

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE  
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN



## Our November Meeting

**'Lymerston Tempe: unpicking the three parts of its history' with Bruce Lay; 'Unravelling the story of the Way family' with Laurel and Bob Horton**  
**Saturday 26 November 10.15 for 10.30 am start**  
**Herb Greedy Hall, 79 Petersham Rd, Marrickville**

Residents of Tempe are familiar with Lymerston and Way Streets. Where did these names come from and how are they connected? **Laurel and Bob Horton** will unravel the story of the Way family.

From **Bruce Lay**: Solicitor Richard Henry Way and his wife Anna Maria purchased one of the lots from Robert Campbell's subdivision between Princes Highway and The Warren Estate around 1840. Evidence suggests they had built the first house, in Georgian homestead style, by 1846. The house was substantially revamped c. 1880 into a grander two-storey Italianate manor by two of their sons. Most of the land was subdivided in 1882. It was sold to the Sisters of Mercy for a convent associated with the adjoining school in 1915. The house is an interesting amalgam of these three phases of development. In Hillcrest Avenue, it is now subdivided into four flats with four terrace styled houses behind, accessed from Way Street.

**Bruce Lay** is an architect/planner, who, after training in Melbourne, worked in London and Montreal, and spent 40 years in State Planning, then Leichhardt Council until 2006. On retirement he became a heritage consultant which he has combined with extensive travel, looking after grandchildren and fighting WestConnex. Mostly seen on a bicycle.

**Laurel Horton OAM** and **Bob Horton** run the St Peters Cooks River History Group. Laurel is church historian and Bob is chief researcher. History talks and walks are used to promote the area. The group has published books and produced DVDs on historically based topics. Both have received achievement awards from RAHS and Marrickville Council; Laurel was recently awarded an OAM, in part for her contribution to local history.

Articles are sought for the next MHS journal. There is no payment other than the satisfaction of being published in our esteemed journal. Enquiries: Richard 9557 3823 or <heritagesociety@optusnet.com.au>.

## Annual Pot Luck Christmas Dinner Saturday 3 December: 6 for 6.30 pm

The venue is in Petersham north, close to public transport. Ample street parking. Book with Mary on <mary.oakenfull@bigpond.com> or 0407 487 157 to advise what food you'll bring (ready to serve, please) and to obtain address. BYO drinks.

## Life Membership for Richard Cashman

At our monthly meeting on 22 October MHS Life Membership was conferred on our guest speaker **Richard Cashman**. His citation reads:

In recognition of his continuing and long term contributions to the Society, especially in its first five years, including:

- two years as President
- three years as Vice President
- first editor of our newsletter
- editor of our first two journals
- writing several journal articles

and his commitment to recording the history of both Marrickville and sport in general over such an extended period.



Richard Cashman (left) with Scott MacArthur  
(photo: Richard Blair)

## Welcome to new members

Shirley Hesse, Trevor McGuire, Jennifer Pidcock & Peter Wilkins, all of Dulwich Hill; Brad Hughes, Lewisham; Joanne & John McGrath, Marrickville; David Leary, Newtown; Ellen Forsyth, Benjamin Summers, both of Stanmore; Jill Brown (MHS gift), Sydenham; Mina Bui Jones (rejoined), Leichhardt; Kathleen Fisher, Ramsgate.

## How to join Marrickville Heritage Society

Send cheque or money order made out to Marrickville Heritage Society (address below) with your name/s, address, phone/s, or pay by direct debit. For enquiries, brochure or direct debit details ring Diane 9588 4930. Fees: Concession \$12, individual/joint concession \$20, household/organisation \$28.

Final reminder slips for overdue fees are enclosed with this newsletter.

## Our September Meeting: *Harp in the South*, Surry Hills walk with John Derum

On Saturday 24 September, 26 members and friends met with actor **John Derum**, at Ibero American Plaza, Chalmers Street, Central Station on a perfect spring day. John spoke about the South American hero busts in this Bicentennial project; then discussed 1940s era Surry Hills, which was mostly light industrial with a working class population, largely of Irish Catholic background. Children played on the streets by day but at night it was a dangerous place. This was the setting for two Ruth Park novels, *The Harp in the South* and its sequel *Poor Man's Orange*. Ruth married fellow author D'Arcy Niland in 1942 and for some time the family lived in Devonshire Street, Surry Hills.

