

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



The President Geoff Ostling and executive committee wish everyone a joyful and healthy Festive Season and a Happy New Year.

Marrickville Council has voted unanimously for a Heritage Listing for the now famous 'I have a dream' mural in King Street Newtown. A far cry from its first appearance in 1991 when it was declared illegal.

## Laurel & Robert honoured by RAHS

Laurel and Robert Horton were awarded with a Certificate of Achievement at the recent annual RAHS conference (report on back page). Their citation reads:

'For their ongoing and valuable contribution to the Marrickville Heritage Society and in their research, recording, preserving and promoting the history of St Peters, Sydenham and Tempe over the past 25 years'.

(Photo: RAHS)



## Welcome to new members

Ben Raue, Sandra Ryan, both of Dulwich Hill; Mignon & John Wegner (rejoined), Enmore; Linda Crupi, Suzanne Gatt, Julie Mackenzie, Jane & Peter Sinclair, Alexandra Wrathall, all of Marrickville; LJ Hooker Real Estate, Marrickville/Dulwich Hill; Megan Grant, Debra Kerr, both of Newtown; Celia Berry, Pat Bruner (rejoined), both of Stanmore; Murray Sinclair, Sydenham; John Jones, Tempe; Ona Maksvytis, Earlwood; Craig McIntosh, Grays Point; Mark Broderick, Miranda; Paul Casey, Narellan Vale.

## Cooks River foreshore plans

A Marrickville Council planner wants to consult with the Society and other relevant community groups regarding a Plan of Management and Master Plan for 2.5km of waterfront along Cooks River to include all LGA parks between Kendrick Park and Mackey Park. The proposed changes will be implemented over a ten year period. The planner wishes to understand more about the history and places of importance along the river and to ensure these plans meet various needs and retain important heritage elements.

Most commendable though a bit rich when we have a current DA to replace the historic Beaman Park footbridge near Marrickville Golf Course. Whilst there may be sound reasons for a new bridge, surely conserving the Dorman, Long Co steel components should be essential apropos 'important heritage elements', and remembering the significant links of Dorman, Long Co with the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

## Fond memories of Duncraggan

Everywhere are examples of buildings that have been (to quote a book title) 'demolished for the public good'! Examples abound in the Marrickville LGA with *Reiby House*, Newtown in the 1960s; Dulwich Hill and Petersham post offices (1970s); the lamentable illegal destruction of Rose's Emporium on Parramatta Road Petersham in 1986, and in the following year the illegal demolition of *Brockleigh* in Illawarra Road Marrickville. The Society was vocal in decrying these two dastardly deeds.

And on it goes into the current century with, in 2002, the 1850s cottage *Prospect Villa* in Croydon Street Petersham being demolished, having been inexplicably overlooked for a heritage listing by authorities. Just last year we lost the Sydenham station master's cottage in the face of strong local community opposition; and this year *Homersfield* (1888) in St John Street Lewisham and *Sunset Lodge* (formerly *The Fold*), long owned by the Salvation Army, in George Street Marrickville. This was particularly galling in that the first DA - which was refused - would have apparently retained the very attractive front of that building.

In 2012 a Joint Regional Planning Panel allowed *Duncraggan*, better known as the J Milne house in Crescent Lane Newtown, to be demolished to make way for apartments. The RTA indicated that *Duncraggan*, which stood behind TJ Andrews, was a 'danger to the lines', notwithstanding that this singular house had stood cheek by jowl with the railway lines since the 1920s!

(cont'd p. 3)

## Our 25 October meeting: Matt Murphy on colonial era Newtown & the Ejectment case

As a history student, Matt Murphy was puzzled by the paucity of mentions of what came to be known as the Newtown Ejectment Case; his 2013 publication, *Weight of evidence* is the product of his curiosity. Matt found in the archival materials and newspaper reports a strange, but true, tale indeed. Nicholas Devine (or Divine), a Second Fleeter, was granted a total of 210 acres (80 ha) in the 1790s, an area which covered modern Erskineville and the eastern side of King Street Newtown. He called his estate Burrin Farm and lived where the Rose of Australia Hotel stands today. The land was acquired by his assigned convict servant, Bernard Rochford through a forged will. Rochford proceeded to sell this highly desirable land close to the city to some of Sydney's wealthiest and most influential people.

