

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



## Our July Meeting

**Tracking down trachyte in Sydney CBD: a guided walk with Robert and Noel Irving**  
**Saturday 25 July 9.45 for 10 am**

Meet at John Dunmore Lang statue, Wynyard Park, near Wynyard Station. Walk is about 1-2 km long, ending near Wynyard and takes about two hours. Notes provided on the day. MHS members only & numbers strictly limited, so book early. People turning up without booking may miss out if quota is reached. Check close to the day if there is trackwork and allow extra travel time if need be. Advise if you have to cancel. Bookings Richard on 9557 3823 or <heritagesociety@optusnet.com.au>.



Left: Trachyte has been used for kerbs and gutters since the 1880s. Right: This 1925 building in George Street has a classical façade at street level, faced in polished trachyte.  
(Source: Sydney's hard rock story, p. 12, p. 13)

Trachyte is one of the most attractive building stones: abundant, yet hardly known by most people. Last year, *Sydney's hard rock story: the cultural heritage of trachyte* by Robert Irving, Ron Powell and Noel Irving was published and won for the authors the 2015 National Trust Research and Investigation Heritage Award.

Now, architectural historian **Robert Irving** and **Noel Irving** will lead a guided walk in Sydney CBD to see examples of the use of trachyte. The walk will look at some of the many architectural, decorative, artistic and utilitarian examples of this beautiful material.

## Welcome to new MHS members

Judith O'Connor, Dulwich Hill; Rowena Finnane & John Hadley, Enmore; Fay Stevens, Marrickville; Jean Inglis, Newtown; Frederico Fraga-Matos, Petersham; Sharry Hu, Croydon Park; Keith Anderson, South Penrith.

Our treasurer reports many members have renewed promptly and thanks members who have made donations and/or expressed appreciation in notes sent with renewals. However, a \$25 payment by direct deposit was made on 13 June; and one of \$20 was made on 29 June through Sydney Credit Union: in each case no surname was given. If either may be yours please ring Diane 9588 4930 or email Society (address back page) to clarify.

## Our August Meeting

**Recollecting my life and change in Sydney's inner west with Sylvia Hale**  
**Saturday 22 August 10.15 for 10.30 am**  
**Herb Greedy Hall, 79 Petersham Road Marrickville**

Although **Sylvia Hale** was only two years old when her parents left Newtown for Arncliffe, their King Street, Newtown cake shop and two years' schooling in Erskineville meant she became well acquainted with the area in the 1940s-1950s. In the 1970s, she and her husband, Roger Barnes, established printing and publishing companies (including Hale & Iremonger) from premises in Marrickville, Petersham and Erskineville. In 1995 and 1999 Sylvia was elected to Marrickville Council representing the No Aircraft Noise Party. In 2001 she joined The Greens and was elected to the Upper House of the NSW Parliament in 2003. Sylvia lives in Petersham in a heritage-listed house she and Roger bought in 1976.

Sylvia's talk will cover her recollections of living and working in Sydney's inner west and the changes she has witnessed over the last five or six decades.

## Our Last Meeting: AGM 27 June Who's who on the new committee

President **Geoff Ostling** welcomed about 40 members to the 31st Annual General Meeting at Herb Greedy Hall and presented his annual report (see inside) which was followed by reports from Treasurer **Diane McCarthy**, Publications editor **Richard Blair** and Heritage Watch convenor **Scott MacArthur**. After questions, **Lorraine Beach** was presented with Life Membership of the Society.

**Geoff** stepped down from both the presidency and committee; **Jan Garaty** also stepped down. All committee positions were declared vacant and **Bill Tarrant** presided as Returning Officer. There were 12 nominations for 12 positions and the following were elected: president, **Ross Berry**; vice presidents, **Scott MacArthur** and **Deborah O'Donnell**; treasurer, **Diane McCarthy**; secretary, **Mary Oakenfull**; assistant secretary, **Iain Carolin**; committee members, **Rod Aanensen**, **Lorraine Beach**, **Richard Blair**, **Valmai Bland**, **Robert Hutchinson** and **Ian Phillips**.

In the absence of our new president, Scott invited members to stay for lunch, prepared by ace caterers **Diane, Lorraine, Mary and Robert**.

**Richard Blair**

\* \* \* \*

Members are advised that the MHS newsletter will continue to appear every second month for now. Publications report in September newsletter.

## Villas at 182-186 Livingstone Road Marrickville in dire straits

A majority of Marrickville Councillors at their meeting in May voted to approve the demolition of these three Livingstone Road Victorian villas 'if a future developer seeks to do this'.

