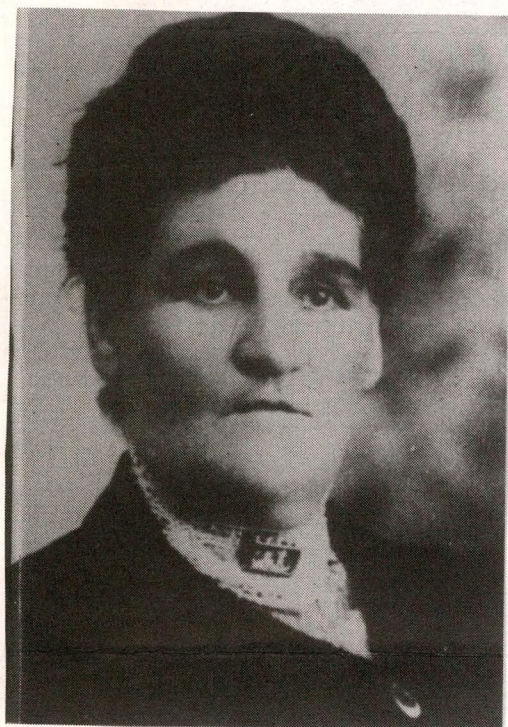


MARRICKVILLE

HERITAGE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Postal Address PO Box 415 Marrickville 2204
ISSN 0818-0695 Vol 6 No 8 March 1990



Louisa Lawson

OUR NEXT MEETING Profile on Louisa Lawson

SATURDAY MARCH 24, 10.30 AM
AMENITIES ROOM, PETERSHAM TOWN HALL

Louisa Lawson, mother of poet Henry Lawson, was a remarkable woman in her own right. At our next meeting Lorna Ollif, author of the 1978 biography of Louisa, will be guest speaker. Lorna writes: "Louisa Lawson's life was a vigorous one of struggle against poverty and hardship. From years spent on the goldfields, in running a farm, raising a family, and later in supporting her children in Sydney, she emerged as a vocally powerful woman at the forefront of the battle for women's rights and a fierce campaigner in NSW for votes for women."

"For these activist purposes she used the medium of her magazine The Dawn, itself a notable achievement. Amongst all this activity she found time to try her hand at inventing, writing prose and poetry, and rescuing the grave of the poet Henry Kendall from oblivion."

Louisa lived in Marrickville in the latter part of her life (see story back page) and after the meeting we will adjourn to the Louisa Lawson Reserve in Roach Street if transport is available.

COMING EVENTS Weekend Trip to Meroogal

SATURDAY 12/SUNDAY 13 MAY 1990

Our first weekend excursion for 1990 will be a visit to the Shoalhaven district. The highlight of the weekend will undoubtedly be a tour of the delightful historic house Meroogal at Nowra. Meroogal was built in 1885 for the Thorburn family. Four generations, mostly women, lived at Meroogal. They lived frugally, tended to patch and mend rather than replace, and the house is a living museum of the housekeeping and home-making practices.

We will also visit the HMAS Albatross Museum at Nowra and the Lady Denman Park and Museum at Huskisson and we'll tour the scenic and historic Kangaroo Valley. We will be travelling by mini-bus and will stay overnight at Nowra.

Details of accommodation, meals etc are yet to be finalised but inclusive cost for the weekend will be around \$100. Numbers are limited. Please call Judith 560-1751 or Shirley 569 1768 to book.