Devine's family in Ireland chose his grandnephew to contest ownership of the Burrin Estate. Legal proceedings stretched over nine years and the case, initially lost by John Devine, was heard on appeal in London, the judges acknowledging the verdict seemed 'against the weight of evidence'; a key submission had been the fact that Rochford, as a convict, could not buy, own, sell or inherit property. The retrial in 1857 went for 30 days and was the biggest case of its time. The decision again went against John Devine but the defendants knew they would almost certainly lose if the case was taken back to London. In 1859 and 'without fanfare' the matter ended in a settlement for John Devine for an undisclosed amount.

The Society thanks Matt for his entertaining and informative talk. *Weight of evidence* can be bought from the Society or ordered through bookshops. For more details, the following websites will be helpful:

<[www.sydneyarchives.info/essays-a-histories/25-newtown-ejectment-case](http://www.sydneyarchives.info/essays-a-histories/25-newtown-ejectment-case)>;

<[adb.anu.edu.au/biography/divine-nicholas-1979](http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/divine-nicholas-1979)>.

Jan Garaty

The 'holey dollar' stolen from the State Library in early August (reported in September newsletter) was later found when police arrested a man who had it sitting on a TV cabinet. In court he pleaded guilty to charges of larceny and goods in custody.

Marrickville Council arranged a ceremony to mark Remembrance Day on Tuesday 11 November at the World War I Memorial in Camperdown Park. Auntie Phemie did the Welcome to Country. MHS members joined others from the RSL, local churches and schools; the mayor, councillors, council staff and local citizens. Wreaths were laid and a cutting from a Gallipoli Lone Pine was planted.

The soldier on the memorial looks forlorn without his rifle (stolen some time ago), but it is understood Council will soon put the serviceman at ease once more with a new rifle, believed to be a Lee Enfield .303.

## Our 22 November meeting: Tour of Callan Park site

On Saturday 22 November 32 MHS members and friends gathered at Callan Park, Rozelle for a tour of the buildings and grounds in two groups led by Friends of Callan Park stalwarts Hall Greenland and Roslyn Burge. Callan Park (between 1976 and 2008 called Rozelle Hospital) consists of Garry Owen House (c. 1840), Kirkbride Block (c. 1880-85), Broughton Hall (c. 1842) and ancillary buildings in beautiful surroundings on the edge of Iron Cove. John Ryan Brenan built Garry Owen House on land purchased from the original grantees; it is now the NSW Writers Centre. Here we learnt about some of the famous people who had spent time here in care such as JF Archibald, Louisa and Henry Lawson.

In 1879, Colonial Architect James Barnett, together with Inspector of the Insane, Dr Frederick Norton Manning, built the Kirkbride Block, using 80% local sandstone. Built for 666 patients; by 1900 it housed 1,000 patients. Onsite are: a water reservoir, which features a Venetian clock tower with a ball to indicate the water level; a courtyard; men's workshop and hall with impressive stained glass windows. Sydney College of the Arts (University of Sydney) now occupies most of the Kirkbride Complex.

Broughton Hall was offered to the government by William and Frederick Langdon – timber merchants who built mansions in Marrickville LGA – for WWI casualties. It was used for mental health purposes until 1978. Fire severely damaged the outside but some interior features are apparently in good condition.

Callan Park's grounds have 190 tree species and many rare types of fauna. We saw the Oriental Garden with its attractive red Japanese style bridge; the head gardener's cottage; bomb shelters; and areas formerly used for a dairy, vegetable gardens and sport, including swimming pool and cricket pitch. The late activist Dr Jean Lennane was very proud of a newspaper article describing a cricket match between 'Lunatics and Police' which the Lunatics won.

The Friends of Callan Park continue to lobby government for a permanent plan to preserve this important precinct for the community. We thank Roslyn and Hall for their illuminating tours.

Mary Oakenfull

Ted Green called this the 'fast' group (led by Hall Greenland) on the tour of Callan Park (photo: Garry Oates); Roslyn Burge led the more leisurely group.



