

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



## OUR NEXT MEETING

***The Spirit of SMEC*: talk by Ron Ringer**  
Saturday 24 August 10.15 for 10.30 am  
Petersham Town Hall, 107 Crystal Street Petersham  
(Note: venue changed due to federal election)

*The Spirit of SMEC* explores the life and times of two distinct yet interrelated organisations, the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority (SMHEA) and the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (SMEC). Work on the Snowy Scheme commenced in 1949, heralding a period of mass migration to Australia. At a time when this country was considered to be underdeveloped it is important to recognise that the World Bank provided a \$100 million loan towards the full cost which was borne by the Australian people. Yet, the Snowy project would never have succeeded without the expertise of German engineers, Czech surveyors and the multitude of highly skilled nationals who fled after the devastation in Europe.

The completion of this remarkable project amply demonstrates the 'can-do' spirit that characterised migrant workers, engineers and other professionals in the early postwar decades. From out of the collective experience and skills acquired during the Snowy Scheme there grew SMEC. Established in 1970 as a public sector organisation, SMEC was corporatised in 1985 and finally sold to the staff in 1993. Today, the spirit of those who worked on the Snowy Scheme continues through a company that provides consulting services for many challenging engineering projects throughout Australia and the world.



*Dam project in Indonesia c. 1978 where SMEC was involved*

**Ron Ringer** is a business communications consultant, professional historian and the published author of educational textbooks and business histories including *A History of Elgas* (2004); *The Brickmasters, 1788–2008*; and *The Spirit of SMEC* (2012) launched by Hon. Simon Crean MP at Parliament House, Canberra. MHS is among the several organisations Ron belongs to. He addressed MHS in 2006 on Sydney's brickmakers.

**MHS President's annual report inside**

## The National Trust (NSW) submission re the White Paper: A New Planning System for NSW

The White Paper hardly mentions the word 'heritage'. Given that 98% of statutory listed heritage in NSW is dealt with under planning legislation via the Local Environmental Plan Heritage Schedules of local councils, it is surprising that proposed changes to a planning system which focuses to a great degree on local councils and communities does not consider in more detail protection and management of heritage.

Items listed on the NSW State Register are protected by Heritage Legislation. But these account for only 2% of the state's heritage – around 1600 items. The 27,000 items listed as heritage by local councils includes not only buildings but also other items such as trees, parks, cemeteries and bridges.

Most heritage-listed buildings have high value because of their special qualities. Owners want advice to ensure their investment is maintained and enhanced. They want a quality result rather than a quick development approval. A small number of developers will argue for demolition of heritage-listed properties to maximise their potential for high-density development and increased profit margin. These developments should be rejected outright.

## The Trust urged the following for maintaining and enhancing heritage protection in the new legislation:

- Heritage should be a distinct and separate NSW Planning Policy as heritage is significant to the state's environmental, economic and social fabric and should form part of the government's policy framework for land use, development and strategic planning
- The Heritage Act must not be 'switched off' where 'state significant developments' are under consideration
- Conservation areas and listed items must be maintained and legally protected from development which is inappropriate
- Existing heritage development control plans must be retained
- Heritage Council approval should remain a necessity for development affecting state-listed properties, and should be extended to all council-owned local heritage items.

Heritage planning and assessment expertise resides with the Heritage Council and its committees and specialist staff. Transfer of this role to a one-stop shop in the Planning Department will only extend planning approval times, as occurs in other states using this approach. The Heritage Council pre-Development Application consultations have proven very effective. Why risk this efficient and effective approach?

**Graham Quint, Conservation Manager**  
(from National Trust (NSW) magazine Spring 2013, p. 3)



## President's Report for the 29th MHS AGM 22 June 2013 (transmitted by Skype)\*

**G**ood morning everyone. I am in Flintstone, a suburb of the city of Chattanooga, Georgia, USA. Thanks to modern technology and to Lorraine Beach at your end, this report is being presented on Skype, the internet connection that combines both sound and image.

