

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



OUR NEXT MEETING

The works of John Verge:

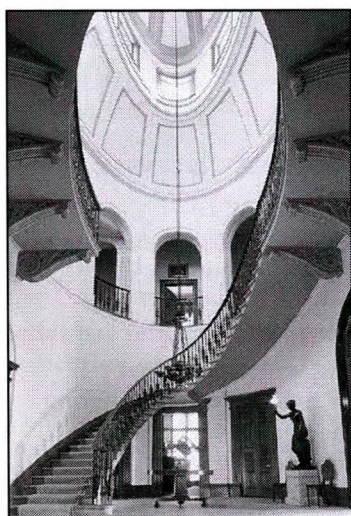
An illustrated talk with Ross Berry

Saturday 23 November 10.15 for 10.30 am

Herb Greedy Hall 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville

English-born architect **John Verge** (1782-1861) migrated in 1828 to New South Wales where he became one of the earliest and the most important architects of the Greek Revival in Australia. He brought a more comprehensive range of Regency style than contemporary architects and a greater level of design sophistication than previous architects.

Ross Berry's interest in Australian Colonial architecture stems from his time as a voluntary guide with the National Trust in the 1980s (Old Government House and Experiment Farm). His passion for the



works of John Verge began with his first visit to Elizabeth Bay House to view the amazing details and proportions. He became Hon. Historian for Verge's Tempe House in 2011; and assumed similar roles at Bronte House during the lease of Matt Handbury (nephew of Rupert Murdoch), and at the Graythwaite Estate, North Sydney, recently purchased by Ross's old school, Shore. He is a MHS member.

*The magnificent staircase of Elizabeth Bay House
(photo: Ross Berry)*

The new **Planning legislation** has passed through state parliament's Lower House. It needs to pass through the Upper House to become legislation.

Care to sponsor our next journal *Heritage 14*?

With good progress being made on the Society's next journal, *Heritage 14*, we invite members and others to show their support by becoming a sponsor. Please indicate 'sponsor' with your donation. All sponsors will be acknowledged in *Heritage 14*. All paid-up members will receive a complimentary copy of the journal. Articles include the Addison Road Army Depot (founded in 1913) and Newington College (founded in 1863) and much more. For direct deposit details see June newsletter, email MHS (see bottom back page) or ring Richard 9557 3823.

Winged Victory update

The future of the Doble **Winged Victory** was reviewed at the Council meeting on 15 October in the wake of a Mayoral Minute. This stemmed from an approach from the Assistant Director of the National Collection at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) to transfer ownership of the statue to the Australian War Memorial: 'They foresee this as an appropriate solution to ensure the statue's future preservation and display as part of the Memorial's National Collection. They see **Winged Victory** as nationally significant . . . and have indicated that the **Winged Victory** is envisaged as a major component they would like to display to conclude the Australian War Memorial's First World War galleries, which will reopen in November 2014.

'Transfer of ownership would involve Council passing their current rights in relation to the **Winged Victory** statue to the Australian War Memorial. Following a transfer of ownership, the Australian War Memorial would take physical custody of **Winged Victory** and implement a conservation strategy to ensure **Winged Victory's** restoration and ongoing care. They would also assume future responsibilities to protect the rights of both the original artist, Gilbert Doble, and Dr Alex Kolozsy, who undertook restoration works in 1988.'

Whilst the Society has advocated strongly to retain this statue in Marrickville - especially when Council officers had, in August, recommended the statue be disposed of in unacceptable ways - Council officers are adamant they have nowhere to put it. The future preservation of the statue seems best served by accepting this offer from the AWM. The statue would be appreciated by a larger audience and its historic association with the people and history of Marrickville would always be acknowledged.

If Council decides to transfer ownership the AWM should ensure the statue is on *permanent* show and displayed in a manner similar to Doble's intention. Council will determine the matter on 19 November.

