



MARRICKVILLE

HERITAGE SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

ISSN 0818-0695 Vol 4 No 1 June 1987
Postal Address PO Box 415 Marrickville 2204

Our Next Meeting

Saturday 27 June, the Society will visit Goat Island, Sydney Harbour. **BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL.** Please contact Chrys on 5609333 ext. 282 or Anne on 4064862 by Wednesday 17 June. We plan to meet at No 6 Jetty, Circular Quay at 10.30am, but transport to the city can be arranged for those who need it. Cost is \$5.50 for adults and \$3.50 for pensioners and children. Morning tea can be purchased on the island.



The picturesque Harbour Master's residence on Goat Island reflected the importance of the harbour on the life of the city of Sydney early this century.

Office Bearers for 1987-1988

At the Annual General Meeting of the Society on May 23rd 1987 the following were elected:-

President - Richard Cashman

Senior Vice President - Eve Sharpe

Junior Vice President - Barbara Le Maistre

Treasurer - Anne Cherry

Secretary - Chrys Meader

Assistant Secretary - Bruce Welch

Committee Members - Robert Thompson; Anne Carolan;
Verona Rothwell.

President's Report

This year has been a busy and successful year for the Society. It goes without saying that any success we have had is due to the hard work of many people.

I would like to thank the members of the Executive; Eve Sharpe, Richard Cashman, Anne Cherry, Chrys Meader, Andrea Loder, and the convenors of the five sub-committees; Anne Carolan, Terry Hicks, Geoff Ostling, Verona Rothwell and Bruce Welch. Also Jan Pittard for her work on Publications during the early part of the year, and Greg Robertson who edited Heritage 3.

The Executive is indebted to Gary Nichols, who gave much legal guidance.

The members of the sub-committees also do a great deal of work, without which the Society would not have achieved as much as we have. The Newsletter deliverers also do a great job, getting the Newsletter and the Journal out to members.

The Executive had a great deal of business to deal with during the year, which was not made easier by problems which arose early on and continued to hinder the smooth flow of meetings. Without the patience of its members, the Executive committee could quite easily have disintegrated on more than one occasion. I thank those people for their support when things were not running smoothly.

An important part of our Society year once again was our Heritage Week Concert, in association with St Brigid's Church. As a token of our appreciation the Executive has decided to give a year's free membership to Mrs Connie Cloran and Mr David Molloy.

I have been proud to serve as President of the Society. I believe that the face we have shown to Council, to Government, to Commerce and to the general public has been a responsible one. We have tried to present our case with restraint and with dignity, but at the same time we have tried to convey a sense of urgency regarding our concern for the Heritage of Marrickville. We have been pleased to see both Government and private owners preserving much that is irreplaceable. In our area we have much to be proud of. Let's not be lulled into a false sense of security by our achievements to date. Much remains to be done, by education and persuasion.

I wish the Society and the new Executive well for the coming year.

- Bob Thompson

LOCAL HISTORY AND THE BICENTENNIAL

The most recent edition of the Society's Journal, HERITAGE No 3, has been very well received. The following review was published in The Journal of the General Studies Teachers Association of NSW (1987 No 1). We publish it in our Newsletter with the permission of the editorial committee of the GSTA.

A Review of HERITAGE No 3 by Dorothy Morris.

One of the exciting things to occur in Australia as we approach our Bicentennial year is the growing interest in our heritage from all areas of the community. Local history groups are being formed, regional museums established, and some old buildings restored instead of being demolished.

Some years ago, Marie Smith summed up what she saw as the major problems facing young people. 'To lose our heritage,' she said, 'is to lose our identity.'

Heritage No 3, the Journal of the Marrickville Heritage Society, is just one of the many local history publications to reach the GSTA. It has been edited by Greg Robertson and financed partly by a grant of \$500 from the Royal Australian Historical Society.

Articles include Greg Tillet's description of A Hidden Treasure, the Egyptian Room at the Masonic Temple in Stanmore which contains 'a magnificent frieze reproducing illustrations from the Papyrus of Ani, an Egyptian funerary text of about 1450 BC'. This frieze was sculpted in 1927 by Rayner Hoff, who was also responsible for the Hume Barbour Debating Trophy and some of the sculpture on the War Memorial in Sydney's Hyde Park.

Florence Jones' The Cathedral of the Western Suburbs describes the building of St

Clement's Anglican Church, also known as 'Bellingham's Folly' after the turn-of-the-century Rector of the parish who insisted on building for the future rather than the present. St Clement's, with its long aisle and commanding tower and spire, soon became a fashionable place for society weddings and over the years many thousands of brides have been summoned to church by the playing of the bells erected in the tower in 1922 . . . 'Oranges and lemons say the bells of St Clement's' . . . following the tradition of St Clement Danes Church in London.