This has been a successful year. We have well over 400 members and a wonderful committee who have worked tirelessly throughout the year. I want to thank our two vice presidents **Lorraine Beach** and **Iain Carolin**, and the other members of the executive committee – our treasurer **Diane McCarthy**, secretary **Vivien Wherry**, assistant secretary **Rosemary Wood**, and other committee members, **Robert Hutchinson**, **Mary Oakenfull**, **Deborah Lang**, **Pamela Stewart**, **Richard Blair** and **Ian Phillips**.

**Richard Blair** has produced the newsletter each month which is the envy of other history and heritage societies across Australia. While thanking Richard, I also want to thank our 'runners' who deliver your newsletter to your doorstep. Over the last 29 years they have saved our society thousands of dollars in postage.

**Deborah Lang** has developed an attractive and regularly updated Society blog which includes information about the history and heritage of Marrickville and has a wide following. There will be more about this in the Publications Report.

Our Society's financial position is sound as a result of all the voluntary work. Marrickville Council has continued to provide free-of-charge the Herb Greedy Hall for our regular meetings. The Council has also continued in information about heritage-related development applications within the Local Government Area.

**Deborah Lang** and I are our society's representatives on Marrickville Council's Heritage Promotions Committee which arranged the annual Marrickville Medal presentation in May at Marrickville Town Hall. The speaker that night was **Robin Walsh**, whose recent publication *In Her Own Words, the writings of Elizabeth Macquarie* has received wide acclaim. We congratulate all the prize winners including **Lorraine Beach** who received Council's 2013 Special Achievement Award for her contribution to the heritage of our LGA since joining our society in 1999.

Also representing the Society with the approach of the Anzac Centenary in 2015 is MHS member **David Bowron**, who is on the Marrickville Anzac Centenary Commemorative Committee.

*Marrickville, a past worth preserving* (MAPWP) is the volume of essays published by our Society. Marrickville Council purchased a copy of this work for each high school in the Marrickville LGA and they are being presented by a MHS member at each high school's assembly of students.

In the last year, our Society has been represented at: the Fanny Durack Centenary Picnic at Petersham Park, where we celebrated the first Australian to win an Olympic Swimming Gold Medal, at the Stockholm Olympic Games on 15 July 1912; the Marrickville Festival with its usual stall; the Annual Conference of the Royal Australian Historical Society held at the St George Rowing Club where **Lorraine Beach**, was presented with a Certificate of Achievement for her work in promoting the history of this part of Sydney; the Health and Wellbeing Forum at Marrickville Town Hall; the Open Weekend at Tempe House in April arranged by MHS member and founder of the Friends of Tempe House, **Ross Berry**; and the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of St Peters Anglican Church, Cooks River, the oldest building still-standing in the LGA.

Our speakers for the year were – **King Fong**: on the history of the Chinese people in Australia; **Laurel and Bob Horton**: an excellent presentation on St Peters with readings from the diaries of early settler Alexander Brodie Spark; **Robert Parkinson**: the Marrickville and Newtown picture theatres between 1898 and 2012; **Andrew Tink**: the life and times of Lord Sydney after whom our city was named; and **Clinton Johnston**, coordinator of History Services at Marrickville Library: items from the Marrickville Council History Collection and Archives 'From the Vault'.

Our excursions were to the following places: **The Big Dig** in The Rocks and visit to **The Rocks Discovery Museum**; the **Egyptian Room** at Petersham Masonic Place which includes bas-relief sculptures, some covered in pure gold-leaf – they are the work of sculptor Raynor Hoff and based on the 2000-year-old Egyptian 'Book of the Dead' in the British Museum; **Rookwood Cemetery** where the graves we inspected include those graves removed from the Petersham Cemetery in Lewisham when the railway was widened in the 1920s and later, the **Gallipoli Mosque** in Auburn, and the much-admired Japanese garden at **Auburn Botanic Gardens**; A bus trip to the two sites at Petersham and at Vaucluse associated with the 'Great Australian Patriot' **William Charles Wentworth**, his wife, the 'currency lass', **Sarah Cox**, and their children; we also visited the Wentworth Family Mausoleum and the Wentworth Memorial Church. Finally, our annual **Christmas Pot Luck Dinner** was at the home and garden of **Laurel and Bob Horton**.