In response to our submissions to Council deploring this proposal MHS has been approached by two councillors seeking to explain and comment on this decision. Councillor Victor Macri (Independent) voted against the proposal, citing many of the concerns previously noted by MHS, including demolition being approved without details of an appropriate new development, and how this sets a horrible precedent for other developers in the area. Councillor Sylvie Ellsmore (Greens) voted to approve the demolition with a condition that:

the DA consent is conditional on the broader project going ahead. That is, unless the more significant old Marrickville Hospital and [old] Nurses Quarters are adaptively reused for the library and community hub as planned, the DA will lapse.

This at least seems to delay the Council-sanctioned demolition of the villas, and perhaps leaves time for the community to lobby for a better outcome.

But there is a malign misconception at the heart of the current justification for the demolition of the villas. The 'heritage' argument for their demolition is that the overall heritage values of the *whole* old Marrickville Hospital site are not diminished by the villas' demolition, as the 'main' heritage items are retained. However, as Cllr Ellsmore explicitly states:

The proposal has never been that the cottages remain in public hands like the other heritage buildings, but instead were on the parts of the site which were to be sold.

Leaving aside the fact that the Local Environment Plan, the site Masterplan and the Conservation Management Plan *all* require the retention of the Victorian villas, it is obvious that should the land containing the villas be separated off from the main hospital site and sold, then the villas will cease to be one of several heritage items on a large site, but the only heritage items on a small site. The claim that only a part of the subject site's heritage items are being demolished will not be sustainable.

The impetus for this unseemly haste to destroy the villas is, apparently, to guarantee the financial viability of the project. A recent community meeting was advised that in the current real estate market Council could expect \$4.5 million dollars from the sale of the villas, with their heritage orders intact. As Council paid less than half that amount for the whole hospital site over 20 years ago, the project would appear to have a sound financial foundation without demolishing the villas.

**In the face of discredited financial modelling and planning sophistry, Council must respect its own master-planning and heritage controls, and preserve the Livingstone Road villas.**

Scott MacArthur



*Side of 36 Kent Street Newtown, recently sold by long term co-owner John Shipton, the father of Julian Assange. Snapped by Peter Cousens in the early 2000s, it is surely among Sydney's quirkiest houses.*

### Future assured for Callan Park precinct

For years The Friends of Callan Park have lobbied the state government for a permanent plan to preserve the important Callan Park precinct in Rozelle and prevent moves for the site to be sold and redeveloped. On 4 June the state parliament passed a motion to implement a Callan Park Trust, finalise a Callan Park Master Plan and develop a sustainable long term funding model to secure protection of Callan Park in perpetuity. Several Society members undertook a guided walking tour of the site last November.

### Frances Charteris fondly remembered

John Chappell writes to the editor: 'Frances Charteris (whose obituaries were in our April-May newsletter and in Council's Winter *Marrickville Matters*) is one of the finest women I have ever had the privilege to meet and certainly the most competent. I used to ride my bike to Marrickville Library until 1957 when Petersham Library opened in Gordon Street. You will recall the furore when Council resumed part of *Rohilla*, the Johnston family's stronghold, to build that library. I can still picture this tall figure bending to assist young folk like me when Marrickville Library was upstairs in the front of Marrickville Town Hall. Miss Charteris was one of those women who put their cardigans over their shoulders with her arms free.'

### Winter Trivia Question

Where in the present day Marrickville LGA was this building located a century or so ago? Ring Richard on 9557 3823 or MHS email address (foot of back page).





## President's 2015 Report

It gives me great pleasure to present the 2014-15 President's report. It has been a most successful year for the society with our regular talks and excursions; and our submissions mainly to Marrickville Council to protect those parts of our built and natural heritage under threat.

Most of all, the year has seen the preservation of the original Winged Victory now on permanent display in the Australian War Memorial Museum in Canberra. It has been replaced by a newly commissioned sculpture of similar dimensions that, we hope, will remain on her plinth outside Marrickville Town Hall for a very long time. Last December Marrickville Council arranged for several Marrickville Heritage Society members to be part of a coach trip, at Council's expense, to Canberra, to view the Winged Victory in its new setting, before the revamped World War I galleries were officially opened to the public. One of my favorite memories of that day was after most of the MHS members had left the gallery and moved on to other parts of the museum, a young child was slowly reading the inscription when a wonderful smile came over her face as she read out that the statue had come from Marrickville. With absolute glee she said 'That's where I live!' That made me think about all the people who had not wanted it to go to Canberra, and seeing how happy she was to see it there and be able to identify with it because that was where *she* lived. The Society has planned an overnight coach trip to Canberra for 12-13 September and I encourage members to join this.

