

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

CAMPERDOWN DULWICH HILL ENMORE
NEWTOWN PETERSHAM STANMORE

LEWISHAM MARRICKVILLE
ST PETERS SYDENHAM & TEMPE



Our March Outing

Exploring Marrickville's industrial heritage on Carrington Road with Louisa King
Saturday 23 March 9.45 for 10 am

Rendezvous given on booking which is via Richard 9557 3823 or email (bottom back page). Free, but booking essential with limit of 30; no more than two per booking; advise if you need to cancel.

Join local history researcher **Louisa King** on a 90-minute guided walk along Marrickville's premier industrial boulevard, Carrington Road. Find out how the area became a major centre for industry in the 1920s and learn more about its modernist factories. We will cover how urbanisation, big corporations like General Motors Holden, the Second World War and the suburban dream transformed a swampy watercourse on the land of the Cadigal-Wangal people of the Eora Nation into a powerhouse of industrial productivity. We will recall the people, events and fabulous enterprise that supported and shaped a growing nation including our obsession with the motor car, democratisation of the workforce and migration. Enjoy the quirky, remarkable, often forgotten stories of Marrickville's industrial past.

Cooks River reportage since 1997: its health, funding allocations and other spending

The front page of the *Inner West Times* (13/2/2019) carried a photo of Cooks River Alliance members and Cooks River Community Assembly residents who are 'throwing their support behind a Labor pledge of \$200 million to clean up Sydney waterways and bring the Cooks back to life'. Sound encouraging?

So, what to make of the 19 March 1997 editorial of *The Glebe and Inner Western Weekly* which stated: 'It's hard not to be cynical. Another year, another plan/proposal/effort to clean up Cooks River'?

Indeed, has any issue received as much attention in the local press in the past 30 years or so? I doubt it. It was largely *that* editorial that prompted me to start collecting press cuttings about Cooks River with particular attention to: a) the river's health and b) funding allocations to address the river's wellbeing. That *Glebe* editorial stated how jarring it was to hear Cooks River 'referred to, probably correctly, as Sydney's most unloved waterway ...' and the 'vague deadline' to make a difference by the 2000 Olympic Games. Shame about that!

What follows is, in brief, a list of newspapers with date and headline or main thrust of the article. (go to p. 3)

Our April Meeting

Story of the *Krait* and Operation Jaywick: talk by Mervyn Rosen

Saturday 27 April 10.15 for 10.30 am

Herb Greedy Hall, 79 Petersham Rd, Marrickville

This vessel (renamed *Krait* after a deadly species of snake) has a fascinating history starting life as a wooden hull fishing boat; but is best remembered for a raid on Japanese shipping in Singapore Harbour in 1943 by a group of allied commandos that demonstrated extraordinary bravery, resilience and ingenuity. Hear about how this Japanese fishing boat became one of the most famous Allied boats in WWII. We will discuss the training, the raid, the aftermath and the legacy of this remarkable boat which is now in the possession of the National Maritime Museum at Darling Harbour.



The Krait during WWII (AWM image 044211)

Trained as an industrial engineer **Mervyn Rosen** spent most of his working life in the building and construction industry. He was a long time member of Toastmasters and also enjoys cycling, history and photography. Merv is an active volunteer and guide at the Maritime Museum with additional interest in the *Endeavour*, the *Lighthouse*, HMAS *Vampire*, HMAS *Onslow* and HMAS *Advance*.

To join Marrickville Heritage Society

Either send a cheque or money order made out to Marrickville Heritage Society (address below) with your name/s, address, phone and email; or pay by direct debit. Ring Diane 9588 4930 for enquiries, a brochure or direct debit details; or email MHS (bottom back page). Join now and membership extends till June 2020. Fees: Concession \$12, Individual/Joint Concession \$20, Household/Organisation \$28 (rates unchanged since 2003).

Our February meeting: 23 February – The Aussies of East Nanjing Road: talk by Scott MacArthur

Scott MacArthur fascinated us with a presentation about successful Chinese businessmen in post gold rush Sydney including merchants who returned to establish magnificent department stores in Shanghai. During the 1850s gold rush, Chinese arrived seeking the New Gold Mountain. Mostly from around Canton (now Guangzhou) they were fleeing famine and rebellion, consequences of the Opium Wars. Some who came for gold prospered in business. Scott described these Sydney Chinese businessmen. **Mei Quong Tart** arrived on the Braidwood goldfield aged nine. With a keen interest in sport and the ways of the English and Scottish, Quong Tart grew to establish a tea empire. His tea rooms included the Loong Shan in King Street and another in the Queen Victoria building with a restaurant seating 500. Luminaries including Louisa Lawson were customers. Quong Tart married Margaret Scarlett in 1886 living in Gallop House in Ashfield. His death due to a beating received during a bungled robbery in 1901 shocked Sydney.