Richard Blair

Annual Christmas Pot Luck Dinner Saturday 30 November 6 for 6.30 pm

This annual event will be back at the Petersham venue of the Society's inaugural such dinner in 1989. Is close to the station. Book with Lorraine on 9550 6608 (after hours) or email <lbeach@iprimus.com.au> to advise what food you will bring (nothing frozen please) and obtain address. BYO drinks.

Our Last Meeting: 26 October Crossing the Blue Mountains

We all know who first crossed the Blue Mountains, right? Our memories of primary school Social Studies are clear — Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson. But they were not the only three men involved. In this 200th anniversary year of the Blue Mountains crossing **Christine Yeats** gave us some fascinating insights into the details of the crossing. Based on her research of the State Archives she showed us how meticulous research of newspaper articles, letters, gazettes, reports to the Colonial Secretary, and even petitions to the Governor can bring to light a more rounded picture of this momentous event in the colony's history.

Numerous attempts were made to achieve a crossing. As early as 1792 the pressure to find quality farmland to feed the colony was mounting. Rumours and myths abounded. People thought China was just over the mountains. Aborigines were thought to have travelled via a north/south rather than an east/west route. Gregory Blaxland attempted to find a way up the Warragamba River by boat. William Patterson tried via the Grose River. George Bass tried in 1796, as did George Caley in 1802, 1803 and 1804. Even a French explorer, Francis Barraillier, tried going up the Burrorang Valley in 1802. And others tried too.

Blaxland's privately funded expedition with Lawson and Wentworth had no Aboriginal guides. The identity of one guide, James Byrne (variant spellings), was ascertained in 1992 by historian Joy Hughes. Christine's research in the Colonial Secretary's papers revealed the presence on the expedition of ex-convict Samuel Fairs, through a reference on a petition to the Governor for a pardon on his secondary sentence to Moreton Bay. Fairs later received a grant of land and lived to a good old age with his third wife in Tasmania. This brings to five those identified on this crossing.

George Evans led the first party through to Bathurst in late 1813, and reported excellent land for farming and grazing. In 1814 Governor Macquarie commissioned William Cox to build a road across the mountains. What a feat! It took only 27 weeks from late 1814 to the opening on 26 April 1815 when Governor Macquarie led a party of dignitaries over the 163 kilometres of 12-foot wide road across the mountains. The road building party consisted of eight free men, 30 convicts and some soldiers to guard them. No convicts died during construction; one soldier was a casualty. It was even noted that William Cox occasionally popped home down the mountains for a good dinner!

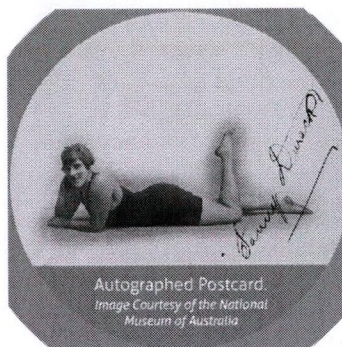
The RAHS has digitised all the primary sources relating to the crossing: map routes, reports, newspaper articles, letters, extracts from reports to the Colonial Secretary, and these, together with details of the railway crossing and the 1913 Anniversary celebrations, are available on the RAHS website. Our thanks go to Christine for such a fascinating look into the past.

Vilma Bell

Note: Retired surveyor **Graham Hunt** drew attention to the booklet *Footsteps in Time: a road across the mountains* and the associated project which re-marked 'the survey line established by Evans which Cox followed closely [and which] was originally conceived as part of the 1988 Bicentennial Celebrations.'

Fanny Durack Pool in Petersham reopens

On 15 July 2012 the Society participated in festivities at Petersham Park to honour the centenary of Fanny Durack's Olympic Gold Medal at the 1912 Stockholm Olympics (see August 2012 newsletter). Petersham Swimming Pool opened in 1962 and in 1999 was renamed the Fanny Durack Aquatic Centre, at the suggestion of historian and playwright Mary Haire, whose play *Dive Divas* had not long before been performed at both this and the Annette Kellerman pools. It is ironic that Australia's two most prominent female swimmers of their age had Marrickville links. The Petersham pool and environs have recently had a complete makeover and the reopening on 27 October (Fanny's birthday) attracted over 1500 people.



