

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

CAMPERDOWN DULWICH HILL ENMORE
NEWTOWN PETERSHAM STANMORE

LEWISHAM MARRICKVILLE
ST PETERS SYDENHAM & TEMPE



Our September Meeting

Tour of the new Marrickville Library
Saturday 28 September 10 am-11.30 am

Assemble in the foyer of the new Marrickville Library, corner Livingstone & Marrickville Roads; tour designed specifically for MHS members and is free, but booking essential: Mary on 0407 487 157 or email <mary.oakenfull@bigpond.com>.

The new library opened on 31 August. Designed by architects BVN, the new Marrickville Library seamlessly integrates contemporary design and technology with the original conserved heritage elements of the former Marrickville Hospital's main building. It is uncompromising in relation to sustainability with recycled elements where possible and clever design features that reduce energy consumption. The design caters to Marrickville's diverse community while remaining sympathetic to the heritage-listed original building.

Community History & Heritage, Inner West Council, will conduct a tour of the library specifically for MHS members. CH&H Coordinator **Amie Zar** will talk on the old Marrickville Library exploring elements of the retained heritage building including the district hospital's former men's wards, women's wards and Nurses Lane. Former nurse **Barbara Emslie** will present her memories of nurse training (1968-72) and walk us through a day in the life of the old Marrickville District Hospital.



Joining Marrickville Heritage Society is easy

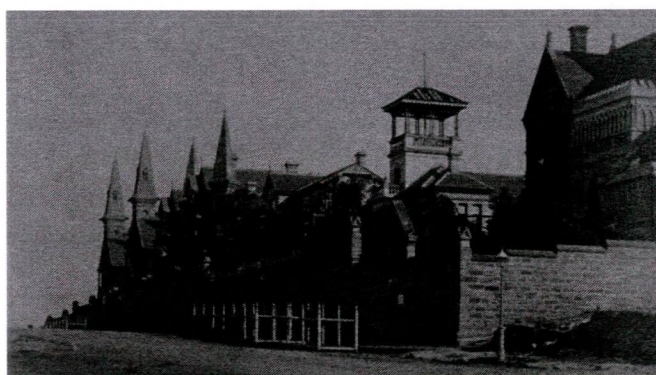
Either send a cheque to Marrickville Heritage Society (address below) with your name/s, address, phone/s and email; pay by direct debit; or by cash at one of our meetings. Ring Diane 9588 4930 for enquiries, a brochure or direct debit details; or email MHS. Fees: Concession \$12, Individual/Joint Concession \$20, Household/Organisation \$28.

Our October Meeting

The Witches' houses of Annandale with
Beverley Walsh & Ann Reynolds, AURA
Saturday 26 October 10.15 for 10.30 am
Herb Greedy Hall, 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville

How many times have you driven along Johnston Street Annandale and wondered who built the now beautifully restored houses between Kentville Avenue and Rose Street?

Bev Walsh and **Ann Reynolds** will give an overview of how Annandale came into being and the vision of its founder, English-born building contractor, John Young, who was also known as the 'Father of Bowls'. They will show images of the houses, including those that have been demolished, and share stories about some of the women associated with them - Bertha Blackmann (*Oybin*), Elizabeth Young (*Claremont*), Sister Dorothea (*St Basil's Home*) and Betty Mason (the Annandale Association, that saved the block from further demolitions). Mention will also be made of 'Father of Federation' Sir Henry Parkes, who was living at *Kenilworth* at the time of his death.



Witches Houses c. 1890 (photographer unknown, source: Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection)

Beverley Walsh, contributor to AURA Journals 1 & 2 and AURA (Annandale Urban Research Association) treasurer, lives in *Greba*. Her interest in local history was sparked by living in the Witches Houses Group and encouragement from local historians Peter Reynolds and Norma Perry (co-contributor to both journals).

Ann Reynolds, contributor to Journal 2, research assistant for 'Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron 1862-2000' and Wikipedia editor who has created over 40 biographies of Australian women, is a self-styled 'Trove Tragic'.

Members whose fees seem to be unpaid should receive a yellow reminder slip with this newsletter. If you have a query about this, ring Diane on 9588 4930.