Four Haymarket merchants – Mark Jo, Ma Ying Piu, George Kwok Bew and Choy Hing – formed **Wing Sang & Co.**, an immensely successful wholesale import/export fruit and vegetable business. Reluctant to enter the retail world in Australia amid the growing ferment that would result in the White Australia policy, the four men established landmark department stores (based on the Anthony Hordern model) on the East Nanjing Road in Shanghai. Separate and fiercely competitive businesses the **Sincere**, **Wing On**, **Sun Sun** and **Sun Co** department store buildings boasted numerous floors and towers. Besides retailing global merchandise, entertainments included roof gardens, radio stations, theatres and opera. The stores broke new ground for China: the first to be owned by Chinese, the first to employ female shop assistants and the first to have escalators.

Scott provided images of the stores in their heyday in the 1920s, the 1930s and today. The buildings illustrate the Art Deco style with distinctive Chinese influence.

Marg Ludlow

Autumn Trivia Question

Locate this local post office? Richard 9557 3823 or email c/- address at bottom of back page.



From Chartered Architect Bob Irving on cast iron

'I was very interested in the cast iron balcony railing sketched in the article by Mary Oakenfull and Vilma Bell in the January-February newsletter – an example of what Graeme Robertson illustrated in his *Sydney Lace* (1962), scanned below. Another slightly different design is shown in Brian Turner's *Australia's Iron Lace* (1985). Neither Robertson nor Turner could find any indication that these designs were registered by an iron founder as was customary in the nineteenth century. So whichever founder cast these patterns might well have been outside NSW, Victoria or Queensland, the three states then registering iron patterns. No proof of course.'



Above: Robertson's example; below: Turner's



History Corner

The History Collection items which prompted this series of articles contain memorabilia related to Flight Lieutenant David Rochford, who was a British Second World War pilot. His plane, a Mk VI Mosquito Bomber exploded over Petersham on 2 May 1945 killing him and co-pilot LAC Charles Broughton Boydell (RAAF). Rochford's body fell into the playground of Petersham Public School.

Memorabilia include photographs, postcards and letters, the Order of Service for Flt Lieutenant Rochford's funeral, a Letter of Condolence from King George VI, a scroll inscribed with the GV1 R1 Coat of Arms and the words: 'This scroll commemorates Flight Lieutenant D. G. Rochford Royal Air Force'.

A separate donation from MHS member Florence (Lu) Bell, a pupil at the school at the time of the crash, contains material related to the crash, the funeral service for the two pilots and the 60th anniversary Commemorative Ceremony in 2005 which was co-organised by Lu.

All these items have been entrusted by donation to Marrickville's Library and History Collection for safekeeping by the Rochford family and Lu Bell. They accentuate the value of this collection to the community.

Mary Oakenfull & Vilma Bell

Note: An article on this crash has been prepared by a MHS member for our next journal, *Heritage* 16. Editor

(cont'd from p. 1) 26/2/97 *The Glebe*: Gutter fight against pollution/**Funds for Cooks River work**: amount not given

19/3/97 *Glebe*: New plan to revive Cooks 'sewer'

6/1/00 *Cooks River Valley Times* (VT): Valley victory re stacks

13/1/00 VT: No butts clean up

27/1/00 VT: Pollution remains despite programs

10/2/00 VT: Bringing CR back to life / Pollution crackdown

3/8/00 VT: **CR wins funding \$690,800 Streets to Rivers Project**

7/9/00 VT: **Life goes on after project: \$1.3 million grant from NSW Stormwater Trust**

13/12/00 *Glebe*: Time to practice what they preach re third stage of Streets to River program (letter to editor)

Summer 2000-01 *Cooks River Reporter*: Variety of material (newsletter of CR Foreshores Working Group)

8/3/01 *The Leader*: Help the CR: leave a leafy legacy

10/9/01 *Courier*: CR gets new lease of life: **Strathfield Council spends \$600,000 on rehabilitation works**