The Heritage Watch program of the Society included numerous submissions to Marrickville Council and follow-ups relating to DAs involving heritage issues. Recently I rang a committee member who had spent a day and a half researching just one particular heritage site for presentation to Council on proposed redevelopments. Many times we do not recognise the enormous amount of work that members do which is not generally known outside the Committee.

In February 2013, a delegation of Society members visited the former Marrickville Hospital site with two key Council staff members; MHS will be a significant stakeholder in the future development of this important site, including the new library.

Marrickville Heritage Society is one of over 400 community groups affiliated to the Better Planning Network of NSW which is concerned with the new planning legislation presently proposed by the State Government. I am certain that there will be lots more about this in the near future. Our society is in the process of preparing a response to the State Government due this week, and I urge all MHS members to prepare their own letters in the hope that the new legislation will include appropriate protection of our built and environmental heritage.

Finally, we have been involved as a stakeholder in the future of the Winged Victory monument outside Marrickville Town Hall. The wheels of Marrickville Council are turning slowly but it has been decided the Doble/Kolozsy statue will be decommissioned due to the extent of its deterioration and that a new statue will be commissioned. Hot off the press is news that Council has allocated \$200,000 for the new statue.

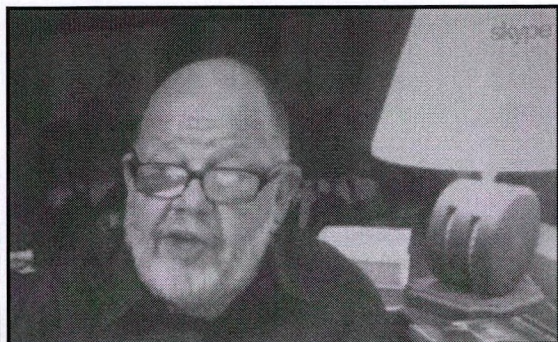
In April 2014 the Society celebrates 30 years of contribution to the municipality of Marrickville and the continuing recognition of heritage within our local government area. We look forward to another very successful year.

To conclude I have had a most enjoyable time as President of Marrickville Heritage Society and consider it an honour to be invited to stand for re-election.

**Geoff Ostling**

\* See MHS blog for full transcript of Geoff's report and US travelogue

*Skyping from Georgia, USA, MHS President Geoff Ostling delivered the president's annual report at our June AGM (photo: Richard Blair)*





## OUR LAST MEETING: Saturday 27 July Chrys Meader's Dulwich Hill history walk

It's hard to believe that the sea was ever visible from Dulwich Hill, but from the top floor of Dulwich Hill School of Visual Art & Design the sea can still be seen. Originally the sea was visible from ground level, hence the name Seaview Street, a short thoroughfare which also contains Dulwich Hill Library, Holy Trinity Anglican Church and two free car parks very handy to the shopping centre. The library was originally a cottage but from 1926 accommodated the Dulwich Hill School of Arts, and the honour board of life members still graces the wall of the library. The library, the first in Marrickville Municipality, was opened in 1947.

At Holy Trinity Church we met Father Dave Smith, rector since 1990, and highly regarded for his work with juveniles, using boxing ring therapy, an activity which, until recently, took place in the much-missed parish hall over the road, burnt down by vandals in April. That 1886 hall was the original church but was superseded in 1915 by the fine church on the corner of Seaview and Herbert Streets (architect: John Burcham Clamp). Among the dedicated church windows are those for Lieutenant Everard Digges La Touche, killed in Gallipoli in 1915, and Bombardier William Hilder, killed in France in 1917.