Heritage No 3 also includes original research on the effects of the Great War on the Marrickville district. Through an examination of the St Clement's Parish Notes it is possible to follow national and international events - such as the outbreak of war, the Gallipoli campaign, the horrors of the western front, Prime Minister Billy Hughes' conscription campaigns, the 1917 Russian Revolution, the Armistice of November 1918 and the Paris Peace Conference - and see the influence they had on a small area of Sydney.

The war was a time of transition. The increasing needs of industry, brought on by the war, resulted in factories being built on the rich soil of the market gardens. Brick pits and woollen mills brought large numbers of new families and added prosperity to the area in the 1920s but completely changed its character. The great estates were divided up into small allotments and the houses which had once hosted Edwardian tennis and croquet parties and needed a small army of servants and gardeners were now converted into flats. Motor cars and electric trains allowed the merchants to live further away from the city and Marrickville took on the character of 'the Sheffield or Birmingham of the southern hemisphere.'

As we approach the Bicentenary, the Municipality of Marrickville has changed again. The brick pits on the Princes Highway at St Peters have been filled in and are part of the new Sydney Park and Vicar's Woollen Mills, which were reputed to make some of the finest woollen cloth in the world, is the site of a newly built regional shopping centre.

Heritage No 3 costs \$4 (plus \$1 postage) and is available from Chrys Meader at Marrickville Library or from the Publications Committee, PO Box 415, Marrickville 2204.

Cooks River Cleanup

It was good to see so many of our members at the Cook's River Festival, a community-based initiative which aims to encourage community interest in the river and its surroundings.

In November 1986, the State Pollution Control Commission launched a 'Clean Up Cooks River Campaign'. Pollution problems in the river began in 1848 when an Act of Parliament was passed banning noxious trades such as wool washing, tanneries and boiling down works.

These moved to Shea's Creek where a dam provided water and the effluent ran down Shea's Creek to Cook's River.

By 1890, pollution problems had become so bad that residents and local councils petitioned the state authorities in regard to sewage in the river, the slaughterhouse, the boiling down works and the tannery. It was declared that the odours arising from Cook's River had achieved a world wide reputation!

In the 1980s we no longer run the risk of the local cattle infected by typhoid drinking the river water but Cook's River is still suffering severe pollution problems that have turned it from "a very fine stream of fresh water" as described by Captain Cook in 1770 to a degraded, urban waterway.

An anti-pollution device employed in the 1870s by a wool washing station was to construct a filter of ti-tree and sand through which all waste water was strained. Factory pollution of the river has been controlled but problems are now being caused by people dumping rubbish and litter down drains, in the street and in the river. The anti-pollution device today is a community education program. Pamphlets have been produced for primary school children and are available at Marrickville Municipal Library. Contact Chrys Meader at 5609333 ext. 282.

Garden Notes

Members who are trying to recreate a nineteenth or early twentieth century heritage garden around their homes may be interested in visiting Colonial Cottage Nursery and Gallery at 62 Kenthurst Road, Dural, phone 6541340. Here landscape designer and horticulturist Mary Davis has constructed an old fashioned English cottage garden with winding paths and flower beds of heritage roses, foxgloves, columbines, daisies, geraniums and beautiful silver foliage plants surrounding an old stone house. Although at its best during springtime, this garden is planned to delight throughout the year. Behind the house is a nursery filled with fragrant small trees and shrubs, each one a treasure suitable for the small to medium size garden. Open from Thursday to Sunday, 9am to 5pm, it is well worth a visit.

Raffle Winners

Opera tickets in our raffle drawn at the AGM were won by Tony and Judy Deguara and Edna Andrews. Third prize of wine and beer was won by Phyllis Martin. Congratulations!

New Members

Gary McIvor; Mary Curcio; Brian and Sue Nugent; Kay Burling; Evelyn Watkins; Leslee Isted; Mark Mattheson. Welcome back to former members Ken and Rosemary Henderson and Richard and Barbara Appleton. Congratulations to Tim and Olivia Robinson on the birth of Alexandra, on 12th May.

How to Subscribe to the Newsletter

It's only \$7 for individuals, \$10 for households and institutions, \$2 for pensioners and students. You will become a member of the Society and receive copies of our Newsletter (either posted or delivered to your door) and our Journal Heritage. Your subscription is good for twelve months from the date of joining. Contact Chrys Meader at Marrickville Library (5609333 ext. 282) or write to PO Box 415, Marrickville 2204. The editor would also like to hear from members with contributions to the Newsletter. Contact Geoff Ostling at 5683029.