11/2/02 *Courier*: Protecting our heritage / Aboriginal site survey

12/02 *MetroTimes*: Down the drain

27/3/02 *Glebe*: **\$550,000 state grant to Marrickville, Strathfield & Canterbury Councils to improve water quality by reducing stormwater pollution in CR**

28/4/02 *Sunday Telegraph*: Squalor and shame on Sydney's dirtiest river

14/10/02 *Courier*: The stink on CR needs cleaning up

6/10/03 *Courier*: **Stormwater project \$180,000 part of almost \$1m on offer**

8/12/03 *Courier*: You'll catch more than just fish

Early 2004 *Inner City News*: River pollution concern

11/1/04 *Daily Telegraph*: River of filth still a health hazard

9/2/04 *Inner City News*: Unwitting killer: pollution from suburban life [to have] devastating effect

15/3/04 *Courier*: River clean-up plea / shopping trolleys dumped

29/4/04 VT: River being revived

20/5/04 VT: Keeping the river clean + **Perking up the parks: \$240,000+ on parklands around CR**

24/5/04 *Courier*: Forshore [sic] funding: **state government gives \$500,000 to upgrade CR foreshore**

23/9/04 VT: River's future to be considered

12/10/04 *Inner City News*: Clearer vision for CR

Early 2005 Letter to residents from Andrew Refshauge MP: **\$4.9million funding boost for Cooks River**

14/4/05 *Glebe*: Recycle and grow rich

14/5/05 VT: Care for Cooks

24/5/04 *Inner City News*: **Foreshore funding** (no amount given)

27/5/04 *Glebe*: **Almost \$500,000 for eight CR foreshore development projects**

7/6/05 *Courier*: **More cash for Cooks . . . but river funding futile (\$500,000 offered May 2004)** say environment group

9/6/05 *Glebe*: Plan is just a Band-Aid: **\$5m CR Foreshores improvement plan over four years** (with costings)

2/8/05 *Courier*: Down the drain a pain

18/10/05 *Inner City News*: Cooks monitoring: Council working to improve CR

26/1/06 *Glebe*: Tempe rubbish tip transformed

31/1/06 *Inner City News*: River's slow clean up (**grants worth \$5.7m**)

2/2/06 *Glebe*: Cleaner water for Cooks River

21/4/06 *Glebe*: Committees look after CR + Call to bring back deposits for bottles

18/7/06 *Courier*: **CR parks upgrade \$1.3 m upgrade by Marrickville Council**

12/7/07 *Leader*: Mudcrabs are wonderful (letter from Colin Lee)

31/7/08 VT: **\$2.6m for foreshore**

December 08 *Tebbutt Community News*: **\$2.6m CR improvements underway**

11/2/10 VT: River is disgusting: Who will clean up the mess?

20/5/10 *Courier*: Cooks River revamp (letter from William Woods)

12/8/10 VT: Wetland plan nears fruition: **\$900,000 on construction of new wetlands at Cup and Saucer Creek**

11/2/11 *Inner City Weekender*: **Cooks healthy vision: \$2m funding**

27/10/11 *Leader*: Filth flowing freely: broken sewers leaking into Cooks River

5/4/12 *Courier*: Grim tidings for river: high e-coli levels

26/4/12 VT: Silt removal to boost river

14/12/12 *Inner City Weekender*: Cooks River needs a clean: sewerage upgrade demanded

20/12/12 *Courier*: Planning for the future: focus on Cooks River's long term survival

2013 Burwood Festival: **CR Alliance welcomes almost \$2 million for a four year project**

16/2/13 *Sydney Morning Herald*: Plan to turn open sewer into river fit for a swim

28/2/13 VT: **\$9m health tonic to improve CR**

25/6/13 *Leader*: Plea to save (Fatima) island (two letters to editor)

6/9/13 ICW: **CR receives \$2 million for clean up (federal government)** + CR will have new banks

21/9/13 SMH: Race against time to save magical island refuge

26/9/13 VT: Cooks still going down toilet: **\$17m contribution from state government**

1/10/13 *Courier*: Fatima Island to get urgent works

22/5/14 VT: Help clean up Cooks

19/8/15 VT: **River's \$9m clean up plan now complete**

1/6/16 VT: Restore health of river: vow to make it 'swimmable'

5/9/18 *Inner West Times* (formerly *Cooks River Valley Times*): Ban bags to restore river

21/11/18 IWT: Help Cook up plan: have a say on river's upgrade

13/2/19 IWT: See opening paragraph (front page).