1st Dulwich Hill Scout group – still going strong in Lewisham Street – was founded in the early 1920s and named Dame Emma Dixon's Own. This was one of many local Scout and Guide groups that once existed. The Dixon family owned the nearby villa *Abergeldie*, that was demolished in the 1920s and replaced by the Abergeldie housing estate. Chrys told of other notable mansions, such as *Sefton Hall*, built by retailer Marcus Clark in 1889 and where he lived for over 20 years. All that remains are some balustrades on top of buildings in Marrickville Road (and in nearby Beach Road, subject of the Winter Trivial Answer in August 2008).

Sadly, a row of buildings in New Canterbury Road and adjoining Art Deco Interwar flats, *Silverdale*, corner of Seaview and Herbert Streets, may be demolished for a large block of units. We join Chrys in lamenting this increasing trend by opportunistic developers, likely to be exacerbated by the proposed planning legislation.

Chrys's tour was informative and entertaining, yet in over two hours we only walked about one kilometre. Chrys suggested MHS should conduct a walk along The Boulevarde, once one of Sydney's grandest streets. Looks like she's talked herself into that one!

Richard Blair

**Note:** Thanks to organisers Lorraine Beach and Mary Oakenfull; plus Ian Phillips (mobile sound system).

Due to the Society's large membership, parish pump matters rarely rate a mention in the newsletter but by way of editor's prerogative, congratulations are extended to David and Elva Blair (nee Pittendrigh) on their Golden Wedding anniversary. And the church? Holy Trinity Dulwich Hill on 10 August 1963.

*Domain, Sydney Morning Herald* (12-13 April 2013): The suburb of St Peters has a new residential record of \$2.15 million with the sale in April of *Claraville*, 21-23 Silver Street, which was the residence of well known artist, the late David Boyd OAM, who died in 2011.

## 1906 tragedy at Sefton Hall

On Chrys Meader's recent Dulwich Hill walk, there was a sad aspect to her narrative of Marcus Clark and his villa *Sefton Hall*. On Friday 19 January 1906 Edna Kingsbury (9) and Dorothy Gole (10) drowned in Marcus Clark's pool at *Sefton Hall*. Edna's father was Clark's friend and fellow retailer John Kingsbury. Two charming medallions, struck by Clark for the grieving families, depict images of the girls, one on either side. Edna's niece, MHS member Joy Lewis, inherited the Kingsbury medallion. Joy's nephew Brett Johnston, who was on the walk, produced the heirloom. These photos show Edna on the left; Dorothy on the right.



## Petersham horse trough restored

Marrickville LGA's many heritage items include three horse troughs – one steel (in John Street, Petersham); and two concrete: one in Camperdown Park, and the other on the corner of Trafalgar and Gordon Streets, Petersham. This horse trough is one of over 500 built and erected in Australia as a result of a trust set up by George and Annis Bills and dating from the 1930s. The troughs were of standard construction and included a separate trough for dogs. Weather, traffic pollution and various road and building works all contributed to significant deterioration over the years.

In June Marrickville Council handsomely restored the trough and moved it further back from the roadway. Compare the difference in these before (top) and after photos. We trust this valuable heritage item will continue to adorn this corner for many years. Council is to be congratulated on this achievement.