John pointed out architectural features such as the narrow horse passages between the terrace houses. Waterloo Street has early buildings on one side and more modern on the other, e.g., the National Trust classified Readers Digest building (1967). Devonshire, Riley and Crown Streets are real Ruth Park territory. Some street names were changed in the novels. In a tiny park in Adelaide Street with houses fronting Riley Street John read excerpts from *Poor Man's Orange*, such as a graphic description of the bed bug problem. Although not an autobiography, Ruth included scenes from her life in the novels. One character, Delie Stock, was based on the notorious Kate Leigh. We passed Kate's house and John pointed out Eddie Ward Park (where the Surry Hills Festival was in progress).

Near the site of Ruth and D'Arcy's house, John read part of an email from their daughter, artist and writer Deborah Niland, saying she was pleased about his walks. He pointed out the house at 31 Tudor Street which inspired Ruth in her fictional house at 12½ Plymouth Street, which in the 1860s had been a dairy. John read further extracts including Delie Stock 'done up' for an interview with a reporter railing against Council's housing policy. There is a great story of Delie offering money to Father Cooley for a children's outing which he rejected as 'the wages of sin' and her explanation that it was honest money.

We finished at Frog Hollow – the most notorious slum where people lived in stacked up packing cases during the Depression – now a pleasant reserve. John read the last pages of *Poor Man's Orange* which were very poignant. He explained that 'poor man's orange' was grapefruit, which was cheaper than oranges.

John said his own family were Irish living in Scotland; they travelled to Australia by ship which was held in quarantine for several days on arrival. We thank John for his informative and entertaining tour.

**Mary Oakenfull**

### Member Wayne le Clos writes:

'I was the editor on *The Harp in the South* and *Poor Man's Orange* TV mini series in the late 1980s. We shot *Harp* in Pyrmont and the 'greening' of the streets had just started. We had to remove all the trees from the streets we shot in and replace them once filming finished. Not long after all the trees were replaced we got word that the networks were so pleased with *Harp* they wanted to make *Poor Man's Orange*, so all the trees had to come out again. Of course, they were again replaced once the filming of *Orange* finished.'

## Spring Trivia Answer

This life-size bronze statue of **Imhotep** stands on a marble plinth outside Gloucester House at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown. In the eyes of Sir William Osler, Imhotep was 'the first Figure of a Physician to stand out clearly from the Mists of Antiquity'. As the Egyptian God of Medicine, he is believed to have been worshipped as a medical demi-god by the Egyptians around 2770 BC.

A booklet produced for the statue's unveiling and written by Chairman of the RPA Board of Directors Herbert Schlink says Imhotep was also an architect who designed and built the first Pyramid of Egypt, i.e., the Step Pyramid of Sakkarah near Memphis, as a tomb for his Royal Master, King Zoser. Imhotep has also been described as 'the earliest philosopher, astronomer and poet.' Inspired by viewing the original statue in the Pergamon Museum, Berlin, Schlink commissioned a replica be made for RPA. The sculptor was Stephan Pokoara. Schlink said the RPA replica embodies all the features of the Pergamon Museum statue. This statue was unveiled on 10 November 1938 by Lady Wakehurst, wife of the NSW Governor.

Imhotep and its location were correctly identified by: **Iain Carolin, Barbara Forsyth, Shirley Hilyard, Geoff Ostling, Judy Reynolds and John Ward.**

**Richard Blair**

## Summer Trivia Question

A resident in this house was prominent in his field of expertise. Who was he, what was he known for and where in the former Marrickville LGA is this house? Clue: House lies between the Sydenham-Bankstown and the Inner West railway lines. Richard 9557 3823 or <heritagesociety@optusnet.com.au>.



The Society held another successful stall at the annual **Marrickville Festival** on Sunday 23 October. There was an increased interest in our stall by younger folk, many asking if we have a website. Local walking tours remain a popular sale item. Thanks Rod and Deborah assisted by Faye, Ian, Keith and Richard.



## Our October Meeting: Saturday 22 October Yabba: Cricket's Legendary Barracker

Whether you're a cricket tragic or you don't know the first thing about the game, the name Yabba will nonetheless ring a bell and invariably bring a wide smile to your face. Stephen Harold Gascoigne (1878-1942), also known as Yabba, reigned as King of the Hill at the Sydney Cricket Ground for decades entertaining fellow spectators, umpires, players and newspaper reporters with his irreverent and colourful barracking. This description by sports journalist Jack Pollard says it all:

... a horny-handed rebel who would hold court on the Hill, standing or sprawled on the grass, with a comical, earthy wit, a clown's sense of timing and an uninhibited vocabulary which owed a lot of its striking power to a term he served as a soldier in the South African War.

