

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



OUR NEXT MEETING

**Big Dig Archaeological Education Centre
with Alison Frappell**

**The Rocks Discovery Museum (see last para)
Saturday 28 July 10.15 for 10.30 am sharp start**

Meet 110 Cumberland Street, The Rocks. Cost \$10 (payable on day but bookings essential) includes morning tea. Finish c. 12.30 pm. Numbers limited. Please advise if you have to cancel. Photography permitted. Note there are a number of ramps, staircases and bumpy surfaces.

Bookings: Iain 0400 473 252 after 7 pm or weekends.

With the arrival of the First Fleet in Sydney Cove in 1788 the western side of the cove became known as 'The Rocks' due to the steeply sided rocky outcrops. The area became densely populated and by the 1890s was a slum in desperate need of a clean-up. The catalyst was the outbreak of bubonic plague in 1900, resulting in the government resuming and demolishing all but one of the houses on a block of land between Cumberland and Gloucester Streets. This is now the site of the **Big Dig Archaeological Education Centre** and the Sydney Harbour YHA Hostel.



'Cumberland Street The Rocks' by Charles Rodius (1831)

From 1917 the land was used industrially until the buildings on the site were again razed in the 1950s making way for a bus parking station and from the early 1970s a storage area. In 1994 a major excavation of the site began, attracting great public interest with 20 archaeologists and around 400 volunteers in what became popularly known as the 'Big Dig', an excavation that continues. The foundations of 30 houses and shops dating from 1795 have been discovered along with over a million artefacts, many displayed around the site and in the YHA building which sits over the site with the excavated remains visible underneath.

The **Rocks Discovery Museum** (opened 2005) is housed in a restored 1850s sandstone warehouse in cobbled Kendall Lane. The museum outlines the history of The Rocks from pre-European times through interactive displays and archaeological artefacts. You can either do a self-guided tour or join a guided 2-3 pm tour, both free.

Fanny Durack Centenary Picnic: 15 July
see back page

OUR LAST MEETING: AGM

Who's who on the committee

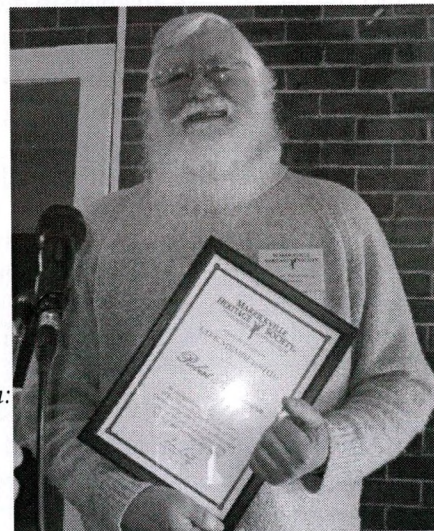
President Dr Sonia Laverty welcomed members to the Society's 28th Annual General Meeting on Saturday 23 June at Herb Greedy Hall, Marrickville. Sonia presented her annual report (see inside) which was followed by **Diane McCarthy's** treasurer's report and **Richard Blair's** publications report. After questions, Diane presented outgoing president Sonia with a bouquet of flowers. Sonia then presented **Robert Hutchinson** with a framed certificate for Life Membership of the Society (see below and inside).

Sonia took the chair as Returning Officer and advised that **Silas Clifford-Smith**, **Nancy MacAlpine** and herself would not seek re-election. All positions were declared vacant. Elected were: president, **Geoff Ostling**; vice presidents, **Lorraine Beach** and **Iain Carolin**; treasurer, **Diane McCarthy**; secretary, **Vivien Wherry**; assistant secretary, **Rosemary Wood**; committee members, **Richard Blair**, **Robert Hutchinson**, **Deborah Lang**, **Ian Phillips** and **Pamela Stewart**. Incoming president **Geoff Ostling** said he was honoured to stand as president again, having served in that capacity over 20 years ago. He looks forward to a fruitful year ahead. Following the AGM, **Mary Oakenfull** expressed interest in joining the committee. In accordance with the constitution, Mary was appointed at the first committee meeting in July.

