

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

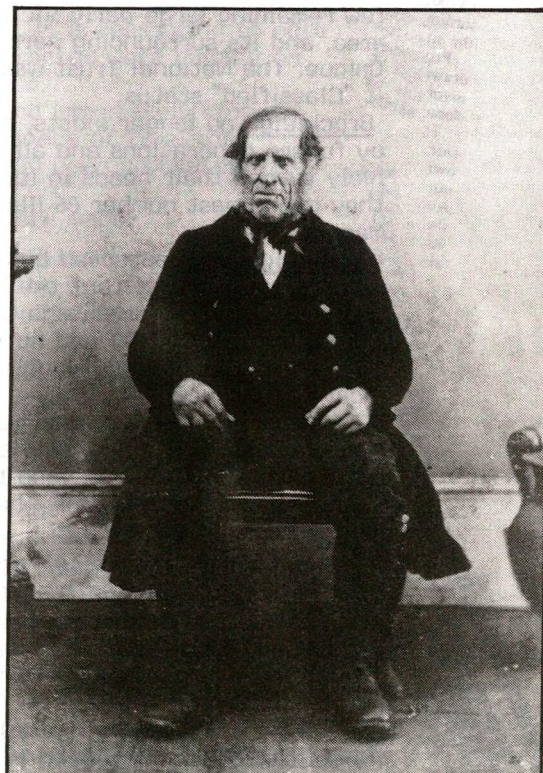
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Postal Address PO Box 415 Marrickville 2204

Our Next Meeting

Saturday 25 July, at 10.30am in the Amenities Room, Petersham Town Hall, Effy Alexakis and Leonard Janiszewski will present a report illustrated by slides on the National Photographic Survey of Greeks which is one of the major features of the Marrickville Bicentennial Project. Effy and Leonard have travelled throughout Australia gathering information including photographs of the many Greeks who flocked to Australia during the goldrushes of the 1850s.



Aikaterini Crummer (née Plessos)
appears to be the first Greek woman to arrive
in Australia, arrived Sydney October 1835.



John Peters (name anglicized)
believed to be first 'free' Greek male settler
in Australia, arrived late 1830s or early 1840s.

In March 1987, 100 of these photographs were presented at a major exhibition at the State Library of the Northern Territory in Darwin.

Court action on heritage demolition

Court proceedings being prepared by a company accused of demolishing a Victorian house in Marrickville. The case has been identified by Mr. Leo. The planning will see months of a \$100,000 demolition of the site. The project draws involvement from the side of the owner, Mr. Tsekos, who is alleged to have been involved in the demolition.

Demolition charge
Six people are to face charges for allegedly demolishing a Victorian house in Marrickville.

BROCKLEIGH 1886 - 1987

So soon after the loss of Rose's Emporium on Parramatta Road, many of us thought that it could not happen again. We knew that Brockleigh was under threat about six years ago, when several genuinely sympathetic prospective buyers were outbid. The purchaser's intentions were quite clear from the day he gained ownership. During those six years, no efforts were made to maintain the house, and the land was slowly but ruthlessly cleared.

Brockleigh was certainly neglected, but structurally it was sound, and the interior represented a virtual time capsule of Victorian architecture and domestic hardware. It was one of the very few remaining large early Victorian villas in this area, and its surrounding parcel of land made it unique. The National Trust was considering giving it "Classified" status.

Brockleigh no longer exists, and it will be missed by future generations and all those who instinctively turned their heads in its direction whenever they drove past number 86 Illawarra Road Marrickville.

Brockleigh was protected by a Section 130 Order, which clearly states that the "building shall not be demolished". The Heritage Council gazetted the Order on 29th May and notified the owner by mail (as well as placing a public notice in the local newspaper).

The owner, Mr. Tsekos, operating through the company Mobide Pty Ltd, said that he had no notification of the Order and that, if the Heritage Council had approached him, he would gladly have delayed demolition.

National Trust Environment Director, Mr. Chris Pratten, said the demolition of Brockleigh was "a provocative and deliberate intent to ignore the legislation". Here are the facts as we know them. What do you think?

Saturday, June 13.

Demolition work commenced in the morning. Soon after 1pm, a passerby saw the demolition and notified a Marrickville Heritage Society member. That member inspected the site, and at approximately 1.20pm contacted the Heritage Watch Committee.



Brockleigh on Saturday before demolition was stopped by police.



