

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



OUR NEXT MEETING

Coach Tour to Vacluse House and environs
Saturday 25 May 9am for 9.15 sharp departure

Meet opposite Petersham Town Hall. BYO lunch.
Cost \$40 (includes coach, morning tea, entries and tours). Prepayment (cheque to PO below or direct deposit – details from Diane) and bookings essential.
Ring Diane 9588 4930.

En route to Vacluse we will visit WC Wentworth's 'Petersham Paddocks Estate', learn Wentworth's reasons for leaving, stop at Kincoppal-Rose Bay School of the Sacred Heart (1882), and tour the school chapel (1900) designed by architect John Horbury Hunt.

At Vacluse we will inspect the Mortuary Chapel of the Wentworth family, and the exterior of the 1963 Wentworth Memorial Church (now sadly unused).



Vacluse House (photo from Wikipedia)

We will view the 'Pleasure Gardens', the farm and the stables designed by the Wentworths. Led by a Sydney Living Museums guide (*see note below right*) we will tour the interior of Vacluse House: kitchens, butler's pantry, servants hall, principal entertaining rooms and bedrooms upstairs.

At Watsons Bay we will visit the Gap, the 'Dunbar' anchor and see remnants of tram tracks that brought visitors to South Head until 1960. Heading home, other sights are Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church (1910), Greycliffe Memorial Gates (1927) at St Peter's Church, the spot where the Dunbar was wrecked (1857) and South Head Cemetery.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Antonia Kartambis, Carlton; Emma Dortins, Natalie Hitoun, Jacqueline Isles, Kirsten & Steve Junor, all of Marrickville; Peter Dunphy & Keith Elvy, Newtown; Helen Enright, Peter Mayes, John Olander & Linda West, all of Petersham; Paula Akkari, Rockdale.

Blue Mountains Crossing Bicentenary
From 11 May – See back page for more

HERITAGE WATCH

Sydenham Stationmaster's Cottage – a battle lost

In 2011 the Society and a tenacious community group opposed a development application by RailCorp to demolish Sydenham Stationmaster's cottage. Council was not the consent authority; the DA was considered by a Joint Regional Planning Panel and MHS's **Richard Blair** spoke against the proposal at its hearing.

This house should arguably have been included in the 'Sydenham Railway Station group' which enjoys protection presently, by virtue of its inclusion in Marrickville's list of heritage items, contained in our Local Environmental Plan, MLEP 2011. It is afforded 'State significance'. It is not known how or why this intact cottage was not included in the group listing except to say that, tucked away behind many large trees, it appears to have been overlooked, never suggested or considered for heritage listing.

Sadly the JRPP has now decided in favour of RailCorp and the Stationmaster's Cottage appears earmarked for demolition.

White Paper – a new planning system for NSW

On 16 April the White Paper was released for public feedback. Draft planning legislation is contained in two Bills – Planning Bill 2013 and Planning Administration Bill 2013. The draft Acts and copious other documents are available for reading on NSW Planning's website <www.nsw.gov.au/a-new-planning-system-for-nsw> and you can 'have your say' until 28 June 2013, also the last day to lodge submissions.

It is somewhat daunting but very important to know what the changes mean, especially how heritage fits in. **Better Planning Network** (of which MHS is a member) offers a comprehensive overview on its website <<http://betterplanningnetwork.good.do/>>

Change on a grand scale has a way of polarising us, but all appear to agree a planning overhaul has long been needed. Supporters and detractors alike emphasise the importance of understanding as a prerequisite for engaging with local planners over the future vision for our community.

Lorraine Beach

Name change for Historic Houses Trust

HHT has had a name change that has met with mixed reactions. Now called Sydney Living Museums, the new name was effected in early April 2013.

OUR LAST MEETING

Access Marrickville's past: History Collection and Archives

It's not often we have the opportunity to see some of the heritage items that Marrickville Council has accumulated over the years. At our last meeting, **Clinton Johnston**, Coordinator History Services at Council, showed us a selection of some of these items.