Mary Oakenfull





## Calendar of MHS Events

**Saturday 24 August**

**Ron Ringer: History of Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation**  
Details on front page

**Saturday 28 September**

**'Touring the Past' exhibition and talk by Richard White at Macleay Museum**

**Saturday 26 October**

**Christine Yeats: *Crossing the Blue Mountains?: Not just Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson***

**Saturday 23 November**

**Ross Berry: The works of John Verge**

**Concert at Holy Trinity Church, Dulwich Hill**  
**Corner Seaview & Herbert Streets**

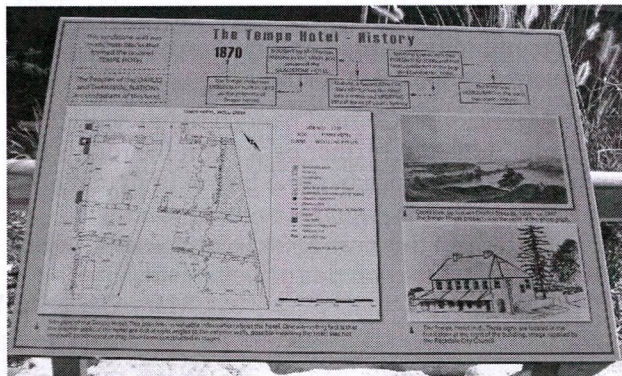
**Sunday 8 September 5 pm**

**Haydn's Little Organ Mass in B Flat Major**  
**Performed by Jubilate Singers**

The concert is a fundraiser for the new hall to replace the 1886 parish hall which was destroyed by fire in April. Pay at door but ticket price to be advised.

The Jubilate Singers is Holy Trinity's church choir, lead by Claire Chehade, and is open to anybody, of any belief or background, who wants to sing. Rehearsals on Monday evenings at Holy Trinity. Next rehearsal cycle to begin in October. For enquiries ring 9569 1255.

## Tempe Family Hotel site plaques



From Laurel Horton: 'One of the recently installed plaques on the corner of Princes Highway and Brodie Spark Drive, Wolli Creek, giving information on the **Tempe Family Hotel** site, whose foundation stones were uncovered last year during construction of Woolworth's carpark. An error on the history plaque claims the hotel was demolished in the early 20th century but a c. 1950 photo shows it still standing then' (image in September 2012 newsletter).

Vivien and Cliff Wherry represented MHS at Tempe House for the opening of the **St George Art Society** exhibition where a copy of *Marrickville: a past worth preserving* was donated for presentation to opening night guest speaker, **Dr John Yu AC**. The exhibition ran for a week. On Saturday 13 July the Society had use of a room to promote MHS. Thanks to **Iain, Lorraine and Richard**; also **Mitzi Tilley** from the art society and **Ross Berry** for their facilitation.

## Homersfield 2 St John St Lewisham at risk

The Google Earth photo below (ignore the circled 'A') shows *Homersfield*, a fully intact Victorian villa built in 1888 by Captain Thomas Rouse (believed to be related to the Rouse Hill House family), who served in both the 1885 Sudan Campaign and the Boer War. Rouse lived there until his death in 1911 and his family remained there long after. It was a boarding house from the mid-1960s. A DA has been lodged to demolish this fine looking house - inexplicably not heritage-listed - to build home units. It should be both listed and preserved. The exterior of the house retains its original features with chimneys intact, slate roof, bull-nosed verandah roof, decorative timber bargeboards, Victorian tiled verandah, curved windows and, as this photo shows, much else of worth.

It would be reprehensible for Council to allow demolition of this 125-year-old Victorian villa in such good condition - whose style is a rarity in the LGA - and with an associated pedigree in terms of its illustrious original owner.



The Marie-Louise Salon in Enmore (see the July newsletter) has sold for \$955,000. Watch this space!

**43 & 45 Perry Street Marrickville:** Two members, both called **Wendy** (Dyson and Valentine), knew the Winter Trivia Answer but advised us after the July newsletter had gone to print. **Wendy Valentine**, who lives out of Sydney, emailed:

'I was amazed to see a piece in the July newsletter which mentioned 45 Perry Street where I lived for my first four years or so with my parents and Grandmother Valentine who died there in October 1939. I'm sending a photograph of my mother, my twin sister and me on the front porch where my father has said we are 2 years 11 months which makes it September 1940. I drove past the house a couple of years ago and found it, like many others in the area, has been renovated, but the front porch tiles still seem to be the same. The carvings are intriguing.'



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**Treasurer** Diane 9588 4930  
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