MHS was involved in Council's 'Marrickville Remembers' program. Member David Bowron and I represented MHS on the organizing committee. Our members took part in the march on Sunday 19 April with school and community groups along Marrickville Road to Marrickville Town Hall where hymns were sung and speeches made in memory of the more than 400 servicemen who lost their lives during WWI and whose names are on the memorial. The *new* Winged Victory was unveiled by the Mayor Mark Gardiner. I was honoured to lay one of the wreaths of remembrance there.

Then the town hall doors were opened for morning tea or locally brewed beer with fresh Anzac biscuits. The 'Marrickville Soldiers' exhibition, arranged by Clinton Johnston and library staff, created a great deal of interest. That week there was a series of talks, interviews and public forums on the new and old statues and other WWI-related themes. Although none of these events were organised by MHS, they all had the support of MHS members.

The MHS logo of the original Winged Victory will remain the same: the MHS symbol is now a national treasure.

MHS had stalls at the Dulwich Hill Fair, the Marrickville Festival, the Tempe House Open Days, and at the Centenary of the New South Wales Light Horse Brigade at Addison Road Community Centre (formerly the Army Camp). I particularly thank Iain Carolin for his coordination of these stalls.

Our excursions included a tour of Newington College with archivist David Roberts; tours of the buildings and grounds at Callan Park with Roslyn Burge and Hall Greenland; walk to Richardson's Lookout and Cooks River with John Butcher and Nadia Simpson; and a coach trip to Macarthur Country coordinated by Lyn and John Sawyer.

Our speakers were: Dr Peter Mitchell about Bennelong and the search for his grave; Bruce Watt on the history of Sutherland Shire; Matt Murphy on Colonial Era Newtown and the Newtown Ejectment case; a visual tour of the restored Brisbane City Hall conducted by Dr Scott Macarthur; and on Anzac Day, Tony Griffith, who spoke about the extraordinary life of Douglas Grant, a WWI Aboriginal serviceman. I thank the speakers and the event organizers; and Robert Hutchinson for his home-made biscuits and cakes for morning tea at our meetings which included two at the St Peters Cooks River Church hall. Thanks to Laurel and Bob Horton for hosting the Society on these occasions.

Our Pot Luck Christmas Dinner at the home of Megan and Alan Hicks was a great success. One event has already been organised for 2016 – a coach trip to Rose Seidler House and the Australian Wildflower Garden, St Ives in March.

Awards to members included Laurel and Bob Horton who jointly received the Certificate of Achievement at the RAHS annual conference in Mittagong; whilst Laurel was made 'Senior Citizen of the Year' by Marrickville Council. Scott Macarthur received a Special Achievement Award in the Marrickville Medal event from Marrickville Council.

Marrickville Council, Australian War Memorial and International Conservation Services jointly won the National Trust Heritage Award (*Conservation: Objects and Interiors*) for the restoration of the Gilbert Doble/Alex Kolozsy Winged Victory and installation of Winged Victory, 2015.

Now, a word of explanation as to why I'm standing down as President. Last year I had a serious fall outside Petersham Railway Station and despite the best efforts of doctors, specialists and physios, the pain in my back has not gone away. I was told by the doctors that I should give up all activities and have complete rest for at least three months. This meant an end to the 'Secrets of Sydney' walks around Sydney that I had conducted for U3A each month for the previous three years. My partner, Joe Chapman, has taken early retirement from St George hospital and become my full-time carer and chauffeur as I can no longer drive.

I have nominated Ross Berry as the next MHS President. Ross cannot be here today as he is travelling overseas. He

(Photo: R Blair)



has been on the committee for almost two years and in the past year has been one of the two vice presidents; he spoke to members last year on the life of colonial architect John Verge and was recently MC at the Marrickville Medal event. He also carried one side of the MHS banner at the Marrickville Remembers march. I believe he will be a fine president.

I thank all you members for continuing your support of MHS and I thank my committee for all their assistance including Jan Garaty who, like me, is stepping down. I will remain involved with MHS. After being awarded life membership of the Society last year, I'm hoping to live for a very long time, and Marrickville Heritage Society, of which I have been a member now for over 30 years, will remain an important part of my life.

**Geoff Ostling**

**Lorraine Beach** with her MHS Life Membership certificate. Citation reads:

In recognition of her superior organisational abilities, the care and skills she has displayed in layout and design of the Society's publications and her unstinting dedication in so many facets of the Society's work over the past 15 years.

