

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



## OUR NEXT MEETING

*Picture shows in the Marrickville and Newtown districts 1898-2012: an illustrated talk by Robert Parkinson*

**Saturday 24 November 10.15 for 10.30 am**  
**Herb Greedy Hall 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville**

MHS member **Robert Parkinson** has just published a book on the picture shows of Marrickville and Newtown, his fifth book on movie theatres. The Salvation Army screened the first movies in September 1898 in their own premises. They were followed by various exhibitors who used other halls or erected open-air structures. These were later replaced by covered-in theatres, many with grand ornamentation and sizeable dimensions to accommodate large numbers of movie enthusiasts. All have now closed. The Newtown Dendy, which opened in 1995, was recently expanded with multiple screens.

Copies of the book will be on sale for \$25. Details re purchasing will appear in December newsletter.



*Marrickville Kings Theatre at night 1937*

MHS member **Silas Clifford-Smith** is researching the life and career of **David G Reid** (c. 1860-1933) for an article in the next MHS journal *Heritage*. Silas is keen to make contact with descendants of Scottish-born Reid, who was a plumber and gas fitter and lived most of his life in the Newtown and Marrickville areas. Reid was also a landscape painter, who was active in the Society of Artists and Royal Art Society of NSW. Silas has written about Reid for an entry in the Design and Art Australia Online (DAAO) website but is keen to learn more about him.

If you have any information or own examples of his work, email <silas.cliffordsmith@gmail.com> or ring on 9569 3417.

Newtown Council was formed 150 years ago on 12 December 1862

## Lorraine Beach: Certificate of Achievement

Honoured at this year's RAHS annual conference (report inside) with a Certificate of Achievement award was **Lorraine Beach** whose citation reads:

'For her outstanding service since 1999 as President, Vice President and Honorary Secretary and for her great achievements in arranging a wide range of activities and formal submissions by the Society.'



*Lorraine receives her Certificate of Achievement from Anne-Maree Whitaker, RAHS President (photo: Richard Blair)*

## MHS blog updated

Last year **Silas Clifford-Smith** devised our MHS blog and now our new blogmaster, committee member, **Deborah Lang** has updated it. See the changes at: <[www.marrickville-heritage.blogspot.com.au](http://www.marrickville-heritage.blogspot.com.au)>.

The blog aims to showcase some of the activities of the society and its publications and provide information about Marrickville's history and heritage. We hope that through the blog we can attract new members. Deborah can be emailed with comments on <[marrickvilleheritage@gmail.com](mailto:marrickvilleheritage@gmail.com)>.

## Annual Christmas Pot Luck Dinner Saturday 1 December 6 for 6.30 pm

Our annual Christmas pot luck dinner will be held in Tempe, not far from Tempe station. Book with Lorraine 9550 6608 (after hours) or email <[lbeach@iprimus.com.au](mailto:lbeach@iprimus.com.au)> to advise what food you will bring and obtain address. BYO drinks.

## RAHS State History Conference: more than 'filth and corruption': 20-21 October

The theme of this year's Royal Australian Historical Society's State History Conference had us puzzled at the outset – '*Saturated with filth and corruption*': NSW History? Was this a slight on the chosen venue of our own Cooks River and Wolli Creek, or our locality, or, as one of our illustrious speakers, the Hon. George Souris, quipped during his most affable address, a shot at politicians? Well, we were all a bit thin skinned as it was none of these but instead a quote from the 1883 New South Wales Legislative Council Noxious and Offensive Trades Inquiry Commission.

Two further influences flowed throughout the conference, arguably the state's premier history event. We remembered and honoured Dr Lesley Muir, her loss felt by us all, and her remarkable contribution and legacy to the RAHS and the history community. Lesley's husband, Brian Madden, presented her paper, *Cooks River Valley – a history saturated with filth?*, a brief history of the valley from the time of its Aboriginal inhabitants through colonisation, industry and its place today as a compromise between competing interests of progress and residential development.