Just as there is a series of interpretative fixtures at the Annette Kellerman Aquatic Centre, Enmore Park, 17 pictorial and biographical panels have been installed outside the pool at Petersham. Well done, Council!

Waterfall General (Garrawarra) Cemetery

Around a century ago, thousands of Australians (including, in South Australia, my grandmother and two teenage aunts) died during the tuberculosis (TB) epidemic which swept the country. South of Sydney was Waterfall Sanatorium and between 1909 and 1949 over 2000 TB patients were buried in nearby Waterfall General (Garrawarra) Cemetery. At its peak, between 1909 and 1928, there averaged 100 burials per year.

After the cemetery closed in 1949 it was not maintained and, in 1967, along with other local cemeteries, was placed under the care of Wollongong City Council, but remained neglected such that the site almost completely returned to bushland.

After public pressure Wollongong CC has conducted research into the cemetery assisted by consultants and local historians. A draft Conservation Management Plan has been prepared and community input is now sought for the future management of the site, which is not accessible to the public. I commend the evocative 15-minute film, *Not forgotten: the story of Waterfall General Cemetery* which is on YouTube (Google title). Anyone wishing to seek or convey information can email <jthompson@wollongong.nsw.gov.au>.

Thanks to member **George Gibbons** for drawing this to the Society's attention.

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'Lewisham Stones' at Rookwood

Those who went on the MHS Rookwood Cemetery tour in March will recall our visit to the 'Lewisham Stones' (relocated from the extinct Petersham Cemetery). The December newsletter will report on our approach to Catholic Cemeteries & Crematoria with the view to having a plaque installed at the site.

Richard Blair

Proposed sale of the former Department of Lands building, 23 Bridge Street, Sydney

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on 2 October 2013 that the historic Department of Lands building in Bridge Street, Sydney, designed by architect James Barnet and listed on the State Heritage Register, has been earmarked for future sale and redevelopment as apartments or a hotel: 'The building's ornamental facades in Renaissance Revival-style, are richly decorated with classical motifs and statuettes, and include statues of explorers George Bass, John Oxley and William Lawson.'

MHS member **Graham Hunt** emailed the Society the letter of objection (reproduced below) to the sale sent to Premier Barry O'Farrell by the Institution of Surveyors NSW Inc. Graham has written to the Sydney's lord mayor and city councillors objecting to the sale of the Lands and Education Department buildings, which both appear on the City of Sydney Heritage Planning Scheme.



Lands Dept building (ph: Dean Sewell, SMH, 2/10/13)

Letter to Premier from Graeme Stewart, President, Institution of Surveyors NSW Inc.:

'I am writing on behalf of the NSW Institution of Surveyors NSW to express our deep concern over the proposed sale of the Lands Department building and to urge you to abandon this idea.

'This building has been described as "The Jewel in the Crown" which is one of the most significant of the iconic public buildings in Sydney. Given its place in the history and development of NSW it is a monument to the orderly, lawful development of the state and this country from the 19th century to the present. Much of this history is exhibited around its exterior walls, and in the interior. Its sale would, in our eyes, be equivalent to the privatisation of Bondi Beach, or of the precinct around Circular Quay and the Opera House, and would be a huge loss to the people of this state.

'We feel that to sell it to private interests in order to help raise revenue for the state would be most short-sighted, and, like selling the crown jewels, would mean a loss forever, as a public treasure, to future generations. We therefore ask you to reconsider this proposal and to abandon this idea to sell this significant and beautiful building.'