Publication Editor's Report 2019

The newsletter is largely about describing what outings and talks are coming up, reporting on past meetings, keeping a brief on heritage watch matters of concern and paying tribute to those members who have died. Looking back through the last year of the newsletter, on average this amounts to about half the size of our four page missive.

Some of the stories featured in the past year have included the unfortunate fate of the time capsule placed under a building at Marrickville Hospital some decades ago. Although Council was notified of this both directly and in a newsletter, it wasn't properly recorded by Council such that the building was demolished without the builders being made aware of the capsule. In September [2018] we covered the untimely fire at the General Gordon Hotel in Sydenham along with a good news story about the preservation of the key which officially opened St Peters Town Hall in 1927 (thanks to Laurel Horton for her advice about that). In November we paid tribute to long term member, the late Verona Rothwell, who grew up in Marrickville; and we applauded Pamela Stewart who received a Certificate of Achievement at the annual RAHS conference. In the January-February newsletter we congratulated Joy Lewis (whose family lived locally for c. 150 years) on turning 100; whilst we recognized the restoration of Louisa Lawson's grave at Rookwood and the restoration and reinstatement of the soldier's rifle to the monument at Camperdown Park. In March we presented reportage in local newspapers of proposed funding to restore the health of Cooks River and revealed a number of scrapbooks held by the Society that had been assembled over the years. Finally, in May we cited Colin Webb's impressive website on inner city leadlight and included, courtesy of Megan Hicks, some memories of a clergyman's daughter in Petersham in the 1930s.

Our trivia questions focussed on: *Marionette*, a once grand 1850s Tempe mansion; the comic strip *Boofhead* and its creator Bob Clarke of Brereton Avenue Marrickville; a little known fountain outside the Maternal Heart of Mary Chapel in the grounds of the former Lewisham Hospital; and the original 1897 Petersham Post Office, demolished in the 1970s.

Mary Oakenfull initiated a column, initially called Archive Corner, but later renamed History Corner. It described some of the items donated to Marrickville Library and catalogued by Mary and a team of other volunteers, mostly MHS members, including Vilma Bell, Paula Gard and Megan Hicks. Items included surgical instruments donated by three generations of local family doctors named Kennedy-Gould; a folder of folk paintings from a village in Vietnam; memorabilia donated by champion cyclist and bike shop owner, the late Mick Mazza; memorabilia relating to the Petersham plane crash of May 1945; and a booklet titled 'The Occurrence of a Submerged Forest with Remains of Dugong at Sheas Creek near Sydney' (1896). An eclectic array!

Apart from our president and committee, which holds me to account, I single out for special thanks: Pamela Stewart, Hillary Goldsmith, Diane McCarthy and Ian Phillips who assist me in continuing to ensure that the newsletter is hatched, matched and despatched, and on time. Others who have been involved over the past year in the process of despatch are drivers Lucille Dunstan, John Mara, Diane McCarthy, Graeme Napier, Keith Sutton and Ken Turner. Ken is now 86 and was pleased to recently pass his latest driving test with flying colours.

And, of course, the runners - Rod Aanensen, Mary Barthelmy, Lu Bell, Richard Blair, 'Tricia' Blombery, Stuart Grigg, Iain Carolin, Lucille Dunstan, Michael Egan, Rosemary Fallon, Ann Fenton, Rowena Finnane, John Hadley, Audrey Furney, Roger Gazard, Colin Hesse, Marg Ludlow, John Mara, Ruth Olip, Monica Oppen, Allen Outlaw, Ian Phillips, Peter Robertson, Pamela Stewart and Ken Turner. Filling in when other runners were away were Pat Jessop, Chris King, Peter McLaren and Corinne O'Loughlin.

Richard Blair

Our May Outing: Visits to Mary MacKillop Place and Wendy Whiteley's Secret Garden

Saturday 25 May produced a traditional MHS beautiful day for 25 members and friends to travel to North Sydney to visit two iconic locations. Mary MacKillop Place houses a chapel with the tomb of Saint Mary of the Cross, a museum, Alma Cottage (where Mary lived), a Heritage Walkway and dining areas, all set in lovely gardens. The chapel and memorial provide a peaceful sanctuary. The museum consists of a series of galleries, each covering an aspect of Mary's life and work with excellent pictures and explanatory notes. It also depicts many aspects of Australian life during those times which are applicable to life generally.