The second influence was the inevitability of change in a climate of electronic media, digitised records and the internet, a theme introduced in RAHS President, Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker's opening address.

The conference set a cracking pace, beginning with an all day workshop – *Oral History in the Digital Age* – on Friday and welcome drinks that evening, jointly hosted at History House by Canterbury & District Historical Society, St George Historical Society and Marrickville Heritage Society. With the venue of Rowers on Cooks River (St George Rowing Club) there followed two full days of speakers, papers, presentation of awards, business affecting local societies and election of members to the Affiliated Societies committee, where MHS's Robert Hutchinson was appointed for another term, and punctuated by the Conference Dinner on Saturday night.

Each year the RAHS facilitates applications by societies and individuals for government grants. This year, Heritage Grants were presented by the Hon. Robyn Parker, Minister for the Environment and Heritage, and Cultural Grants by the Hon. George Souris, Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Hospitality and Racing, Minister for the Arts.

Some speakers addressed the challenging subject contained in the title of the conference – notably the always entertaining and informative Angela Phippen with *Sources for Researching Noxious Industries*, Brian Madden as noted above, Leonie Knapman, *The Story of Cement at Berrima*, and *Corrupted Ideals? Keeping History the Focus in Your Historical Society* presented by the Affiliated Societies Committee. Professor Peter Spearritt, in the inaugural Lesley Muir Address, explored Sydney's 'proud history' of foreshore conservation, public access and national parks and examined the curious inclination of major cities to establish costly desalination plants.

Papers by Rowan Day, Richard Neville, Judith Denby, Kevin Murray (delivered by Carol Liston), Michelle Nichols, Judith Dunn and Gavin Gatenby introduced, described and explained researching, interpreting and recording local history, many with emphasis on using and establishing digitised resources.

Author Nadia Wheatley gave us an insight into how she researches 'place' and encourages engagement by young people with the history of their neighbourhoods and community. Architect Howard Tanner spoke about the need for state planning schemes and policies that enable the survival and a new 'career' for preserved and restored historic buildings. His colleague, Scott MacArthur (former MHS President), in conjunction with Ross Berry (St Magdalene's Chapel), conducted a tour of *Tempe House*, described by Howard Tanner as a demonstration of 'both the success and failure of the present planning system.'

MHS was well represented at this conference by ten delegates. Our thanks and congratulations go to the councillors and staff of RAHS for enabling yet another memorable, informative and educative event.

Lorraine Beach

## Street Names: Hollands Avenue

Hollands Avenue is part of the former Cooper's Dairy which was established in 1879 at 197 Livingstone Road Marrickville. The dairy had Jersey and Guernsey cows. The property stretched from [present day] St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church on Livingstone Road to St Maroun's College (formerly the Carmelites convent) on Wardell Road. The farm consisted of the Cooper's house and three tennis courts. Cooper built five tennis courts in the area before selling in 1928.

Marrickville Council purchased the area relating to Hollands Avenue and sold it to developer Herbert Henry Hollands who built the housing in Hollands Avenue in 1936-37. The nearby Marrickville Girls Club was built in 1944. Hollands built other houses in Woodbury Street, Jocelyn Avenue and Wardell Road.

Deborah Lang (adapted from MHS blog: see p. 1)



Shown at the October meeting, this resembles an axe, but members **Geoff Francis** and **Fred Ellis** think that as it's blunt, it may be a tool for working with sandstone or rock and could be a hundred years old. It was recently located by a six-year-old boy in a Marrickville park. Let us know if you have any ideas (photo: Richard Blair).



## Our Last Meeting

### The story of St Peters Church Cooks River

On 27 October, MHS members **Laurel** and **Bob Horton** presented the story of St Peters Anglican Church Cooks River in St Peters. It is the church which gave the suburb of St Peters its name and is the oldest building in the Marrickville Local Government Area. It was the third Anglican church built in Sydney, after St Philip's and St James in the Sydney CBD, and was the first church built by free, as opposed to convict, labour. It is listed on the Register of the National Estate.