The post-AGM lunch of soups, bread, paté and cake was enjoyed by all who stayed. Thanks especially to **Lorraine** and **Robert** and to the others who helped.

Richard Blair

MHS Life Membership for Robert Hutchinson



*Robert Hutchinson:
story inside
(photo:
Lorraine Beach)*

President's Report for the 28th AGM 23 June 2012

As president my role is to report on the Society's activities over the past 12 months but to keep it short and interesting. This is rather difficult as MHS is quite an active society so I will be selective. The core business of our work can be summed up as being concerned with both the promotion and protection of heritage in Marrickville LGA, and in general.

Without doubt the highlight of the past 12 months was the launch of *Marrickville, a past worth preserving* in November last year, when we were honoured to have the CEO of RAHS, Maria Walsh, to do the launch. This publication represented great commitment both by the authors and the editors Keith Sutton, Lorraine Beach and Richard Blair, who sustained their interest for over three years to produce the document of which we are so proud. The book has been selling well. Marrickville Council has agreed to form a partnership with MHS to promote the book to all high schools in the LGA. Copies will be paid for by Council and be presented to all these schools.

The Society was very honoured to be nominated for and be presented in December 2011 with a 'Heritage Heroes' Award – a NSW Government Heritage Volunteers Award awarded by the Heritage Council of New South Wales. Five committee members attended the award ceremony at Parramatta on behalf of the Society.

Some other highlights of the society over the past 12 months include: Geoff Ostling's Special Achievement Award at Council's Marrickville Medal function in April; Ted Green being awarded a Certificate of Achievement at the RAHS annual conference in Maitland in October where we had three representatives; the MHS blog being set-up by Silas Clifford-Smith; being represented on Marrickville Council's Heritage Promotions Committee; Bob Irving making a valuable contribution to co-judging the Marrickville Medal; and promoting the Society at the Marrickville Festival in October.

We've also been invited by Marrickville Council to participate at the centenary picnic in Petersham Park in July in honour of Fanny Durack, the first Australian woman to win a gold medal at an Olympic Games – in Stockholm in 1912. Fanny resided in Marrickville and Stanmore for much of her life.

In terms of heritage watch, the Society lodged numerous submissions to Council on heritage-affected DAs. Among the more significant projects we supported were: the GreenWay project; retention of the Stationmasters Cottage, Sydenham; retention of former Coptic Church building, Sydenham; retention of Henson Park Hotel, Marrickville; moves to address the problem of pollution of Cooks River where the most recent update is that two fur seals and a shark have been sighted in the river. We also promoted plans for a new Marrickville library and for the restoration of the old Marrickville Hospital key heritage buildings as part of the plans.

We opposed removal of pews at St Clements Church Marrickville; demolition of the J Milne house, Newtown (on site of the TJ Andrews redevelopment on Enmore Road); the downsizing of Marrickville golf course; and the short-sighted closure of State Records City Office in The Rocks as from end of June 2012.

The events that we have enjoyed together include talks by Ian Hoskins on Sydney Harbour, Freda Backes on Australian Lebanese History Society, and Larry Writer on 'Bumper' Farrell. Diane McCarthy hosted our Show & Tell in February with Robert Hutchinson and Rosemary Wood the judges. We had three popular coach trips to The Hills District, Camden and Mt Annan, and Emu Plains and Penrith; our visit to the Mechanical Music Museum in St Peters attracted over 60 people. Nancy MacAlpine opened her house for the annual Pot Luck Christmas Dinner.

But MHS is more than the things we do; it is especially its members. The membership of the Society is responsive, interested and challenging; it provides the committee with important momentum and ensures its continued relevancy. This will continue to be achieved by your diligence in maintaining a watching brief to protect the heritage we all enjoy in our area. As we continue to enjoy an increasing membership – currently about 435 members – we are well placed to do this.

Finally, I want to thank all the members of the committee: Iain Carolin has taken over being minute secretary and has done a wonderful job, giving Lorraine some space to focus on other matters like writing submissions to Council; Richard continued as editor of the newsletter and is a fount of information and always generous in time and commitment; Robert and Silas have been vice presidents and ready to step in to represent, and carry out any tasks as necessary; Diane for her diligence as treasurer and for maintaining membership records, the stock of publications, her local knowledge etc; Vivien Wherry for being a very successful liaison person with Council, attending to the mail and generally a good all round secretary; Ian Phillips for being always there when you need him, and sometimes when you don't know that you need him!; Pamela Stewart and Rosemary who are now key members of the committee after completing their second year; and Nancy for being game enough to rejoin us last year.