This list is incomplete given the papers I'd have missed. Over that time many improvements *have* been made; although, this is somewhat due to groups like the Cooks River Valley Association and the Mudcrabs. Nil desperandum!

Richard Blair

Note: Funding/grant notifications in bold;
CR = Cooks River

Calendar of MHS events

Saturday 23 March

Exploring Marrickville's industrial heritage on Carrington Road: walk led by Louisa King

Details on front page

Saturday 27 April

Story of the MV *Krait* and Operation Jaywick: talk by Mervyn Rosen

Details on front page

Saturday 25 May

Mary MacKillop Place & Wendy Whiteley's Secret Garden

Details in May-June newsletter

Heritage and history scrapbooks

How many of us have kept a scrapbook; and if so, how many have focused their scrapbooks on heritage and history? Within the past and present ranks of our Society I know of several keepers whose scrapbooks have found their way into the MHS archives. Past MHS president (2000-02) **Peter Cousens**, a former Newtown resident, produced three such books replete with photos of members, details of events, buildings at risk and articles of general interest. **Daphne Kingston** and **Kate Dunbar** were dab hands at sticking into their scrapbook cuttings of houses on the market, locally and across Sydney. Often the estimated sale price was indicated and this gives such cuttings added interest.

Another former president (1995-97) and Marrickville resident, **John Zinsmeester**, didn't get round to putting cuttings into book form, but he had a more than a keen interest in heritage conservation from the 1950s, soon after migrating from his native Holland. Many of his cuttings are now in poor condition due to age, but there is evidence that he was, for example, among the protesters when St Malo in Hunters Hill was being demolished to make way for 'progress' in the 1960s. And those who remember John will recall the zeal and passion he brought to heritage conservation in the mid-1990s, especially in relation to preserving Stanmore House (1840s) in Newtown and the spire of St Clements Church, Marrickville. Another ex Newtown resident and former member **Andy Carr** focused on Newtown people and events in the mid to late 1990s. Using his librarian skills his two scrapbooks trace local happenings according to the local press over five years.

The third MHS president into scrapbooks was **Shirley Hilyard** (1992-94). What Shirley (a strong advocate for heritage with a keen interest in history) did for over 20 years was to cut her newsletter into two pages and insert them into the sleeves of a folder along with photos, cuttings, brochures, maps and other memorabilia of relevance. Thorough and precise, but stylish, these scrapbooks (albeit folders) are a template and a pleasure to behold.

Scrapbooks — a worthy hobby! We plan to have some of these scrapbooks on display at meetings.

Richard Blair

President Scott 0416 152 501

Heritage Watch Scott 0416 152 501

Treasurer Diane 9588 4930

Newsletter Richard 9557 3823

Heritage Watch: Lewisham Hospital

Catholic HealthCare is proposing a major redevelopment of the former Lewisham Hospital site in West Street to provide improved and expanded aged care accommodation. The proposal would retain and adapt several important heritage buildings, but would require the demolition of the existing aged care facility on the southern part of the site, to be replaced by three buildings of between seven and twelve storeys. The development would provide a total of 135 Independent Living Units (ILUs) and 144 Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) beds, with staff facilities and 201 parking spaces.

The Society generally supports this proposal, but has concerns that the scale, height and density of the proposed buildings could be used by private residential developers as a justification for high density development in the area. The Society acknowledges that the applicant is continuing the historical health care related use of the site, and proposes to retain the most heritage significant buildings. These buildings should be retained in perpetuity and a sinking fund established for their ongoing maintenance and enhancement.

The provision of aged care and retirement options in the Inner West is vitally important for local residents. The prospect of having to leave the area one has lived in as one ages and becomes less independent is distressing, and all too common. This development promises to provide an opportunity for local people to transition from independent living to supported care within the neighbourhoods that are familiar and supportive of them. However, the special conditions of aged independent and supported care will mean the impact on surrounding areas are minimal. Comparable private residential developments would have far greater parking needs and traffic generation effects and should not be allowed to use this development as a precinct exemplar or justification.

Scott MacArthur



Above: Existing aged care hostel (Google Maps)

Below: Photomontage of proposed development (Courtesy: Jackson Teece)