Over the last 20 years or so, Laurel and Bob have become 'myth-busters' as they researched the history of the church and the graveyard and checked names and dates from original diaries, church registers and newspaper reports. Their aim always has been to separate fact from fiction, in preparation for the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of St Peters Church in 2013.

According to the diary of Alexander Brodie Spark, prominent Sydney merchant and owner of *Tempe House* on Cooks River, the St Peters foundation stone was laid by the Governor, Sir George Gipps, on 9 July 1838. The building was opened for worship in November 1839. For many years it was not known where the foundation stone was actually laid but repairs to the flooring of the church in 1947 revealed it is under the floor on the central east-west axis in the centre of the church.

The original parish of St Peters 'included Newtown, Botany, Cooks and Georges Rivers, Petersham and Georges Hall to within three miles of Liverpool'. The architect of St Peters was Thomas Bird. This is his only church and appears to be his only building still standing. Old photographs show an elegant spire and bell chamber on top of the tower but unfortunately these were demolished in 1963. The exterior is in the then fashionable English Gothic-style but the interior is a simple Georgian 'preaching box' with tall Ironbark columns from the forests on the south side of Cooks River to support the roof. One of the decorative stained-glass windows commemorates the family of Thomas Chalder, the man who named the suburb of Marrickville after the tin-mining village of Marrick in Yorkshire where he grew up.

In the 1840s, Colonial architect Edmund Blacket built stone buttresses and strengthened the walls which were then on the verge of collapse because of inadequate foundations on clay ground. Later, in the 1870s, Blacket also rearranged the church seating and designed the elegant pulpit, lectern and prayer desk carved from Australian cedar. They are still in use. The third architect involved with the church was Leslie Wilkinson, first Professor of Architecture at Sydney University, who designed the new church foyer and parish hall in the 1930s. These have been recently restored with a sympathetic colour scheme and lighting in readiness for the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

For many years Laurel and Bob have been instrumental in coordinating the further restoration of the church and grounds. They run the St Peters Cooks River History Group\* with walks, talks and family history research on the first Saturday of each month at 1.30pm.

**Geoff Ostling**

\* <[www.stpeterscooksriverhistory.wordpress.com](http://www.stpeterscooksriverhistory.wordpress.com)>

## Centenary of Enmore Theatre



Enmore Theatre officially opened on 3 October 1912. Described as 'the premier photo-play theatre in N. S. Wales' this is how the theatre in Enmore Road looked in about 1913 (from *Jubilee Souvenir of the Municipality of Newtown 1922*, p. 199). The theatre has been redeveloped a few times since.

An extensive account of the theatre is in Robert Parkinson's *Picture shows in the Marrickville and Newtown districts 1898-2012* which has just been published and will be the subject of Robert's talk to MHS on 24 November (see front page).

### Architecture Forum in Marrickville

As part of the Sydney Architecture Festival, Marrickville Council hosted a forum titled *Adaptive Reuse & Heritage Conservation* on Saturday 27 October at the newly-restored Old Marrickville Town Hall in Illawarra Road. **Clinton Johnston** (Coordinator, History Services) chaired the forum, which was well-attended, with several MHS members present. Among the speakers were former MHS President, **Scott MacArthur** who discussed the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings. This involves the restoration of proper status to a building which once gave life to a place or community. Brisbane City Hall, due to reopen in April 2013, is an example where Scott has been actively involved.

**Shaun Carter** discussed Antipodean terraces in the context of the remaking of cold climate (i.e. northern hemisphere terrace) houses for a temperate climate. Reusing existing housing stock is recycling at its best. **Michael Zanardo** explored architectural ideas in pre-World War II workers housing and its relevance to the design of affordable housing today.

Finally, **James Phillips's** talk about his work on Old Marrickville Town Hall demonstrated how such a derelict building could be restored and finished to a high standard throughout. The entrance stairs were enhanced by reinstating two new guardian lions. Olive trees are planted in the garden as homage to the homeland of the current custodians of the building, The Greek Atlas League. James also discussed aspects of interwar architecture. A lively Q&A followed.