It's been my very great pleasure to work with you all and I do thank you all for your generosity in time and commitment in maintaining a very high standard in promoting and protecting heritage in Marrickville LGA. I have enjoyed my time on the committee and being president of MHS. I am stepping down from the committee for a variety of reasons, along with Silas and Nancy, but we have threatened to come back again soon!

Sonia Laverty

New Life Member: Robert Hutchinson

At the AGM **Robert Hutchinson** was presented with a certificate for Life Membership of the Society. The citation reads: 'In recognition and appreciation of his unstinting dedication to the Society since 1993, as an ambassador for the Society and in promoting history and heritage in general.'

Richard Blair said: 'Since joining the MHS committee in 1996 Robert has missed few Saturday meetings. Not only has he helped out at meetings in setting up the hall and cleaning up after, he has lined up speakers and has himself often spoken to the Society, as well as to other Societies and organisations; he produced *Three Marrickville Potteries*, a publication still in demand; as an avid collector of Australiana, local pottery and postcards he has opened his house for formal inspections; he often presents his latest postcard find at meetings; he brings homemade cakes to meetings; his Xmas cakes, always a prize at the annual potluck dinner, are sought after; he MHS president for a year in 1999-2000 and has capably served as vice president on several occasions!'

'You've probably guessed I am referring to **Robert Hutchinson**, who has also been involved with the Royal Australian Historical Society as a member of the Affiliated Societies Committee and he never misses an annual conference. Photos of Robert have regularly appeared in this newsletter, whilst his comprehensive knowledge of Australiana which he loves to share, his friendly manner and broad humour always leave one with a smile.'



Sonia Laverty (left) is presented with a bouquet by treasurer Diane McCarthy at AGM (photo: Lorraine Beach)

Treasurer **Diane McCarthy** reports an enthusiastic response from members to the offer of a discount of \$5 for a copy of *Marrickville: a past worth preserving* purchased in conjunction with fee renewal. Diane also acknowledges those members who have made donations and/or have expressed their appreciation to the Society in notes forwarded with their renewal.

We were only recently advised of the death of **Frank 'Mac' Cottee**, late of Petersham, who died aged 92 on 27 December 2011. He served in World War II with the 2/18 Battalion. His wife Linda said he was 'a banker, top rifle shot and ex-POW Japanese'. Our condolences go to Linda and her family.

Winter Trivia Answer

For over 70 years the name McConnell was synonymous with grocery shops in Dulwich Hill and environs. Don McConnell was the third generation of McConnell shop owners and provided these photos and relevant information. Don's grandfather, Joseph William McConnell, born 1880, began trading in 1903 at Crinan Street Fern Hill (later Hurlstone Park) under the name McConnell & Hayes. He opened his grocery at 496 New Canterbury Road Dulwich Hill in 1912 and is seen here outside his shop with an employee in 1920.



The business was later renamed JW McConnell & Sons. He converted the shop to a single storey. After he died in 1945, his son Donald took it over and by the early 1950s had converted it into the first local self-service grocer (see photo below). Next door to the east was the Western Timber Company and to the west was W Hudson Timber (on the south east corner of Terrace Road). After Donald's death in 1968, his son Don Jnr became the owner. He also opened branches in Hurlstone Park and Petersham. His last shop closed in 1978.

Joseph's son Frank opened his own shop at 407 New Canterbury Road Dulwich Hill (on the corner of Pigott Street) and his son Joseph Jnr opened a shop at 465 New Canterbury Road Dulwich Hill (near the Britannia picture theatre: both shop and theatre were demolished in the 1960s) and another in King Street Ashbury. All McConnell shops eventually closed.

The McConnell family had a close association with the Dulwich Hill Presbyterian Church in Constitution Road. Joseph Snr was an Elder and Secretary of the church: his name is on the 1929 foundation stone.

