensive Camden social history museum (est. 1970) for morning tea and a guided tour with members of Camden Historical Society. Heritage information plaques in central Camden will enable a self-guided tour of the town. Then to



Mount Annan, set in 416 hectares, the largest botanic garden in Australia, specialising in native plants with over 4000 species. It was opened to the public in 1988. A perfect setting for lunch, with plenty of time to visit the Information Centre, view the Spring flowers and check our watches against the park's two sun dials. Finally to the Mukti-Gupteshwar Mandir Hindu Temple in Minto. This unique temple is built underground, as council insisted that if visible, it would impact on the heritage value of the area! (photo © Camden Historical Society)

Like to host this year's pot luck dinner, scheduled for Saturday 3 December? You need to live in the Marrickville LGA and have a reasonable size yard. Crockery, glassware, cutlery and extra seating all provided. Please contact Richard 9557 3823 or email address at bottom of back page.

HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Send a cheque or money order made out to Marrickville Heritage Society with your name(s), address, phone(s) and email. Address below. Ring Diane 9588 4930 for a brochure. Membership includes monthly newsletter. Concession \$12, individual or joint concession \$20, household or organisation \$28. Membership renewable June 2012.

HERITAGE WATCH

Former Coptic Church in Sydenham

The 1884 Tempe Park Methodist Church in Railway Road was reconsecrated the Coptic Orthodox St Mary and St Mina Church in 1969 as the first Copts parish in Australia and the first Coptic Church purchased outside of Egypt. In the mid 1990s the Coptic Church relocated to Bexley. Coinciding with the razing/greening of Sydenham when almost 200 houses and shops were demolished in the vicinity, the federal government in 1996 granted the church to Marrickville Council 'for community use'.

The Society has strongly advocated retention of the building ever since and in mid-2010 Council undertook to seek funding from state and federal governments and afforded organisations the opportunity to put forward submissions. Unfortunately no group was able to attract the requisite funding needed to make the building accessible, safe and secure, let alone viable in an ongoing fashion. Council has now signalled its intention to demolish the church though a DA process is still required.

Council must rue this 1996 federal government gesture, given its inability to sell the land. **We are faced with the prospect of this 127-year-old church – one of the few buildings in Sydenham with any historic significance – being demolished, with the view to it becoming public land with no apparent purpose. Shame.**

TJ Andrews site & J Milne house Newtown

The Joint Regional Planning Panel (Dept of Planning) has approved a DA to redevelop the **TJ Andrews site at 21-23 Enmore Road & 1 Crescent Lane Newtown**. This means the demolition of *Duncraggan*, aka the J Milne house, next to the railway line (see April, June and August newsletters). It is understood the RTA advised the Panel after its July meeting that the Crescent Lane house was a danger to the lines. It seems this consideration trumped the heritage concerns raised in Council's report. Never mind that since the widening of the railway line in the 1920s the terrace has posed no apparent threat 'to the lines': mustn't let expediency get in the way of a developer!

Check out Kassmusic's charming Youtube tribute to the house: <www.youtube.com/user/kassmusic#p/a/u/0/XQumTcvUg6Y> or Google 'Kassmusic Milne'.

Richard Blair

Check <www.nolewishamtowers.org> if you wish to lodge an objection re the DA for the site at 78-90 Old Canterbury Road Lewisham, aka **Lewisham Towers**.

On 25 August, \$30 was credited to MHS. Details: 'From STSTN MHS Fees / Ref Marrickville Heritage'. If yours, ring Diane 9588 4930.