Historian and long-term member, **Richard Cashman**, treated members to a fascinating and humorous account of the life and times of Yabba and elaborated on aspects of his recent book *Yabba: Cricket's Legendary Barracker*. Richard not only recounts Yabba's larrikin behaviour and sayings, but, with the keen eye of the professional historian, delves deeper into the Depression era to paint a long term picture of the changing character and culture of crowds and spectators over this period, and beyond. He tracked down Yabba's descendants and accessed archives, newspaper columns and Cinesound newsreels. Richard sets out to understand the man. Was he an eccentric like Bea Miles or Arthur Stace, or a non-conformist striking a blow for the working class spectator, the voice of the battlers of the Depression era? Richard uncovers some touching moments of Yabba's life. For example, after his marriage to Ada Rogers in 1899, the couple celebrated with a wedding breakfast of peas and saveloys at Paddy's Market. And every Sunday morning, Yabba set off for the papers dressed in nothing more than long johns and flannel singlet. There is also this description by Ray Robinson of Yabba as a rabbit:

When a customer hailed him, Yabba would hitch a rabbit's hind-legs around a hook, expertly peel its skin up to its neck with a flick of the wrist, behead it with a knife and slap it on the housewife's plate almost in one action, like a fieldman picking up and returning a ball.

In 1991 when the Hill was bulldozed to make way for a grandstand, a statue of Yabba was commissioned. It was unveiled in 2008 and a short play was performed, written by Trust chairman Rodney Cavalier, ensuring, we'd like to think, that the spirit of this great Aussie icon lives on.

**Judy O'Connor**

## Marrickville Croquet Club 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Mary Oakenfull, Diane McCarthy and Ian Phillips represented the Society at this event on 24 September. Around 40 attended and brief speeches were made by Jo Haylen MP, ex Marrickville Cllr Chris Woods, a representative from Croquet NSW and Club President Bruce Threlfo, who spoke of the club's recent increase in members. Other MHS members present were former Marrickville Historian Chrys Meader (whose late father Charlie worked on the croquet green when first at Marrickville Council), Irene Carder, Heather and Jack Smallbone, Barbara and George Gibbons, and Janice Hilliard. Heather is also a member of the croquet club.

Ian Phillips shared memories of his great grandmother Porter, who was an original committee member. Irene Carder's mother was also a foundation member and Irene had the honour of cutting the birthday cake. The convivial gathering enjoyed delicious refreshments.

**Diane McCarthy**

## RAHS Conference 22-23 October

The annual conference with the theme *Times are A-Changing: History and Innovation* was in Wollongong, a city that has embraced change with many innovative updates. Several talks dwelt on Wollongong's history. Once occupied by the Dharawal people Wollongong became home to a coal (1880s) and steel (1920s) industry along with the environmental pollution that came with it. With the decline of industry in general in the 1980s and a clean-up of its grimy reputation Wollongong attracted developers, tourists and students. Archaeological digs in recent years within the CBD have revealed the original foundations of the city, which was first gazetted in 1834, with heritage buildings preserved and adapted for reuse.

However, Wollongong also had its seamier side. A 'crime tour' was on the agenda, probably in response to Wollongong's shame as the murder capital from 1994 to 2000 with several of the convicted coming from the same high school! Alternatively, there was a tour of local heritage sites.

Grace Karskens delivered the annual Lesley Muir Address with her paper titled 'People of the River: Elemental Histories of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River'. She discussed early colonial farming along the river, the lost district of Castlereagh and the social and cultural history of the Aboriginal people. Her new book *People of the River* is being completed.

Once again there were discussions on the onward march of technological changes and advice on how to manage the digitisation and publication of historical records online and the changes and difficulties in using the many websites familiar to us all. **Robert Hutchinson** and **Diane McCarthy** also represented MHS. Next year's conference will be in Cowra.

**Iain Carolin**

## Certificate of Achievement for Iain Carolin

At this year's RAHS conference **Iain Carolin** was awarded a Certificate of Achievement for:

His considerable contribution to the Society being a valuable member of the Society since 1991 and committee member since 2010. Iain has been a local newsletter runner for 15 years, coordinates and conducts the Society's bookstalls, organises and stores Society records at his home, and performs other valuable duties behind the scenes.