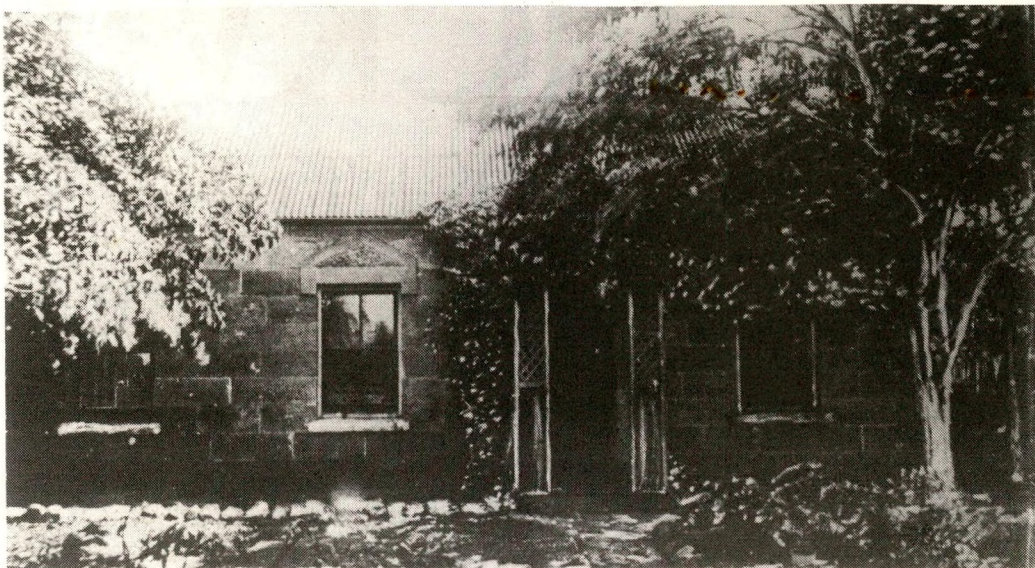
Heritage 5 : Great Gift Idea

Most members will already have their copies of Heritage 5. There has been some delay for those who receive their copies by post but they will arrive shortly. Heritage 5 contains a marvellous collection of articles on local topics and a fascinating collection of historical photographs. Heritage 5 makes an excellent gift for family, friends or neighbours interested in Marrickville. Aditional copies of Heritage 5 are available at all society meetings and at Marrickville Library.

Articles include: The Appa Teeza Hamburger Shop; Ballroom Dancing; Marrickville Town Hall; The Good Samaritan Order at Marrickville; Bonnie Doon Golf Club; Horse Racing in Marrickville and more.

Calender of Events

MARCH 24 - Lorna Ollif on Louisa Lawson
APRIL 28 - Magical Mystery Tour of
Marrickville Municipality
MAY 12/13 Visit to Meroogal and Nowra
MAY 26 Visit to Richmond Villa
JUNE 23 Annual General Meeting



Louisa's Marrickville Home

Late in life Louisa Lawson lived in Marrickville. The Old Stone Cottage, where Louisa and her unmarried son Charles lived in Renwick Street for the last 24 years of her life was originally built as part of Thomas Holt's Warren Estate. The only known photograph of Louisa's home (above) shows it to be a simple colonial style building with a galvanised iron roof. It was demolished in 1947.

Originally Renwick Street ran from Illawarra Road to Unwins Bridge Road. Mrs Lawson was the last householder before reaching the railway line from Carrington Road on the southern side. It is now the site of a factory.

It is well known that Louisa often entertained visitors in her cottage and although it is a long time ago I wonder if any present day residents remember stories of parents or friends visiting her. I would like to discover more about this remarkable woman. Please contact me on 568 3029.

GEOFF OSTLING

OUR LAST MEETING Consuming Interests

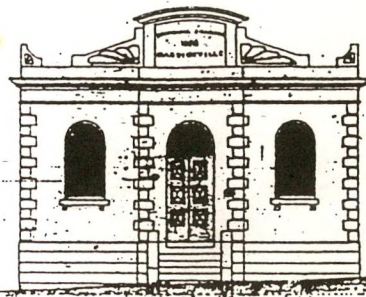
About 40 members visited the headquarters of the Australian Consumers' Association in Carrington Road, Marrickville on Saturday February 24. We were told of the history of the ACA and of the phenomenal success of Choice over the past 30 years. The ACA began in 1959 as a tiny volunteer group with 500 subscribers. It now has 170,000 subscribers and is still the only national consumer research and product testing organisation in Australia. It is a completely independent, non-profit, non-political organisation.

Publication of Choice is ACA's major function, but its role has broadened in recent years to consumer education, advocacy of the consumer view to governments, and at conferences, seminars and through the mass media.