(from p. 1)

The June 2011 newsletter reproduced a 2003 article by Lynette Walker, great granddaughter of John Milne. 'J Milne' was carved into the house's pediment. Now we have heard from **Craig McIntosh**, who is not related to the Milnes, but whose family had a strong link with the house. Craig wrote:

'I have come across the Marrickville Heritage Society website and, more particularly, the posting regarding *Duncraggan* and sadly, its demolition. My grandparents Alfred Percy (Piercy) McIntosh and Minnie McIntosh lived in what we commonly referred to as *The Shaft*, i.e. *Duncraggan*. My grandfather was some sort of inspector for the Metropolitan Water Sewerage & Drainage Board, as it was then known, and *The Shaft* was a works depot. The name may have come from the Water Board building and enclosure situated

adjacent to the house. 'My father and mother lived at *The Shaft* with my grandparents after their marriage, and after I was born in 1949, we continued living there before Mum, Dad and I moved to a house at Earlwood. My Dad died in 2006 and has left a written record of his life. In relation to *Duncraggan* he wrote: "[it] was a remarkable home; it was no more than a few feet



from the main train line to Strathfield and upstairs were 3 large bedrooms, all big enough to have a party in".

'I can remember as a child that there was a Coral Tree in the side garden and we used to make "Supermen" out of its flowers. When my grandfather died in 1958, my grandmother left *Duncraggan* to live in Earlwood. My mother is still alive at 92. I am something of the family genealogist; I often reminisce with Mum and have done a bit of oral recording of her memories.

'My last job before I retired in 2012 was at Ashfield, to which I used to travel by train from the city. I was always craning my neck as the train went past *Duncraggan* to have a stickybeak. I was shattered, to say the least, when one day I saw the 'destroyers' preparing for its demolition. I simply could not believe that this house, which had been built by J Milne, was to eventually disappear.

'There is a further sad link to the property as Minnie's funeral took place at the former TJ Andrews funeral parlour in Enmore Road Newtown, which is now also part of the *Duncraggan* redevelopment. Whilst I know of the other J Milne house nearby, our family is appalled at the loss of *Duncraggan*. The only positive for me is that I have my memories of *Duncraggan* (*The Shaft*), and they are certainly very fond ones.'

\* \* \*

We thank **Craig McIntosh** (who has since become a MHS member) for sharing his story. As described in the April and June newsletters in 2011, *Duncraggan* was built in a street which ceased to exist when extra railway lines were laid in the 1920s. Losing such valued buildings cautions us to remain ever more vigilant.

**Richard Blair**



Iain Carolin, Deborah O'Donnell & Robert Hutchinson at the MHS Marrickville Festival stall (ph: Marrickville Council)

## Marrickville Festival

The Society's flagship event for public exposure – on Sunday 19 October – has come and gone for another year. Much to the committee's surprise we signed up six new members and more than doubled our sales of last year for what was a very busy day in splendid weather. There was the usual line of enquiries on our local history; of particular interest to festival goers was a notice board with local history pictures from the State Library. Thank you Deborah, Iain, Ian, Lorraine and Robert for their help on the day.

**Iain Carolin**

## End of Starr-Bowkett Society

According to the Australian Postal History website: 'A Starr-Bowkett Society is a cooperative, non-profit financial institution that provides interest-free loans to its members and operates on the principle of mutual self-help as espoused by Dr Thomas Edward Bowkett in 1843 . . . In 1862 Richard B Starr made some changes to Bowkett's scheme [which] made the scheme more palatable to potential subscribers.' Popular in Australia from the late 19th century to the mid 20th century, they are all but non-existent today. The website explains how the system has worked and how the sole survivor had continued to operate at 43 Enmore Road Newtown, corner of Station Street, under the name The Newtown & Enmore Starr-Bowkett Statewide Co-operative Society No. 25 Ltd.

However, it was 'no longer taking on new members and only remains to pay out the existing pool of subscribers.' The building was recently sold and it seems the end is nigh for the last of these societies.