A light lunch was followed by a gentle walk down to Lavender Bay for a short précis of the garden and individual ambling to enjoy the ambience.

Iain Carolin on Wendy Whiteley's Secret Garden:

'Situated on the shores of Lavender Bay, a short walk from Luna Park along a pathway hugging the water's edge, an abandoned block of wasteland, at the time owned by NSW Railways, was transformed into a garden by Wendy Whiteley shortly after the sudden passing of her artist husband Brett in 1992. It is one of the more environmentally friendly gardens to be visited using natural tree branches as handrails, recycled railway sleepers as staircases, dry stone walls as embankments and unsealed walking tracks meandering through the shade of a large canopy of trees. Exploring this garden one can find many an artefact hidden in the bushes. The popularity of the garden was highlighted by a large number of visitors including a bridal party taking advantage of a very picturesque photo opportunity.'

I asked members for a brief comment about the garden. These included: 'What a workout! I'm ready for the City to Surf' / 'Joy - it was such a magnificent garden, beautiful to look at and very calming' / 'Admiration: so much work and a wonderful outcome' / 'Gratitude for Wendy's work and inspiration'.

Mary Oakenfull

Our July Outing: 22 July

Light rail took several MHS members to the Rozelle Bay Stop where we joined lifetime local **Jason Chatwin** on his informative tour of The Glebe Foreshore Parklands surrounding Johnstons Creek, which in the 1890s was converted into a brick and concrete channel to improve Sydney's sanitation. We learnt about the ferries that stopped there; the Allan Truss bridge, also called the Federal Road bridge, connecting Glebe and Annandale, and converted to a footbridge; and the 28-span Jubilee Park railway viaduct (1919) which is the longest section of brick arch viaduct in NSW and the largest viaduct structure to survive in Australia. Previously part of a goods line, it is now part of the circuitous light rail system between Central Station and Dulwich Hill.

Jason graced us with stories about some men of influence and authority as we ventured past the Harold Park redevelopment, formerly the Rozelle tramsheds and the Harold Park paceway. Interesting to learn that it was named after imported trotter *Childe Harold*. Finally into Jubilee Park and Oval with its historic pavilion, and Bicentennial Park. Jason explained the area's successive layers of reclamation, recreation, transportation and transformation. Thank to Jason for his enlarged photos and maps and extensive local knowledge.

Richard Blair

Our August Meeting: 24 August *Abergeldie* and the Dixon family

The President of Ashfield & District Historical Society Mark Sabolch's talk on *Abergeldie* and the legacy of the Dixon family, who owned it from 1884 until 1926 was attended by a large audience of MHS members joined by ADHS members. *Abergeldie*, a 22-acre estate, was originally the home of Dr Edwin Chisholm, who sold it to Hugh Dixon (knighted in 1921), the son of Hugh Dixon, a Scottish born tobacco magnate. *Abergeldie* was available as its builder, Dr Edwin Chisholm moved to Victoria Road Ashfield in 1884. Hugh greatly extended the house to accommodate his large family of ten children and numerous staff.

Sir Hugh Dixon, a man of considerable wealth, was an avid collector of exotic plants and employed between 7 and 17 fulltime gardeners who kept the extensive grounds in immaculate order. The public was invited to view on regular open days. The house had a grand entrance on Old Canterbury Road and a sweeping driveway took the visitor to the north facing entrance with its vine-covered balconies and unusual double bay windows with a tower allowing outstanding views over Sydney. The interior was a showcase for the extensive collection of Dame Emma Elizabeth Dixon. Special visitors, like the Americans from the Great White Fleet (1908) were met at Summer Hill Station in drays. The Dixons always gave Summer Hill as their address, although it was in the Petersham Municipality, albeit its extremity.