Council should be congratulated for organising this forum and for utilising this 2012 Marrickville Medal award-winning building.

**Diane McCarthy**

## Calendar of Events

**Saturday 24 November**

**Robert Parkinson: *Picture shows in the Marrickville and Newtown districts***

Details on front page

**Saturday 1 December**

**Annual Christmas Pot Luck Dinner**

Details on front page

### A CHRISTMAS CAROL

The New Theatre will present this special event in Newington College's historic stone chapel, the perfect setting for Charles Dickens's 1843 story directed and faithfully adapted by Lyn Collingwood. Ebenezer Scrooge's transformation from 'Bah! Humbug!' to 'God bless us every one!' is suitable for ages seven up.

Parking in the college grounds off Stanmore Road. The chapel (near Stanmore Road) is air-conditioned. Bookings 1300 347 205 or online: <newtheatre.org.au> Tickets at door: cash only.

**Monday 17 December 7 pm \$10 preview (at door)**

**Tuesday 18–Sunday 23 December 7 pm \$15**

**Saturday 22 & Sunday 23 December 3 pm \$15**

### Marrickville Festival Sunday 21 October

Over recent years the annual Marrickville Festival has expanded and this year there were more stalls and activities than ever. It is an important yearly event for MHS. We made our presence felt with a more appealing and revamped stall and we were given a very good position. Initiatives included two noticeboards with history items and MHS publications for sale, more sale books than usual and, of course, free newsletters. Speech bubbles helped attract the public and we ran a raffle with the prize being a year's free membership.

As a result the Society enjoyed its best sales for years. We were swamped with enquiries especially about the Winged Victory statue, long missing from its pedestal in front of Marrickville Town Hall. Unaware of the status of the statue, we advised enquirers to contact Council. Special thanks to **Deborah Lang** for her great ideas in making our stall more interesting and helping out all day, and to members **Andrew Buchan, Val Gregory and Ian Phillips**, who all assisted.

**Iain Carolin**



*Iain Carolin mans the attractive MHS stall (ph: Deborah Lang)*

**Note:** The committee commends **Iain Carolin** for coordinating the stall and injecting it with such enthusiasm. We thank treasurer, **Diane McCarthy** for her behind the scenes preparatory work.

MHS overdue fee pink slips accompany newsletters this month if fees unpaid. Ring or email (address below) treasurer with queries. Fee details on slips. Perhaps pay for two years and get ahead!

### Marrickville: a past worth preserving

In collaboration with Marrickville Council, MHS is in the process of donating a copy of the Society's book of local history essays, *Marrickville: a past worth preserving* to all ten local high schools. Council has paid for all copies. So far a copy has been presented to two high schools. In the case of Dulwich High School of Visual Arts & Design, co-editor **Keith Sutton** attended a school assembly where he outlined the essay competition and the ensuing publication. Co-editor **Richard Blair** attended a Fort Street High assembly citing Fortian **John Chappell's** evocative essay on the six Quinn siblings who lived next door in *Kotupna*, Petersham and never married; and **Kate Dunbar's** essay on Emanuel Brace. Most students were unaware that Robert Wardell – murdered in 1834 by Brace and two others – had lived at *Sara Dell*, which stood on the site of the school.

Some of our essay writers will attend similar school assemblies in Term 1 next year. Anyone wanting a copy can buy one at the November meeting or by contacting the treasurer. The book is \$35 plus p&p (home delivery in LGA free by prior arrangement).

### Newtown Station renewed



The ticket office of Newtown station sold its final ticket on Friday 26 October 2012. Trackwork closed the station over the weekend and the upgraded station (which includes a lift) was opened on Monday 29 October. The old ticket office building will be refurbished for shops. The former tramway office buildings have been restored and the historic red postbox has been retained on the station forecourt (photos: Richard Blair).



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