(photo: Richard Blair)



**Saturday 28 February 2015: Adaptive reuse and preservation of Brisbane City Hall**  
with Scott MacArthur. Details in February newsletter

## Launch of *Heritage 14* Exhibition

On Saturday 15 November at Marrickville Library the exhibition of the articles in *Heritage 14* was launched by Marrickville Mayor Mark Gardiner. Mark spoke of his love for local history and commended Marrickville Heritage Society on its efforts. Journal editor Richard Blair congratulated History Services Coordinator Clinton Johnston for his initiative in showcasing these journal articles, for the first time ever, by way of this exhibition. Richard thanked Aleem Aleemullah and Karyn McLeod for creating a good balance between text and images. Article authors provided most of the text. Three authors spoke: Julie Bishop (Camperdown house history), Sue Castrique (Addison Road Army Camp) and David Roberts (Newington College).

MHS President Geoff Ostling presented the Mayor, on behalf of Council, with a silver trowel (cited in Ann O'Connell's article), originally presented to brickmaker Rupert Cook in 1915 on the laying of a foundation stone. The trowel has finally returned to Marrickville. Also donated were: (a) a mounted photograph of St Peters Municipal Council in 1921 which had been donated to MHS by June Dennis (nee Seymour), daughter of Margaret Robertson, Assistant Clerk, who appears in the photo; and (b) the Call to Arms certificate presented to MHS member Michael Skennar in 1945. These items are depicted on the inside covers of the Society's journal

## 2014 RAHS State History Conference

This year's conference on 25-26 October was held in the historic Southern Highlands town of Mittagong, an aboriginal word for 'high mountain'; the town was known as New Sheffield for a short time in 1865. The conference theme was 'Moving History' and talks centred around the settlement of Mittagong, the Anzacs, the efforts of local societies to improve their exhibitions, and archives delving into the history of roads. The Lesley Muir Address delivered by Bill Gammage, 'The First Anzac Days in Australia and New Zealand' was most absorbing.

Once again, research, conservation and recording of material was examined, demonstrating their importance to a local community and diverse ways of making this material available to the public. A discussion on good governance developments revealed that all societies need to implement a program of reviewing their constitution and policies regularly as rules pertaining to the running of a society often change. The MHS committee will follow this up.

Congratulations are extended to Laurel and Robert Horton, long term members of MHS, who were nominated by the Society and awarded a Certificate of Achievement (see photo on front page). One of several tours was to the ruins of the Fitzroy Iron Works, set up after the discovery of iron ore in 1833. With Ian Jack as guide the tour took in the preserved ruins of the rolling-mill works with extensive signage in the basement of a carpark and the site of the nearby blast furnace.

Iain Carolin

*Under the Colony's Eye: Gentlemen and Convicts on Cockatoo Island 1839-1869* by Sue Castrique (Anchor Books, Australia, 2014; RRP \$34.95) was launched at History House, RAHS in Sydney on 26 November by Geoff Bailey, Executive Director, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust. It tells 'the story of the penal settlement on Cockatoo Island, the struggle to build a dock and an autocratic superintendent who turned the island into a secret fight club with his bare-knuckle prize-fighting convicts.'

Sue is a MHS member whose article on the Addison Road Army Camp appeared in the Society's latest journal, *Heritage 14*.

*Marrickville: A past worth preserving*, published by MHS, is a book of local history essays now only \$30 plus postage (free delivery in LGA on request). Direct deposit info from Diane (02) 9588 4930 or by email <diane.mccarthy@optusnet.com.au>. Cheques and money orders to Marrickville Heritage Society.

## Shopkeepers of Newtown

Photographs by Nic Bezzina

Exhibition Galleries, State Library of NSW  
Till 10 May 2015. <[www.sl.nsw.gov.au](http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au)>

The quirky and eclectic personality of inner city Newtown is captured in a vibrant collection of 50 photo-portraits. Among the colourful shopkeepers are fetish fashion creators, food designers and retro treasure merchants, accompanied by revealing stories from behind the counter.

## Summer Trivia Question

Where in the LGA is this sign for wood, coal and coke (which doesn't refer to a brand of soft drink)? There is a current DA for the building on which this appears. It is hoped this age-old sign can be conserved in what is proposed. Richard 9557 3823 or email below.



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