Sir Hugh's second son and eldest surviving child William had inherited the collecting genes of his parents. His collection of Australian works of art was housed eventually in the Dixon Galleries of the Public (later renamed State) Library of NSW, the building of which by the NSW Government was on a condition William laid down for his most generous donation. Trained as an engineer in Scotland he was employed by prominent engineer Norman Selfe, an Ashfield resident. Sir William had moved to Killara and when his father died in 1926 the property was put up for sale. There was intense community action for its purchase by the municipal council for community parklands. A plan for the four surrounding municipalities to do so jointly also failed. The estate was subdivided into 157 lots; and the house demolished. On the first of two advertised auction days, on 20 October 1928, all lots were sold. One year after the auction, William Dixon formally handed over his unique collection to the Public Library.

To the west of *Abergeldie* across Old Canterbury Road was the *Hurlstone* Estate of 26 acres where the owner had started up a school for boys but was forced to sell in 1880. Hugh Dixon, living at Petersham at the time would have found this land attractive but the death of his father had occurred in November 1880 at the same time as its sale. *Hurlstone* was bought by the NSW Department of Education to set up a Teacher Training College and later the Hurlstone Agricultural College. The top portion of the land was sold to the Anglican Church to set up Trinity Grammar School. Ashfield Alderman John Yeo approached the Department for the land and in September 1925 Yeo Park was opened. The present Infants school in Yeo Park is the remnant of the Department's holding.



Winter Trivia Answer

Brown & Kidd Pty Ltd was located at 147 New Canterbury Road Lewisham at the junction of Wardell Road. They were baking engineers and machinery merchants and operated from the 1910s until about the 1970s. The building, which still stands, is interwar and is in 'close proximity to a heritage item (the Huntsbury Hotel) and adjacent to the Lewisham Estate Heritage Conservation Area'.



Brown & Kidd Pty Ltd, later Georgiou's Confectionery, and now being redeveloped (photo from *The story of Petersham 1793-1948* (1948), p. 113); the clock with the Brown & Kidd lettering is in a market in the town of Kuranda, on the Atherton Tablelands west of Cairns (photo: Richard Blair)



Several members nailed this one (in order of reply): Peter Chessell, Diane McCarthy, Kay Abrahams, Audrey Furney, Murray Sinclair, Robert Hutchinson and Barbara Forsyth. The photo of another such clock in the July 1999 MHS newsletter was located by Robert in the central Tasmanian town of Ross. As Robert then ascertained, two clocks were used: one showing the time the bread went into the oven and the other the time it was due to come out.

Richard Blair

Spring Trivia Question

Who am I and how am I remembered in the local area?
Contact Richard 9557 3823 or by email:

marrickvilleheritagesociety@outlook.com

* * * *

The audience included current property owner-occupants in the *Abergeldie* Heritage Conservation Area and at least two MHS members who had lived in nearby *Abergeldie* Street as children. Mark's most informative talk was followed by lunch provided by MHS. We thank Mark and his fellow ADHS members for their conviviality and shared interest.

Jan Garaty

Editor's Note: An article by Mark Sabolch on this topic is in *Houses of the Ashfield District*, Journal 21 of the ADHS (2018). Copies are \$25 through ADHS <adhs@tpg.com.au> or ring 9797 7004.



Calendar of MHS events

Saturday 28 September

Historic & architectural tour of new Marrickville Library with Amie Zar and Barbara Emslie

Details on front page

Saturday 26 October

The Witches' houses of Annandale with Beverley Walsh & Ann Reynolds

Details on front page

Saturday 23 November

Discover Marrickville's secret past with Gabby Richards

The Society will have a stall at the **Dulwich Hill Fair** on Sunday 15 September and the **Marrickville Festival** on Sunday 20 October. Ring Iain 0400 473 252 for further information or to locate the stalls.

The Society extends **90th birthday wishes** to MHS Life Member and stalwart **Shirley Hilyard**. Until recent years Shirley rarely missed a Saturday meeting and many will recall her inspiration and guidance in matters relating to heritage watch in particular, as well as operational matters of the Society. She served as MHS president from 1992 to 1994, was a long term runner and for around 20 years reliably proofread the newsletter. Her health is now not the best, but she still maintains a keen interest in our progress.