After morning tea we toured the testing laboratories and learned how Choice's testing methods have had to keep pace with the sophistication of new product technology and development and, in some cases, have set the standard for testing. Thanks to those ACA staff members who took time out to show us around.

Old Town Hall History

Last issue we began a list of significant dates relating to the old town hall building in Illawarra Road, Marrickville. The information is from a conservation study by Orwell & Peter Phillips, Architects. Here are some more dates:



Original 1878 design of old Marrickville town hall before second storey was added.

1912: Photograph shows Victorian picket fence, contrasting colour scheme, side entrance, WCs and timber shed at rear.
1913: £400 paid for painting and £65 for electric light. 1914: J Campbell, Architect, submitted tenders for repairs and alterations, together with a proposed new room and fire stair on the side of the hall (which was "not entertained").
1921: Photograph of town hall shows Edwardian picket fence, side entrance removed, less contrasting colour scheme.
30 January 1922: Last meeting in old town hall. May 1922: Department of Education bought the town hall for £3050 for use as a kindergarten. 1930s: Photograph shows building as Marrickville Junior Technical School, with existing openings and glazing bars to windows.
1964: Photograph shows building as Marrickville Primary School Boys Dept.

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. The Heritage Society holds regular meetings on the fourth Saturday of every month, with a guest speaker or an excursion.

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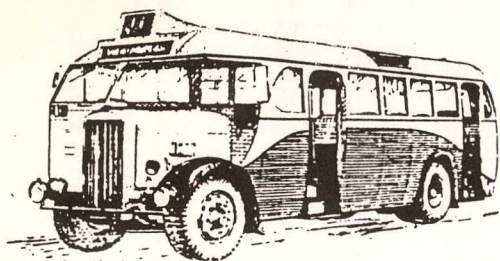
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OUR NEXT MEETING Magical Mystery Tour

SATURDAY APRIL 28, 10AM SHARP
MEET AT PETERSHAM TOWN HALL

Roll up, roll up for the Mystery Tour! Even if you have lived in Marrickville all your life we are sure our Magical Mystery Tour will reveal some points of interest you've not seen before.

Can you pinpoint the site of the old brickpits or the Chinese market garden? Do you know where the World War II air disaster took place? Did you know there were once cattleyards near Petersham Town Hall? What is the story of Wardell Road? How did the Warren View Hotel get its name? All this and more will be revealed as we tour the municipality in an historic bus, taking a route mapped out by our Local Studies Librarian Chrys Meader. There will be drinks and comfort stops along the way and we expect to return to Petersham Town Hall around 1pm. Bookings to Ian on 51 3027. Those members who booked at the last meeting need not rebook. Cost is \$8.



From the President - Society Finances

Every member should now have received a copy of Heritage 5 and there have been some very nice letters congratulating the authors and editors on the production of a quality publication. Unfortunately it has depleted the funds of the Society. First we hope that members will encourage friends to purchase copies at \$8 each. Second, as the cost of family and pensioner memberships have not changed for a number of years, it may be necessary to raise the annual subscriptions at the next AGM. Third we hope to find a local firm (or firms) to sponsor this newsletter in return for advertising space. The cost of 11 issues is approximately \$1000 each year.

GEOFF OSTLING.



Weekend in Shoalhaven

All those who visit Meroogal cannot fail to be enchanted by it. However, our tour of this historic house is just one highlight of the Shoalhaven weekend. Travelling by bus, we will leave Petersham Town Hall on Saturday morning May 12, stopping at Berry for morning tea. Then we will head for Greenwell Point, travelling via Terrara, Numbaa, Comerong Island and Jindyandy Mill. After a B.Y.O. lunch we will proceed to Jervis Bay for the afternoon where we will visit the Lady Denman Park and Museum. Then back to the Leprechaun Motel, Nowra. We will have drinks and view the local museum as guests of the Shoalhaven Historical Society, followed by dinner.

On Sunday we will take a scenic drive along the Shoalhaven River before arriving for our guided tour of Meroogal. After morning tea we will visit the HMAS Albatross Museum. Then we will head up the Cambewarra Mountain to historic Kangaroo Valley where we will stop for lunch and then return to Sydney via Bowral and Berrima, arriving around 6pm. All inclusive cost is \$120. Bookings to Judith 560 1751 or Shirley 569 1768.