## Calendar of MHS events

**Saturday 25 July**

**Tracking down trachyte walk in CBD**  
Details on front page (numbers limited)

**Saturday 22 August**

**Recollecting my life and change in  
Sydney's inner west with Sylvia Hale**  
Details on front page

**Weekend 12-13 September**

**Spring visit to Capital country**  
Details below + in flyer and June newsletter)

**Saturday 26 September**

**Coach trip exploring the natural history  
of the Royal National Park**

### Cooks River Day Out

**Saturday 22 August 11 am-3 pm**

**Gough Whitlam Park, Earlwood**

(Cooks River & Bayview Avenue, Earlwood)

For details see <cooksriverdayout.eventbrite.com.au>

### Spring visit to Capital country: 12-13 September

Full details of this MHS weekend trip were in the June newsletter. Seats still available but to secure your booking a deposit of \$50 (payable to MHS treasurer) is required asap. Balance (\$210) due by 31 August. You may pay full amount in one hit if you prefer. Further details from or bookings with Mary on <mary.oakenfull@bigpond.com> or 9560 6409.

### The Society applauds recent decisions to name:

- a) **Lori Short Reserve, Tempe** after a staunch activist and community advocate in the Tempe/St Peters area;
- b) **Gentle Lane, Newtown** in recognition of Josiah Gentle, prominent 19th century brickmaker; and
- c) **Lesley Muir Reserve, Canterbury** after the prominent historian and author who was well known to MHS members and many historical societies.

### State politics locally: it's a woman's world!

With **Carmel Tebbutt** (ALP) MLA stepping down as State Member for Marrickville at the last election, the seat of Marrickville became two seats. The new seat of Summer Hill was created with successful incumbent, former Marrickville Mayor, **Jo Haylen** (ALP); and the new seat of Newtown stretching from Petersham to Redfern was won by **Jenny Leong** (Greens). In her inaugural speech to parliament in May, Ms Leong said: 'Lilian Fowler, the last member for Newtown in this place, began her inaugural speech to this Chamber in September 1944 by stating:

I have always thought that government meant action by elected representatives and the formulation of ideals for the benefit of people. My ideal government would frown on anything not to the ultimate good of all.'

When **Lilian Fowler** became Mayor of Newtown (1937-39) she became the first female mayor in Australia. She was elected as a state member of Lang Labor, beating the ALP incumbent in 1944; she held the seat of Newtown until May 1950 when the seat disappeared.

## Legion of Honour to Keith Levitt

The **Legion of Honour** is the highest French decoration recognising distinguished services for France. It was established by Napoleon Bonaparte on 19 May 1802.

MHS member **Keith Levitt**, aged 92, was among five men awarded the insignia of Chevalier (Knight) in the French National Order of the Légion d'Honneur for their contribution to the liberation of France during World War II. The ceremony was at the Hyde Park War Memorial on 18 November 2014. (There were several other recipients in ceremonies around Australia.)

During WWII Keith flew with: 'Squadron 214 (part of 100 Bomber Support), a special duties group within RAF Bomber Command in Norfolk, England. This squadron was responsible for detection and jamming



of enemy radio and radar equipment. They protected their fellow allied airmen by drawing the Luftwaffe towards themselves when they dropped "windows" of foil that would appear to German radar as allied aircraft. Their amazing and heroic work saw allied air losses drop by 80 per cent.'

Keith continues to live in the Marrickville house where he was born. His wife Lila, daughter Michelle Phillips and son-in-law Ross Phillips are also MHS members. (Photo supplied by Ross Phillips)

### Vale: David Brook

The Society regrets the death of MHS member **David Brook**, originally from Yorkshire, late of Newtown, who died on 5 May. David held various senior nursing positions at Sydney Hospital where he was well respected by his colleagues and staff. David's trademark was his great sense of humour, and his kindness and compassion to everyone who crossed his path.

### Vale: Olive Buzacott

**Olive Buzacott**, late of Wahroonga, previously Epping, originally from Petersham, died on 1 July aged 91. Olive and her sister Norma (who died in 2007) joined MHS in 2000. Their father was Norman Buzacott (1866-1933), Mayor of Newtown 1924-25, who served as an alderman on Broken Hill, Newtown and Canterbury Councils. He was a MLC (ALP) for 34 years from 1899 until his death. Originally a coach builder, he set up a real estate business at 358 King Street Newtown in 1906. Member Richard Hansford knew all the Buzacott siblings and handled their legal affairs for many years.

**President** Ross 8021 2898

**Treasurer** Diane 9588 4930

**Heritage Watch** Scott 0416 152 501

**Newsletter** Richard 9557 3823