*Iain Carolin receives award from RAHS President Carol Liston (photo: Ian Granland © RAHS)*

## Calendar of MHS events

**Saturday 26 November**

**Bruce Lay, Laurel & Bob Horton on Lymerston**

Details on front page

**Saturday 3 December: Annual Pot Luck Dinner**

Details on front page

**Saturday 25 February**

**Ian Tyrrell: 'Cooks River: an unnatural history'**

**Saturday 25 March**

**Port Hacking, Hacking River & Bate Bay cruise**



*This free community street library in Cavendish Street Stanmore is one of many across town. The idea is to take a book and replace it with one of your own. Why not make use of it? (photo: R Blair)*

## Landmark sewer vent, Marrickville

The sewer vent in Premier Street Marrickville which appears on three heritage registers and the Marrickville Local Environment Plan 2013 is set to be partially demolished. The two cottages related to the site are to be retained. Despite surviving for 118 years, being considered 'a rare architectural composition' in NSW (Sydney Water Heritage Register) and the only one of its type (State Heritage Register), owners Sydney Water do not believe it to be sound enough to withstand a 1 in 500 years severity earthquake or extremely high wind conditions. As a result, they propose to lop off the top 10 metres of the stack, reinforce the remainder and reinstate the cap that was removed in 1906.

In fact, there were alternatives to this drastic action but as a report commissioned for Sydney Water noted, the retention of the full existing height and any reinforcement was going to cost at least twice as much and was unwarranted considering the vent is not being used for anything. The report also stated that: 'The proposed rehabilitation of the Premier Street Sewer Vent Stack will have an adverse impact to the historic fabric of the stack and a notable adverse visual impact on its appearance.'

The Society is unhappy that the stack can't be saved in its entirety, and we believe that even the partial demolition will have an adverse impact on the historic fabric of the area and local environment. However, we accept Sydney Water's expert advice that it is potentially unsafe.

**Rod Aanensen**

**President** Scott 0416 152 501

**Heritage Watch** Scott 0416 152 501

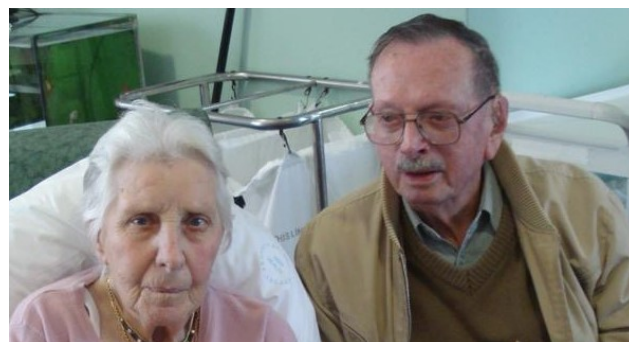
**Treasurer** Diane 9588 4930

**Newsletter** Richard 9557 3823

## Vale Lottie and Bert Ferres

**Lottie Ferres** (nee Hardy) was born in Marrickville but moved with her family to Sans Souci at an early age. She married **Bert Ferres** in 1949 and they lived in that area until moving to Branxton to live with their daughter about ten years ago. Lottie's grandfather, John Hardy, had been an alderman on Marrickville Council 1889-93 and 1900-14 and lived from 1883 with his family in Fairfowl Street, Dulwich Hill. Lottie joined MHS in 1988.

Bert was a Rat of Tobruk. As reported in the March 2014 MHS newsletter, citing Peter Fitzsimons' column, Bert was awarded the Military Medal for taking out a German machine gun nest during the Battle of Ed Duda on the night of 29 November 1941.



When Lottie was admitted to a nursing home, Bert would travel by bus every day to visit Lottie holding her hand for hours on end. Eventually a room for him was found there as well. They remained devoted throughout 67 years of marriage. Bert died on 27 August and Lottie died the following day (photo of Lottie and Bert provided their daughter Lorraine).

## Vale Daphne Grange

**Daphne Grange** died aged 93 on 17 October. Daphne served with the WAAAF 1942-45 as a signals clerk. After the war she did office work until qualifying and working as a chartered accountant. Upon retirement she lived in Marrickville for 20 years becoming a keen member of Marrickville Croquet Club. She joined MHS in 1993 regularly attending MHS meetings. Daphne spent her final years at Plumpton. Our condolences to Daphne's family (photo of Daphne from WN Bull funerals).