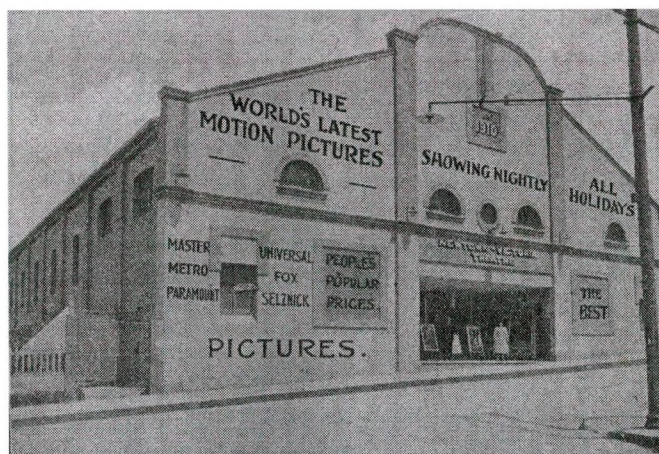
Graham Hunt further advised that the Planning Bill, once passed in the Upper House, will affect any Crown Land. The deputy premier recently revoked the notification for Public Reserve purposes shown on the NSW Government Title for the Lands Department Building. This means the land owned by the state government can be sold or be subject to a 99-year lease for redevelopment. The National Trust of Australia (NSW) and Sydney Living Museums (formerly Historic Houses Trust) have expressed concern about the possible sale of the Chief Secretaries, Education Department and Lands Department buildings.

Graham also contacted Independent Member for Sydney Alex Greenwich, who made representations to the Hon. Andrew Constance, MP, Minister for Finance and Services about the possible sale expressing constituent concerns re the possible risk to heritage features of the building, such as significant statues, if the property is sold. He wrote: 'I understand that a Conservation Management Plan will be prepared and conditions imposed on the sale to protect heritage features. My constituents ask that this Plan be made public to ensure that concerned community members understand the protections in place.'

Graham Hunt is commended for his efforts on this matter. More than ever the state's heritage is at risk!

Another old theatre demolished

Theatre historian **Robert Parkinson** has advised of the recent demolition of what was once advertised as the: 'most up-to-date Picture Theatre in the Commonwealth' (according to the Newtown mayor at the opening ceremony of this theatre on 29 September 1913, as recorded in Robert Parkinson's *Picture Shows in the Marrickville and Newtown Districts 1898-2012*, p. 100). This was the **Victoria Theatre** in Erskineville Road (on the corner of Angel Street), Erskineville. As outlined in Bob's book, it was a picture theatre until 1929 when it became Newtown [boxing] Stadium for six years before reverting to a cinema in 1936 under the new name Hub No. 2. It had a chequered career until finally closing as a cinema in 1950, after which it became the Newtown Police-Citizens Boys Club, which operated for some decades, with all traces of its cinematic past being removed. Jeff Fenech was among the notable boxers who trained there.



Victoria Theatre: 1910 was the year original owner AT Fleay launched his open-air picture show on the site (from p. 67, *Newtown Diamond Jubilee Official Souvenir 1862-1922*)

Calendar of MHS Events

Saturday 23 November

The works of John Verge with Ross Berry

Details on front page

Saturday 30 November

Annual Christmas Pot Luck Dinner

Details on front page

Saturday 23 February

Alexander Brodie & Frances Maria Spark of

Tempe House: talk by Robert Brodie Spark

Trades Hall tour with Neale Towart

Thursday 28 November (am)

(meeting time provided on booking)

Marrickville Heritage Society members only

Bookings essential as numbers limited to 20

Ring Col 9559 7767 or 0401 719 124

or email <colinhesse@gmail.com>

377 Sussex St (near Goulburn St): meet at atrium café

Optional yum cha afterwards

The Sydney Trades and Labour Council was formed in 1871. In 1883 was the first fully constituted meeting of the Trades Hall & Literary Institute. The Trades Hall building was constructed between 1895 and 1916. The Sydney Trades Hall is recognised by the State Heritage Register as an item of state significance.

Addison Road is talking

- Do you remember when the Addison Road Community Centre was an army depot?
- Did you enlist or work there? Do you remember the horses or the dances in the drill hall?
- Were you an anti-conscription demonstrator at the gates?
- Did you arrive in 1976, as one of the first ethnic groups at the community centre?
- Or maybe you lived over the fence and saw it all?