100 Not Out for Amy Needham

Congratulations to our oldest member, Amy Needham, on her 100th birthday on May 3. All Heritage Society members are invited to attend a special service of thanksgiving at St Clement's Church, Marrickville at 10am on Sunday April 29, and then join Amy and her family for a centenary birthday morning tea in the church hall. Amy has lived in Illawarra Road, Marrickville since 1917.



Louisa Lawson signed this portrait of herself.

OUR LAST MEETING Pioneer of Women's Suffrage

Was Louisa Lawson the mother of women's suffrage? That's the view of Lorna Ollif, author of Louisa Lawson's biography, who spoke at our meeting on March 24. Lorna decided to write Louisa's biography because she believed Louisa had been maligned in most biographies of her son Henry Lawson (written by men, of course, says Lorna).

Louisa was undoubtedly one of the most influential women of her time and her magazine The Dawn, which ran for 14 years around the turn of the century, aired many topical and often controversial issues concerning women in Australia and overseas.

Born in 1848, Louisa was the daughter of Henry and Harriet Albury and she grew up on the goldfields of NSW. She married Peter Larsen, a Norwegian sailor, and they moved to Grenfell. Louisa had five children: Henry, Charles, Peter, Gertrude and Annette. A talented writer herself, Louisa encouraged Henry to take up poetry and supported him throughout his life. When Louisa moved to Sydney with her children she became a tailoress to support them but it was not long before she became involved in the literary scene and the burgeoning labour movement and established The Dawn.

After she closed the magazine in 1904 Louisa moved to Marrickville where she spent the later years of her life (see March 1990 newsletter). Louisa died in 1920 and is buried at Rookwood.

Unfortunately Lorna's book is out of print at the moment but she is negotiating for a reprint. Thanks to Lorna for a fascinating insight into a remarkable woman.

How to Subscribe

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More About Meroogal

Meroogal was built in 1885 for the Thorburn family. Although well known in Nowra, the family held no major place in our history. They were a genteel family who slowly adapted their way of life from the 19th to the 20th century.

Four generations of the family lived in Meroogal. They were largely women, the house being passed on through the female line of the family. Each generation adopted the housekeeping and homemaking practices of the previous generation and added new techniques and new ways of their own. By today's standards, they resisted change tending to patch and mend rather than replace.

The house and its exceptionally rich collection were purchased by the Historic Houses Trust in 1985, and the tradition of patching and mending has continued. The mellowness remains and the visitor can see through the layers of each generation to reveal the history of this most fascinating house.

From the President -

GREETINGS FROM MUDGEES

Country member Norman McVicker would have liked to have attended Lorna Ollif's talk on the life of Louisa Lawson. As most members will know, Norman was responsible for the restoration of Eurunderee Public School near Mudgee, first opened on 2 October 1876 as a result of a petition prepared by Louisa.

Norman was recently named Australian of the Year in the Mudgee district for his work at the school.

Fellow Lawson mate Brendan Dunne has been seriously ill in Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. He is now back in Mudgee and we wish him a speedy recovery.

NOT TOO YOUNG AT 89!

Society member Commander Lesley Brooks will be among the veterans returning to Gallipoli to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the first Anzac Day. Commander was born in 1900 and joined the navy at the age of 14, soon after World War I was declared. but he was too young to fight on the Gallipoli peninsula in 1915. However, he was on board one of the ships which provided naval support and was at the signing of the Turkish armistice in Constantinople in 1918.

GEOFF OSTLING.

South Head Rescue Attempt

Mrs S. Pinson of Manly Vale writes: "I am researching my family history and have found an ancestor was drowned while trying to rescue another in the ocean at South Head. At the time of the incident he was living at Stanmore.

"The attempted rescue took place on December 26 1902. The ancestor who drowned attempting the rescue was Henry Sherwood, he was stationed in Port Jackson on a Pilot Steamship, and tried to save Richard Walsh from the waters at South Head."

Does any member remember this incident, newspaper reports or stories about it?