

# MARRICKVILLE

## HERITAGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



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'Tempe' from an engraving by W. Harris published in the Australasian Sporting Magazine, November 1850. Tempe House takes on another guise with its acquisition by Qantas. See story back page.

### OUR NEXT MEETING Georges River Cruise

SATURDAY MAY 27th 10 am - 3.00 pm

Our next excursion will be a scenic cruise upon the beautiful Georges River to historic Botany Bay. There will be an historic commentary as we go along. We will be cruising on the ferry M.V. Mirabel, which will leave the wharf of the Georges River Ferry Co. Henry Lawson Drive, East Hills, promptly at 10 am and returning at 3 pm. Lunch will be at the St. George Motor Boat Club at Sans Souci. Bookings and payment strictly in advance to Anne Carolan on 406.4862. Numbers are limited. Park near East Hills Park or catch the train to East Hills station. If you need transport contact Anne Carolan.

### COMING EVENTS Annual General Meeting

SATURDAY JUNE 24, 10.30 am  
AMENITIES ROOM, PETERSHAM TOWN HALL.

Members are encouraged to attend the Society's Annual General Meeting to hear what has been achieved over the past year and to comment on future directions of the Society. Executive elections will also be held at this meeting and nominations are called for executive positions.

### COMING EVENTS Historic Walk in St Peters

SATURDAY JUNE 3, COMMENCING 10.00 am  
From St. Peters Anglican Church, St. Peters.

After the success of the Bicentennial Walk, a second historic walk through St. Peters has been organised for Saturday June 3. It will commence at 10 am from St. Peters Anglican Church, 187 Princes Highway, St. Peters. Morning tea will be served while walkers will have an opportunity to inspect the church and view an audio-visual presentation on its history. A walk around the local area will take in places of historic interest, followed by lunch on the banks of the Cooks River and an afternoon inspection of the Bus & Truck Museum in Gannon St. Tempe. Cost: free, bring your own lunch.

Enquiries: 51.2332.

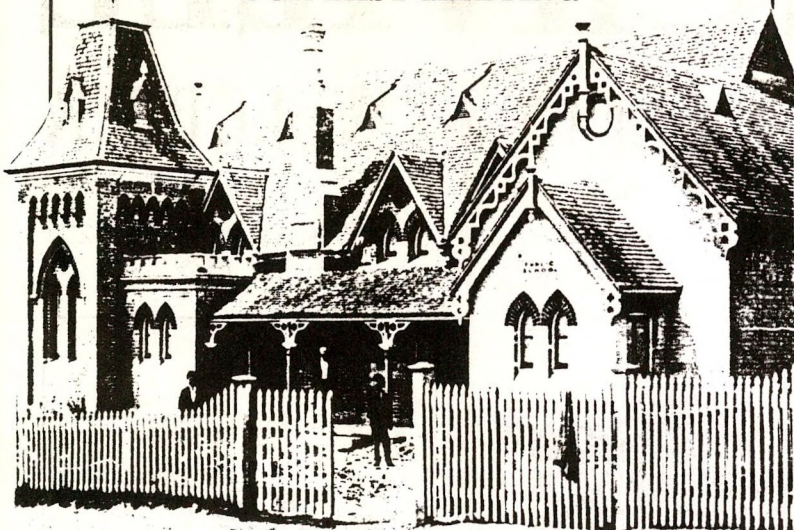
### Runway Protest Rally

SUNDAY JUNE 4, 10.00 am  
VICTORIA PARK, BROADWAY

A major march and rally will be held on Sunday June 4 to protest the construction of a third runway at Sydney Airport. Residents of Marrickville and St. Peters/Sydenham Tempe against the Third Runway report that this will be a major media event and urge those opposed to the runway to come along. Meet at Victoria Park, City Road at 10 am. March along King Street (under the projected flight path) to a rally and picnic at Sydney Park. Enquiries: 559.5502.