MHS member Susan Napier grew up over the road from Don McConnell's shop and fondly remembers it.
Richard Blair



Calendar of Events

Saturday 28 July

'Big Dig' Archaeological Centre The Rocks

Details on front page

Saturday 25 August

***The history of Chinese settlement in Australia since the 1850s* with King Fong**

Talks at Marrickville Library

(All bookings 9335 2173; light refreshments served)

Friday 13 July 6.30 pm

Picture shows in the Marrickville and Newtown districts with Robert Parkinson

The Salvation Army first brought moving pictures to the districts in 1898. Eventually, there were 33 permanent picture theatres or cinemas.

Monday 23 July 11 am

Bricks to build a house: from Brickfield Hill to St Peters with Ron Ringer

Ron explores how brickmaking production developed and moved away from the city to St Peters, Marrickville and Ashfield; and the evolution to mass production.

Wednesday 25 July 2 pm

Out of the vaults: interesting objects from the Marrickville History Collection

Marrickville Library and History Services have a significant local collection of items. The History Services team shares some of their favourite items.

Friday 17 August 6.30 pm

Grahame Bond speaks

Bred in Marrickville, renowned actor, director, writer, musician and architect Grahame Bond will speak about the books that have influenced him. Probably best known for the ABC series *The Auntie Jack Show*, his autobiography *Jack of All Trades, Mistress of One* was published last year.

Storytellers sought

Project WOW (Walking on Water) is a community project supported by Marrickville Council that seeks to engage local residents to appreciate the relationship between the water cycle and their lives. **Marrickville West Public School** is holding a **Water Festival on Thursday 13 September 6-10 pm** and seeks people who can tell a story from their own history about growing up near Cooks River or the way they used water in the past. If you are interested, please ring Ann Fenton on 9558 1425.

The recommendation to halve **Marrickville Golf Course** (see last newsletter) comes from Marrickville Council's report *Recreation Needs Research: Strategic Directions for Marrickville*: 'The need to review the feasibility of downsizing/recycling facilities with declining participant numbers (including golf, tennis, basketball, netball and martial arts)'. The question is whether the research group accurately measured the alleged declining numbers of golf players.

Fanny Durack Centenary Celebration Picnic

Sunday 15 July 11.30 am - 2.30 pm

Petersham Park near the rotunda

Australian Fanny Durack was the first female to win a gold medal in swimming at the Olympics achieving that feat in the Stockholm Olympic Games on 15 July 1912 when she won the 100-metre freestyle. Another Australian, Mina Wylie, came second. Fanny was also the first Australian female to win a gold medal in any Games event. Early in Fanny's life she lived with her family at *Inniscaltra* 5 Esk Street Marrickville (see October 2004 newsletter). After her marriage in 1921 to Bernard Gately she lived at 80 Douglas Street Stanmore for almost



30 years until her death in 1956. Richard Cashman's article 'Fanny Durack' was in *Heritage* 4 (1988).

To celebrate this centenary Marrickville Council is holding a picnic not far from the Fanny Durack Aquatic Centre and the Society has been invited to hold a stall. There will also be sausage sizzle, music, heritage games and races.

(photo: *The Australian Women's Weekly* 3 November 1982)

The shifting Sands

Local and family history researchers know that *Sands Directories* are a valuable research tool, however for various reasons, the recorded information was not always accurate. Consider this example. In the 1884 *Sands Directory* a street in Petersham (today's Dulwich Hill) was listed as Marrick Street with two residents listed as living there. It was described as running between Old Canterbury Road and Manchester Street. One might not be surprised to find a local street named 'Marrick Street' given the name of the nearby suburb of Marrickville derives from the village of Marrick in North Yorkshire, from where Marrickville pioneer Thomas Chalder came.

However, 1884 was the only year in which Marrick Street was listed. One of the residents was John Norton and in 1886 he is listed as living in Maddock Street, which is still there. Given the relative similarity of these names, it would appear the data collector (or someone else on the team) misrecorded the data.

Richard Blair

National Family History Week
27 July - 5 August

PRESIDENT Geoff 9568 3029
TREASURER Diane 9588 4930
HERITAGE WATCH Lorraine 8565 6511
NEWSLETTER Richard 9557 3823