Heritage Watch, aware of the Section 130 Order on the property, immediately called police and others on the emergency call-out list. One of our members was on the site with a copy of the gazetted Order at 1.40pm, just a few minutes before police arrived.

The police, on reading the Order, stopped the demolition, but by this time the roof and some of the top floor of the house had been destroyed.

No arrests were made!

A man claiming to be the owner told police that demolition would not start again until the matter was legally resolved. Wary Society members sought further assurances from the police that work would not continue. The police said that they had fully explained the legal consequences of proceeding with demolition and thought it was highly unlikely that the owner would ignore the advice.

Mansion's owner faces prosecution

By ROSS COULTHART
The owner of a historic century house in Marrickville is being prosecuted for...

Monday June 15.

A Society member heard heavy machinery at 6am, and, on seeing that demolition had recommenced, immediately called the police.

Work had started in total darkness, and the machinery used was much larger than that used on Saturday and clearly had been selected to complete the job in the quickest possible time.

Heritage Watch again contacted Society members, a National Trust representative, local council aldermen, the media and the Member for Marrickville, who in turn contacted a representative of Environment and Planning. It is reassuring to note that nearly all those contacted were quickly on site despite the early hour.

At 6.15, police arrived and immediately stopped demolition. In this short space of time, the remainder of the house had been completely destroyed.

No arrests were made!

A Section 130 Order is still in force, and any removal of material from the site should be immediately reported to police, and Heritage Watch should be notified on 5699928.

Acting Environment Minister, George Paciullo, said that Leo Tsekos, Director of Mobide Pty Ltd, would be prosecuted under the Heritage Act 1977. The Marrickville Heritage Society members who witnessed these events will gladly support any action taken by the Heritage Council. The possible penalties include a \$20,000 fine, six months' gaol, an order to rebuild the house and a ten-year ban on any development of the site, if prosecution is successful.

This kind of financially motivated vandalism should not be allowed to continue. All members of the Society are urged to write to Mr. Bob Carr, Minister for Planning and Environment, Parliament House, Sydney 2000, and Dr. Andrew Refshauge, State Member for Marrickville, 20 Station Street, Marrickville, 2204, asking that Brockleigh be rebuilt OR the full penalties under the law be applied.

- Tony Deguara

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Heritage house bulldozed
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...was
...free-standing Victorian house
...When police stopped the demoli-
...about one-third of the house had
...June 1886

Excursion to Goat Island

On Saturday, 27 June, some 49 members and friends of the Society met at Circular Quay to catch the ferry to Goat Island, one of the little-known treasures of Sydney harbour. On arrival at the island we saw the site of the first Sydney stone quarries, visited the convict-built gunpowder storage magazine and the elegant military barracks, (now converted into a museum of the history of the island) and saw a reproduction of one of the original three portable wooden 'convict boxes' where the convicts slept at night while still wearing their chains to prevent escape.

Three items of particular local interest in the museum were:-

- the Certificate of Honour presented to the people involved in the rescue of the children from St Luke's Enmore Sunday School who were thrown into the harbour when the staging of the Government Floating Jetty at Circular Quay collapsed 'on the occasion of the Annual Pic-Nic' on 23rd September, 1899. In those days few children were able to swim but thanks to the bravery and quick-thinking of a number of adults, a major disaster was averted.
- the large photograph showing the two lines of some 800 welcoming craft for the arrival of the Queen at Farm Cove on the 5th February, 1954. This unique welcome was arranged by Commander Leslie Brooks, RAN, for almost fifty years a resident in Livingstone Road, Marrickville and 'Santa' at the Society's Christmas picnic; and
- the bubonic plague display. When the plague came to Sydney in 1900, 103 people died and thousands of others fled from crowded, rat-infested inner city areas such as The Rocks. Some of them moved to Marrickville because of the area's salubrious nature and clean air. This resulted in the rapid development of Marrickville as a separate municipality.

The tour of the island concluded with a delicious morning tea. As we got on the ferry for the return trip to circular Quay, all would agree with the comments reported in the Sydney Gazette following a visit of Governor Ralph Darling to Goat Island in 1826. 'His Excellency seemed quite enraptured with the view of the harbour and was pleased to express himself in terms of high admiration at the enchanting scenery. . .'. Our thanks to Jacki Isles who first suggested this excursion.

New Members

Les Halls; Joan Rooney; Scott Winspear.

Apologies to Mark Matheson, whose name was misspelt in the last edition of the Newsletter.

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.