We saw quite a few old photos of street scenes around the LGA, some of which had our members guessing as to their locations, being more difficult to identify today with many landmarks gone.

There were photos of floats from a 1956 street parade, sponsored by such local companies as Taubmans Paints, Vicars Knitting Mill, Broadleys Shoes (to the delight of MHS member Judy Reynolds, whose father ran the shoe shop for many years) and Marrickville Library. There were also the obligatory clowns and marching bands, along with the council garbage truck and a lot of cyclists.

Photos of a number of the placards used in the third runway protests of the mid 1990s brought back many memories.

Records from Vicars Woollen Mills from around 1897 to 1958 are extremely comprehensive and reminded us how important this industry was to the Marrickville area during these years. This once thriving company originally employed around 30 people, 400 by 1911 and 1,200 by 1935. In their most profitable years, Vicars won many important contracts, including government contracts. The records, which were donated by the last owner of the Mills, cover details of contracts, wages paid, pattern books of clothes supplied, and samples of the materials used. Women were the more favoured employees, the easy explanation being that their smaller hands could work the looms more easily, but then, as even today, the real reason was more likely that they were paid less than the men.

After restrictions on imports were relaxed post World War II and cheaper synthetics flooded into the country, woollen garments could no longer compete. Vicars tried to diversify, eventually merged with Australian Woollen Mills in the 1960s and in 1979 the Marrickville site was sold.

Next were a number of lovely, largely unidentified sepia photos of Henry Terbutt Brown's family. He was Town Clerk of Marrickville Council from 1898 to 1920.

One particularly sad photo was a mortuary image of a baby girl who had died before her first birthday. Photos of mothers holding their dead infants were a common way of preserving their memories.

Another valuable resource in the history archives are Council rate books and valuation records. These reveal when houses were built, who the owners or tenants were and often their occupations.

Records have also been saved that document the philanthropy of John Vicars and the soldiers comfort funds from World War II.

The Council is currently working to digitise its large collection of records. Most are in the public domain and can be accessed and used; as always, it is best to check with Council about your proposed use before so doing.

Many thanks to Clinton Johnston for this interesting look at some of the invaluable items in Council's possession. We commend Marrickville Council for its action to preserve them for future generations.

Rosemary Wood

The Society thanks **Ellie Zinsmeister** for generously offering pieces of Diana pottery for sale at our meeting, with proceeds donated to MHS.

Honouring the Anzac tradition

Why the spontaneous applause for **Fred Ellis** at the meeting? Members had spotted him on TV, stepping out in Sydney's Anzac Day March. Fred, a WWII veteran, saw active service in Papua New Guinea.

Holy smoke!

Arson was suspected in the blaze that destroyed the Parish Hall of the Holy Trinity Church at Dulwich Hill in the early hours of 21 April. The hall was the original church building (1886), and since the 1930s has had a strong connection to youth in the locality. Trinity Grammar School was located there during the period 1924 to 1926. The 2nd Dulwich Hill Scout Troop was run from the church and the names of those associated with it were displayed on the Parish Hall walls along with the names of those who helped establish the local Girl Guides Group in 1922.



Postcard courtesy of Robert Hutchinson

In 1994 the Parish Hall was converted into a fulltime Youth Fitness Centre with gymnasium equipment and a boxing ring. Sadly only the facade of the old church remained after the fire was extinguished, and latest news reports indicate this is unstable and may not survive.

Across the road from the destroyed building are the Holy Trinity Church (1915) and the Rectory (built in the 1890s and purchased by the church in 1936). Both of these are heritage items in Marrickville's LEP.