Our Last Meeting

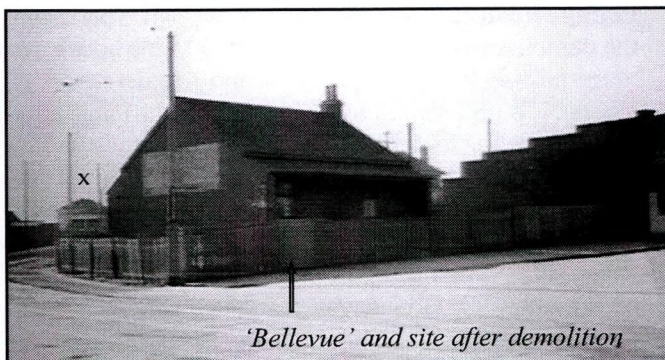
Sydney Harbour: a history, a talk by Dr Ian Hoskins, North Sydney Council Historian, Stanton Library, on Saturday 27 August was based on photographs in his 2009 book of the same name. As a four-year-old Ian immigrated with his family from England to Sydney on the MV *Australasia* which docked in Walsh Bay after passing under the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Ian has written a wonderful illustrated history of the development of Sydney Harbour from the Heads to Cockatoo Island at the start of the Parramatta River.

The Aboriginal clans Gadigal, Wangal and Gamaragal, known as the Eora, lived around Port Jackson – named in 1770 by Captain Cook – when the Europeans arrived under Captain Arthur Phillip in 1788. The Aboriginal clans collected their food from fishing in the harbour and even caught the occasional whale for food. A rock carving at Balls Head shows a whale and an Aboriginal man. However within two years of the arrival of the Europeans the indigenous population was devastated by disease. Governor Phillip had established a relationship with Bennelong, an Aboriginal, who lived on Bennelong Point where later, Fort Macquarie was built. Port Jackson was a major whaling port when the American whalers were active in 1835. Ian showed a photograph of scrimshaw illustrating a three-masted ship with buildings along the foreshore of Sydney Town. Fitzroy Dock on Cockatoo Island was built in 1857 and was later used for Royal Navy ships.

Port Jackson developed in the 1890s into a working harbour for cargo vessels and later passenger ships which were refitted and armed to carry Australian troops in the 1940s. In 1973 the Sydney Opera House was opened on Bennelong Point. The harbour foreshore at the Sydney Opera House, Milsons Point and Bradleys Head has been redeveloped with open space to enjoy the wonderful harbour views and sailing boats as painted by the artist Ken Done. We thank Ian for bringing alive some of the history of the harbour.

Graham Hunt

Bellevue and house resumptions Sydenham 1938



'Bellevue' and site after demolition



The **Newtown Project** is a website conducted by the City of Sydney Council Archives. It began in 2000 based on a concept by Graeme Nichols and was developed for some years by Graeme and volunteers at the City of Sydney Archives. In 2009 it was reactivated and a recent workshop conducted by archivist, Naomi Crago and webmaster, Natasha Neal demonstrated how the site has been expanded. It has drawn largely on official records of the Newtown Municipal Council, Sands Directory and information provided by the community. Check it out at <www.sydneyarchives.info>.

St Peters kilns update

As outlined in our May 2011 newsletter, City of Sydney Council is considering the establishment of a city farm near the historic brick kilns in Sydney Park. A campaign is underway urging this council to establish the city farm elsewhere in recognition of the kilns' significance.

Amongst the objectives of BRICKS (Brickmakers Relatives of the Inner City Kilns of St Peters) is to preserve the kilns for adaptive reuse by the community and to gain recognition of the brickmaking ancestors of the St Peters area. Social historian Ron Ringer addressed our June AGM urging members to email City of Sydney Council about these concerns. BRICKS members, Ross Smith (descended from the Tye brickmaking family) and Bill Bakewell (grandson of the Bakewell Brothers) addressed the MHS meeting on 27 August thanking members for submitting their emails.

Further advice has been received that the CEO of City of Sydney Council may meet with BRICKS to discuss the future of this heritage site. There are plans to expand the campaign to include an information stall at Sydney Park one Saturday morning. For further information contact either Ron on 0412 560 151 or Ross on 0407 672 695.

* * * *

These two Sydenham photographs were taken just three months apart in 1938 during a period when several residences were 'resumed', possibly for road widening. The top photo depicts *Bellevue*, the house on the northwest corner of Unwins Bridge and Railway Roads, while the lower photo shows Gleeson Avenue looking up towards Sydenham Station in the distance with the General Gordon Hotel on the top right. According to the Sands Directory this house had the nameplate 'Bellevue'. It appears to have been built around 1904 and may have been named after an estate to the east. On the side of the house is an unreadable billboard which I tried to coax back to life with imaging software, but could only decipher the letters 'S' and 'O'. The vacated site in the 1950s became a rest area called Memory Reserve, dedicated to the fallen soldiers of both World Wars and the Korean War.