## OUR LAST MEETING



Our visit to Marrickville Public School in Chapel Street on Saturday April 29 was a special treat for two of our senior members, Albert Donney and Florence Jones. Both had attended the school as children; Albert from 1916 and Florence from 1930. In fact, Florence was Dux of the School in 1933. "The book I received as a prize was Seven Little Australians by Ethel Turner and I've still got it," she said. Albert showed us where the children had kept a vegetable garden in front of the original school building (pictured above in the 1880's).

## Music Fills St Brigid's

Punctuated by tumultuous thunder, the Society's annual Heritage Week Concert was once again a varied and thoroughly enjoyable musical evening. Some 300 people attended the concert on Friday April 21 at the magnificent St. Brigid's Church, Marrickville. The programme opened with a selection by the Christian Brothers Lewisham Brass Band, followed by the beautiful voices of the Tongan Choir of St. Brigid's, conducted by Frank Mafi. Composer Nigel Butterly spoke about Musicians and Music of Today. Bass baritone John Brosnan, who shared narration duties with Barbara Le Maistre, gave an inspiring performance of pieces from Rossini and Mendelssohn. Another highlight was trumpeter Paul Goodchild who filled the great church with the music of Gabrieli and Handel. The handbell ringers from Danebank School for Girls made a popular return. The evening ended with supper. Our thanks to all performers and to St. Brigid's musical director, Connie Cloran. Thanks also to Verona Rothwell and her Heritage Concert committee and to May Jessop, Marrickville Florist, for flowers.

## How to Subscribe

It's only \$8 for individuals, \$10 for households and institutions and \$2 for students and pensioners. You will 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. Write to P.O. Box 415, Marrickville, 2204, or phone 560.9333 Ext. 282. Marrickville Heritage Society holds regular meetings on the fourth Saturday of every month.

## Versatile Tempe House- Qantas is New Owner

TEMPE HOUSE 1836 - 1989

On the south side of the Cooks River between the highway and the railway bridge stands a grand colonial home bearing the name "Tempe" as does the suburb that it faces. Those of you who have read Heritage 4 will recall the name Spark and how, in 1836, he built his pretty villa overlooking the idyllic Cooks River with its plentiful clear water, far removed from the crowded inner city. The architect was John Verge, whose name is more often connected with Elizabeth Bay House.

We read how the grandest party ever held in the district took place there after the consecration of St. Peter's, Tempe, in 1839. Within three years, however, Spark was bankrupt and a tenant in his own home where he remained until his death in 1856.

From 1863 to 1866 Caroline Chisholm ran Tempe House as a school for young ladies. The Sisters Of The Good Samaritan took possession in 1877 where they conducted a retreat for destitute women and girls. In order to earn income a laundry was established at the rear.

At one stage the site was subdivided and streets appeared across the front lawns which run down to the river. Fortunately these appeared only on paper and the grass remained undisturbed.

During the past few years rubble has gradually appeared on the river flat without any real explanation. Mutterings of filling for townhouses, perhaps?

The nuns leave, the site is occupied by two caretaker priests. Then the National Trust magazine carries an advertisement for Rushton Fine Arts, which is offering for auction a "Tempe House dressing table signed J. Sly 1838". Old contents being sold off? What is happening?

Finally the word is out. Qantas has bought the site for use as a computer centre! Tempe House is to be renovated as the nucleus. Hopefully a good renovation.

I wonder whether Verge realised that his design would prove to be so versatile.

- Terry Hicks

## School Needs Volunteers

Volunteers are needed at Marrickville West Public School, Livingstone Road, Marrickville, to help with the school's reading programme, which is designed to help children with difficulties in learning English in Years 1 - 4. Volunteers monitor the children's progress and no teaching is involved. The programme is held four days a week and any assistance (even a couple of hours a week) would be appreciated. Contact Sharon Dougherty at the school on 558.1137 or 559.2894.

## New Members

Pamela Stewart, Dulwich Hill;  
Fran Jelley, Lewisham;  
Norman McVicker, Mudgee.