Deborah Lang

Society's blogsite earns compliments

Our blogsite creates interest in and awareness of MHS and local heritage issues, encourages contact and gets noticed. All kudos to **Deborah Lang** for her creativity and diligence, and for all the positive feedback we received during the *Tempe House* open weekend. <marrickville-heritage.blogspot.com.au >

Editor

Tempe House Open Weekend

Perfect autumn weather for the weekend of 13-14 April attracted an estimated 1,200 visitors to a rare viewing of the interiors and grounds of the superbly restored *Tempe House* now part of Discovery Point, Australand's Wolli Creek development. **Dr Robert Brodie Spark**, great great grandson of *Tempe House's* original owner Alexander Brodie Spark, officiated at the opening of a permanent museum in a room of the house. Events included the launch of the Heritage Walk, a series of sponsored plaques each describing a part of Tempe Estate history, and illustrated talks by the St George Historical Society in the adjacent St Magdalene Chapel. A fine exhibition of paintings, etchings and prints by acclaimed artist **Pamela Griffith** graced the walls of the house's elegant rooms and hallway.

Ross Berry, energetic honorary historian of *Tempe House*, MHS member and founder of The Friends of Tempe House, organised the weekend. Ross set up the museum, hosted, entertained and shared with visitors his detailed knowledge of the history of the house and the families and individuals who have occupied it.

MHS was generously offered a room to promote the Society. **Robert Hutchinson's** eclectic displays from his collections of historic postcards and pieces from Marrickville's three best known local potteries created great interest, as did selected publications and walks which sold well throughout the weekend. A highlight of our display was a short video put together by **Deborah Lang** for the occasion, providing a chance for visitors to sit for a few minutes, gain an insight into the Society's work and chat with committee members.



The weekend team with the Society's sponsored plaque
Clockwise from left: Deborah Lang, Pamela Stewart, Robert Hutchinson, Lorraine Beach, Geoff Ostling, Mary Oakenfull. Others not pictured: Iain Carolin, Diane McCarthy and Rosemary Wood

Some visitors said they were unaware of the historic site, delighted to be able to visit it, and appreciative of the high standard of restoration. *Tempe House* is a rare example of a Neo Classical Georgian villa designed in 1833 by renowned colonial architect John Verge for AB Spark, and completed in 1836. Its varied history is well documented notably including its use from 1863 by Caroline Chisholm as a school for young ladies, and its purchase in 1884 by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan to use as a women's refuge. The Sisters built the chapel

in 1888 and their use continued for nearly a century until closure in 1983. Ensuing decades were not kind to the house, bringing neglect, quiet decay and vandalism (some beautiful timber floors still show burn marks from squatters) until its eventual restoration.

The lasting legacy of the weekend's opening of *Tempe House* will be the museum, with its collection of historic artefacts and documents linked to the estate; and the Heritage Walk of informative plaques. Eleven of these are in place and one more is yet to be installed. The Society's sponsored plaque describes 'the famed garden of the Tempe Estate', and is fittingly placed just to the east of the house at the gardens leading to Mount Olympus.

It is hoped more opportunities may be offered to enjoy this wonderful villa's interiors. In the meantime, owners Australand want to see the grounds enjoyed, pointing out that they are always accessible by walkways to the west of the chapel, from the river and from a gated entry (unlocked) at Princes Highway. It is a lovely location for a picnic or just quiet enjoyment.

Our sincere thanks to Ross Berry and to Australand for inviting us to participate in this memorable weekend.

Pamela Stewart

(Nearby bus stop sign says 'Alexander Bruce Spark'!)

Your memories are needed!

Two organisations, below, have asked for our help in putting together the histories of their places to support plans for celebrating important heritage milestones.

Anglican Church of St Columb's Camdenville

(1913), located at 35-39 Dickson Street Newtown is now occupied by Inner West Cultural Services. IWCS need help with researching the history of the building and parish of St Columb's.

A centenary celebration, *Afternoon Tea with St Columb*, will be held during the Open Marrickville festival in June. If you have information about the church, or can help with some research, please contact IWCS direct – Annette Tesoriero <info@innerwestcs.org.au> phone 0416 723 893.



Newtown Public School will celebrate its 150th anniversary in September with an old fashioned fair. Also underway is an oral history documentary about the school's history. Established in 1863, the school moved in the 1870s to the King Street building that is now part of Newtown High School of Performing Arts. Eventually outgrowing the premises, an Infants School was built in Norfolk Street. Few records exist for the school as it's said the written records were burnt in an incinerator during the 1960s.