The crosses in each photo mark another building, on the corner of Wright Street, which still stands. My research into this pocket of Sydenham has revealed many interesting discoveries which will be the subject of a journal article.

Iain Carolin

(Photos: © Picture Collection, State Library of New South Wales)

Vintage Views of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney

Many years ago I came across a book titled *Postcards from Kew*. This well-illustrated work highlighted a collection of old postcards of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew, London. Inspired, I decided to search for similar postcards showing views of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney. As a garden historian I was intrigued by these images and went in search of more at markets and postcard fairs. Within a couple of years I had a collection of several hundred cards; clearly the botanic gardens in Sydney was just as popular with postcard collectors as was Kew. I showed part of my collection to Judy Blood and Miguel Garcia at the research library of Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens. Fascinated by these images they asked permission to scan them



for research purposes. Recently a series of these images have been reproduced for sale at the RBG bookshop. The 'Vintage Views' cards sell for \$1 and there are mounted prints which sell for a very reasonable \$9.95. These images were recently used in an interactive walk in the gardens where the vintage views were set up at the same spot as where the original photographs were taken.

Silas Clifford-Smith

(Silas's garden history blog is <reflectivegardener.blogspot.com>)

Three major organisations concerned for Australia's natural and cultural heritage places have joined forces creating a new alliance, the Australian Heritage Partnership, comprising Australian Council of National Trusts (ACNT), Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) and Federation of Australian Historical Societies (FAHS). It will undertake joint and coordinated advocacy activities to raise the profile of Australia's cultural heritage places. The Chairman of the ACNT Dr Graeme Blackman said: 'It is very timely that our three organisations have agreed to work together to provide a unified and strong advocacy voice, particularly to government. The government commitment to the development of a new National Heritage Strategy illustrates the importance of our three peak bodies coordinating our resources and actions to achieve the best possible heritage outcomes.'

These three organisations have over 170,000 members, manage several hundred significant heritage places, and represent many cultural heritage professionals here in Australia. Australian Heritage Partnership members share a common concern that governments have sufficient capacity to meet the community's high expectations for Australia's heritage, and at all levels are able to support community efforts.

The President of Australia ICOMOS Dr Jane Harrington said: 'Australian communities cherish their heritage. This heritage is integral to our sense of self, of where we have come from and where we are going. If we lose it, it is gone forever. Much of the hard work caring for and preserving our heritage is done by the community, ordinary people and other custodians of heritage places. We need to make sure that the burden of caring for our cultural heritage is shared fairly and assisted through well-resourced government programs providing not just funding but access to heritage expertise and advice.' Our heritage is highly significant for the nation and for the community, it gives integrity to the natural and cultural spaces within which we live, and promotes social cohesion through a sense of history, self, place and identity.

Assoc. Prof. Don Garden, President of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies said: 'FAHS is delighted to be a part of the Australian Heritage Partnership as an opportunity to work towards better heritage outcomes, while also promoting an understanding and appreciation of heritage and those who work for it within the community.'

(Source: <<http://bit.ly/q85ikP>>)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday 24 September
Camden and environs by coach

Saturday 22 October
Lebanese settlement into Australia:
talk by Freda Backes

Saturday 26 November
Launch of essay competition publication

The annual **State History Conference of the Royal Australian Historical Society** will be on 29-30 October in Maitland. The theme is 'Of Droughts and Flooding Rains': Australian Disasters: Research, Recording, Recovery. Any MHS member may attend at their own expense. Further information on RAHS website, by phone (02) 9247 8001 or email <history@rahs.org.au>.

New Marrickville Library

Robert Hutchinson and I attended the launch of the next round of community consultations for the new Marrickville Library on 22 August at the old Marrickville Hospital providing the opportunity for an inspection of the site under the guidance of Council's Executive Manager of Major Projects, William Blunt.