Then we want to talk to you! If you have stories, memories or photographs let us know.

Contact the Talking History Project by:

email <addisonhistory@iinet.net.au>; phone 9569 7633; or write to Talking History Project, 142 Addison Road Marrickville NSW 2204.

Council's final free rainwater harvesting workshop for the year is on Wednesday 11 December (6-9 pm) and is compulsory for anyone applying for the rebate; it provides detailed information on choosing, installing and maintaining the most suitable rainwater tank system, plus everything you need to know about claiming rebates. Booking essential: 9335 2222. Held in Newtown South, location is confirmed on booking.

All workshops and rebates are funded by ratepayers through Council's Stormwater Service Charge.

Sydney Rare Book Fair

Roundhouse University UNSW

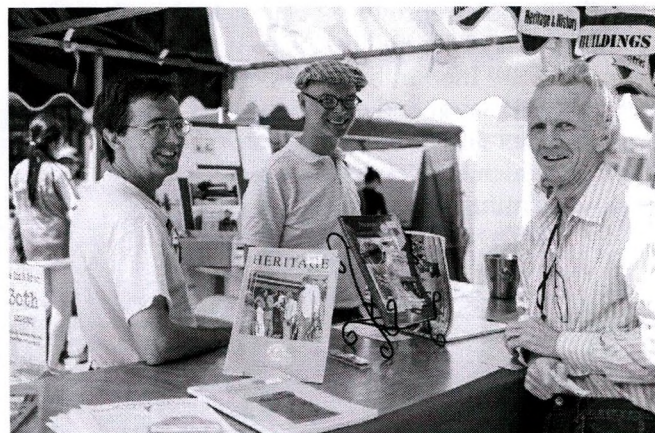
8-10 November (Fri 6-9 pm, Sat & Sun 10-5)

<www.anzaab>

Marrickville Festival - 20 October

A sunny day greeted festival goers for what was quieter than in previous years. However, the Society still managed good sales, including more than 50 local history walks, whilst we sold out of the very popular *Pictorial History of Marrickville*. We sold a lot of Diana pottery (kindly donated by members Lynne Greenwood and Ellie Zinsmeester), which drew a lot of interest. More than ever we had queries on: 'how do I research the history of my house?', and we were able to offer a lot of assistance. We again ran a raffle for one year's free membership. Thank you to Deborah, Iain, Ian, Lorraine, Robert and Scott for helping on the day.

Iain Carolin



From left: Iain Carolin, Scott MacArthur and Ian Phillips at the festival MHS stall (photo: Marrickville Council)

In brief

The 1858 Tempe villa **Nelson Lodge** (aka Milford Haven, formerly Leinster Hall), which is listed on the State Heritage Register, is to be auctioned on 23 November. A B&B since 1988, about 60 members visited there with Laurel Horton in March 2002.

Council's reversal of its earlier decision to close the **Newtown Market** is a victory for commonsense.

Margaret Sinclair, who has for many years collected used stamps for charity, is looking for a successor and trusts we are not stuck. Can anyone interested please ring or email editor (contact details below)?

We thank **Ted Green** for his generous donation to MHS of Australian and local history books for sale.

From member **Beverly Martin**: 'Growing up I lived in Illawarra Road Marrickville. My sister Mary and I usually caught the "toast rack" tram to school but on the rare occasion when we walked we had to go past St Brigid's Girls' School, and the kids would sing out: "Catholics, Catholics ring the bell; while all the Protestants go to hell!" But we got back at them when the Catholic kids went past Marrickville West school and we sang out in reverse!'

Members are reminded of the website **SydneyTalks** <sydneytalks.com.au>, which publicises a diverse range of talks across Sydney, including those of MHS. The site is co-run by a MHS member.

President Geoff 9568 3029

Heritage Watch Scott 0416 152 501

Newsletter Editor Richard 9557 3823