Organisers would love to hear from former students, teachers or anyone who has a connection with the school and may have stories or memorabilia such as old reports, photos, or uniforms. Please contact Lisa Burke at <newtownpublicschool150@gmail.com> phone 9557 0162.

Calendar of MHS Events

Saturday 25 May

Vaucluse House and environs – bus tour

Details on front page

Saturday 22 June

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 27 July

Dulwich Hill walk with Chrys Meader

Saturday 24 August

Ron Ringer on History of Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation

Saturday 28 September

'Touring the Past' exhibition and talk by Richard White

Marrickville Library events

At Marrickville Town Hall

Wednesday 15 May 1pm-5pm

Thursday 16 May 10am-6pm

Friday 17 May 10am-1pm

Marrickville Library Book Sale

The Library's occasional book sale returns. Purchase books, DVDs and CDs, cash only.

At Marrickville Library

Thursday 16 May 2pm

Family History Online

Practical session in online family history research resources. Computer experience and an email address needed. \$5 (\$2.50 concession). Bookings essential, call 9335 2173.

RAHS evening lecture

Tuesday 28 May 5.30-6.30pm

Larry Writer

The Life and Times of Tilly Devine, Kate Leigh and their Razor Gangs in the 1920s-30s. History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney. To book call RAHS 9247 8001 or email <history@rahs.org.au> Free.

David Jones 175 years exhibition

Saturday 25 May to Sunday 23 June

David Jones celebrates its 175th birthday with *David Jones 175 Years: The Exhibition*, with images, artefacts and memorabilia of design, architecture and fashion tracing the rich history of one of the world's oldest department stores. On Seven, 7th floor Elizabeth Street store, daily during trading hours.

Seniors Week celebrations

Each year Marrickville Council hosts a **Health and Wellbeing Expo** to celebrate Seniors Week. On 4 April this well organised event at Marrickville Town Hall was again attended by the Society. Despite rain and cold weather, visitors enjoyed the entertainment and variety of information stalls offered by a diverse range of healthcare and service agencies. Thanks to **Diane McCarthy, Pamela Stewart, Rosemary Wood and Mary Oakenfull** for representing the Society.

Blue Mountains Crossing Bicentenary

Events are underway celebrating the bicentenary of the European crossing of the Blue Mountains by Gregory Blaxland, William Lawson and William Charles Wentworth. Setting off from Blaxland's farm at South Creek, St Marys on 11 May 1813 with an Aboriginal hunter, three convicts*, four horses and five dogs, they returned triumphant within a month, having found a passage to the western plains.



The Blue Mountains Pioneers (Detail), Sydney Mail Christmas Supplement, 1880, engraving. Courtesy State Library of NSW

There are several groups involved in the celebrations, many of which are listed on the organisers' website at <<http://visitbluemountains.com.au/bicentenary.php>>

A highlight is the 21 day re-enactment trek, departing 11 May from the site of Blaxland's farm, keeping as close as practicable to the original route, in the same time frame, with seven people, dogs and horses and with similar equipment to the original crossing party.



The RAHS, with the help of a grant from NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet, has organised a commemorative button badge to mark the occasion to be distributed to over 14,000 Blue Mountains and Emu Plains school students.

Lorraine Beach

* Christine Yeats, Senior Vice President RAHS, discovered the identity of one of the convicts while researching for the Blue Mountains Crossing Bicentenary.

'Providence Provides: A History of the Brigidine Sisters in the New South Wales Province'

The result of four years of research and writing by MHS member **Janice Garaty**, this book is a salute to the courageous and talented women who, in the 19th century, set up boarding, select and parish schools in NSW country towns and then in Sydney, Brisbane, Moreton Bay and Perth. The book begins in 1883 with a journey from Mountrath (Ireland) to Coonamble and ends with an overview of the present works of the Sisters and future directions. RRP \$49.95 (plus p&h) from Brigidine Provincial Office, 93 Carrington Road Coogee 2034. Ph 9398 9935 <provoff@bigpond.net.au>

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