It seems that about two thirds of the old hospital will be used for the new library with the exterior of the whole building to be restored and the remaining section set aside for other purposes. We were advised that the original nurses quarters, the rather stately 1920s two storey house which stands beside the old hospital in Lilydale Street, would be restored, but disposed of for residential purposes, along with an adjoining building.

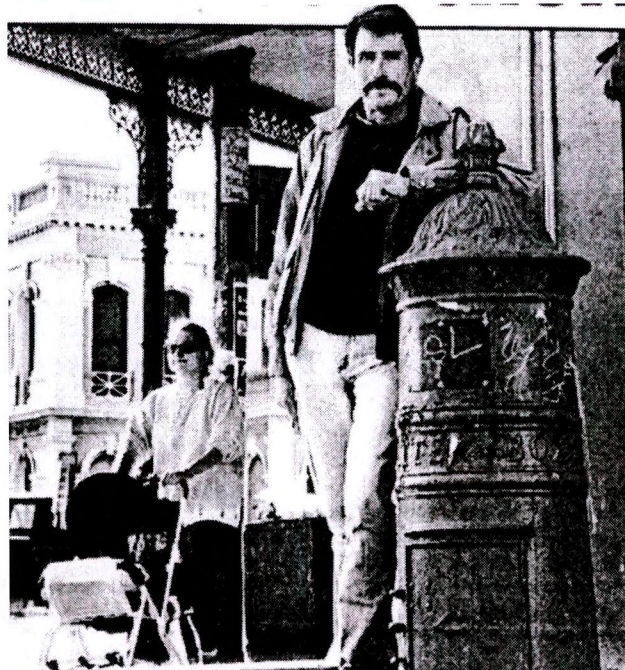
Robert and I both thought the old house would be an ideal location for the archives and historical material that has been dispersed over the four library branches around the LGA. We discussed this with William Blunt pointing out that Marrickville Council is considerably lacking in how it presents our historical and cultural heritage compared with some other LGAs, despite the fact that it was once a leader in this field.

The large nurses quarters in Livingstone Road may also be sold for residential purposes; and the car park on the corner of Marrickville and Livingstone Roads may become open green space with underground parking.

Mayor Fiona Byrne advised that three nationally renowned architectural firms will compete to design the new library. Future consultation events will be held in coming months — details in the next newsletter.

MHS will be interested in proposals for use of the space in Marrickville Town Hall left as a result of relocating Marrickville Library. The Society's interest in obtaining a small portion was conveyed to council's General Manager but this will need to be followed up. The new library will be an important community facility. Your input into its design and opportunities for meeting community requirements will ensure its relevance.

Dr Sonia Laverty, President



This photo from the Western Suburbs Courier (10/8/93) depicts former MHS president, the late John Zinsmeester standing beside the historic postbox which had long stood near Newtown Railway Station. Though the postbox was decommissioned in 1979, on hearing that it was to be relocated John campaigned to have it remain and this is what eventuated. However, with the current refurbishment at Newtown Station, the postbox has been moved. The Society has been assured by the stationmaster that the postbox will be reinstated as part of the revamp. Needless to say, we'll keep you posted!

On Sunday 21 August an Open Day was held at **Vaucluse House** to celebrate 100 years since the house and remnant estate were acquired by the state government to provide public access to Sydney Harbour foreshores. In 1912 the ground floor of the house was first open to the public. The Open Day featured free guided tours with music, talks and other activities. The nearby Wentworth mausoleum (designer Ralph Mansfield) was also open. Historic Houses Trust have owned Vaucluse House since 1980.

Marrickville Library's Eat: Marrickville exhibition, which explores the social history of Marrickville's cooking and eating traditions, continues to 19 September. In conjunction with its 150th anniversary, Marrickville Council has produced the *Marrickville Sesquicentenary Cookbook* which merges history with food and examines how our meals have changed over that time. Available soon.

Spring Trivia Question

I am an internationally known author with a significant association to a church in the Marrickville municipality. I speak from beyond the grave. Who am I and name the church? Richard 9557 3823 or email as below.

PRESIDENT Sonia 9519 3137
TREASURER Diane 9588 4930
HERITAGE WATCH Rosemary 9560 4023
NEWSLETTER Richard 9557 3823