'Memberies' from member Hazel Blair

Hazel Blair (nee Gibson; not related to editor) has been a MHS member since 1993. She grew up living in Australia Street Newtown and attended Australia Street School and Newtown Public School. Her first job was as a sales assistant in the toy department at Marcus Clark's in Railway Square, but she got very upset when one day a customer she was trying to assist stole some toys. Her family moved to Hurstville but she still travelled to Marrickville working as a typist with Frank & Bryce Bentley in Victoria Road. Hazel wanted to get into nursing, but was initially rejected as she had had scarlet fever during World War II. She eventually got into nurse training at St George Hospital but once married, raising three children prevented her from completing her training. Hazel cherishes her memories of nursing.

Hazel has pursued a strong interest in family history since the 1970s and has acquired numerous related journals over that time. She is looking for homes for *Descent* (journal of SAG), Victorian and Tasmanian family history journals. Her mobile is 0421 278 758, but the journals would need to be collected.

Members are reminded of the Society's revamped website with regular articles added. Webmaster is Rod Aanensen who would appreciate any feedback from members or visitors to the site. MHS also has a new email address. Both appear in black box below.

President Scott 0416 152 501

Heritage Watch Scott 0416 152 501

Treasurer Diane 9588 4930

Newsletter Richard 9557 3823

Local History Collection cataloguing project

Since late 2016 members of Marrickville Heritage Society have been working as volunteers with the Inner West Council Library and History Services to document the library's local history collection. Now that the cataloguing project is coming to a conclusion it is worth looking at what has been achieved.

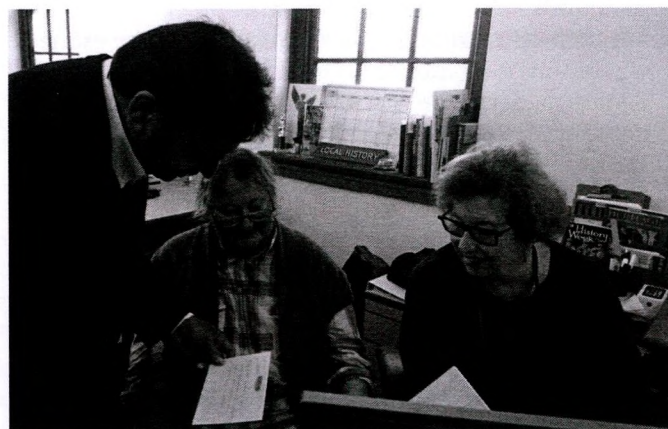
The aim of the project was to make the contents of the local history collection searchable and accessible online for researchers, heritage consultants, exhibition and event organisers, and the community in general. Rounded up by Richard Blair, the MHS participants have been Richard himself, Diane McCarthy, Mary Oakenfull, Vilma Bell, Megan Hicks, Paula Gard, Monica Oppen and Benjamin Summers.

Under the supervision of Local History Librarian Aleem Aleemullah, and working in pairs for several hours each week, the MHS volunteers discussed and described each item or group of items in the collection, and then entered what information they could gather into the collection database.

Mary and Vilma's 'History Corner' article in the July-August MHS newsletter explained how to access this information, and those who have been following 'History Corner' articles in previous newsletters will have some idea of what the collection contains. Much of the material comes from the former Marrickville LGA. There are objects ranging from surgical instruments to sewing machines; family photo albums to formal photographic projects; bound minute books to boxes of memorabilia; and much, much more. In all, 1,290 database entries have been created or edited during the course of the project. It is expected that the last few objects will be catalogued by the end of 2019.

It was an inspired idea to ask MHS members to bring their knowledge of the local area to the project and probably a source of amusement for library staff to see pairs of volunteers huddled together discussing the finer points of obscure collection objects, peering at photos while dredging up the names of people and places from the recesses of their collective memories, and piecing together stories from fragmentary sets of memorabilia. Truly a successful collaboration between Marrickville Heritage Society and the Inner West Council.

Megan Hicks



Along with Local History Librarian Aleem Aleemullah, MHS members Paula Gard and Megan Hicks pore over an album of slide transparencies in the Inner West Council's local history collection. They are working in the upstairs rooms of the Marrickville Town Hall, the former home of the collection before the opening of the new Marrickville Library in August 2019 (photo © Inner West Council).