

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

CAMPERDOWN DULWICH HILL ENMORE
NEWTOWN PETERSHAM STANMORE

LEWISHAM MARRICKVILLE
ST PETERS SYDENHAM & TEMPE



From the President

The President's Annual Report is usually delivered to members at our June AGM. Of course, due to COVID-19, our AGM has been postponed until it is safe for us all to gather together again, which we are hoping will be in February next year. Until then, I thought a summary of our tumultuous year would be valuable as we head to our long Christmas break.

The year certainly started with heritage business as usual, with the Society addressing the Sydenham to Bankstown Metro Parliamentary inquiry, and calling out developers of the inappropriate proposal for a five-storey block of shop-top apartments at 315-321 Illawarra Road in Marrickville. Our February meeting, with special guest Mervyn Rosen, speaking on the Japanese midget submarines in Sydney Harbour during World War II, turned out to be our only group meeting or outing of the year, so it will be recalled with particular poignancy.

Meanwhile, the pressures for development in our area continued unabated, with the Church of Christ in Illawarra Road and the Victorian villa *Otaki* in Marrickville Road both being targeted for demolition and replacement with apartments. Thankfully, Council intervened in both cases to impose Interim Heritage Orders on the properties to allow full assessments of their heritage values. The Church of Christ has been recommended for listing as a heritage item by a unanimous vote of Council, but the developers are actively challenging this with a disinformation campaign against 'the Marrickville NIMBYs' supposedly stopping their 'affordable housing' initiative. The fate of *Otaki* will rest with Councillors and the recommendations of an independent heritage report. As the building is now vacant and already being vandalised, the Society fears for its fate.

With COVID-19 halting our meetings and in person delivery of newsletters, the Society, like so many other families, charities, community groups and workplaces, has turned to electronic means to stay connected and viable. The Committee is getting quite proficient at holding Zoom meetings, and the colour newsletter delivered by email has been well received. Our website is going from strength to strength, garnering new members and lots of enquiries about local history from all around Australia (see Rod Aanensen's report on back page). And after a tentative start, our revamped Facebook page is

also gaining attention, with new members and 'likes'. The Society will be looking to bolster our presence in both of these 'new media', and we welcome ideas and contributions from our members.

In particular, the Society is very aware that we are all living through a horrible period, and we want to chronicle our experience for future generations, as did the diarists during the 1918 epidemic. We are therefore very interested in including articles and notices about our members' COVID-19 experiences in our newsletter and social media. (I encourage everyone to read Irene Gannon's moving email, on page 2, from lockdown in Victoria). We do not know of any Society members who have contracted the virus yet, and, given the way things seem to be trending, we can hope that none will.

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all good health, a Merry Christmas and a happy and COVID-19 safe 2021.

Scott MacArthur

No AGM – but still a Life Member award

In recent times it has been a tradition to acknowledge outstanding contributions to MHS by awarding Life Membership to a special member at our AGM. The AGM is delayed, but we felt it was fitting to bestow the award to our worthy recipient before year's end.



Ted Green—Life Member 2020
(photo Lorraine Beach)

Ted Green has rarely missed a meeting, outing, event or one of our many bus trips that typically featured his 'lolly jar' making the rounds. Ted recently moved to an aged care facility, and we arranged to deliver his Life Membership certificate. It says: 'In appreciation and recognition of his long term and continuing contributions to the Society. Ted's eagerness to share his extraordinary knowledge of local history, his storytelling, enthusiasm, exuberance and generosity are an inspiration for all.'

We look forward to when we can all meet up again.

Lorraine Beach

Petersham Bowling Club: first minute book donated

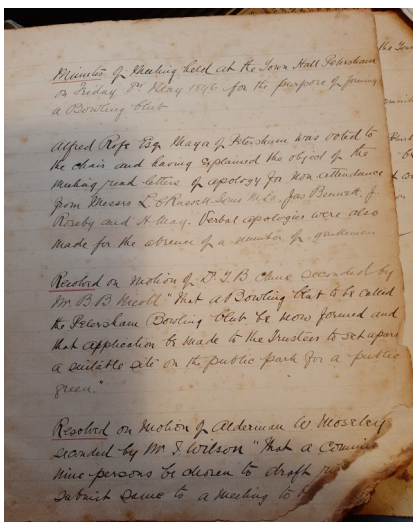
As well as having lived in the Stanmore-Camperdown area for most of her life and having been a most valued member of MHS, the late **Dorothy (Dot) Sullivan** (1918-2020) was a Life Member of Petersham RSL and a long term member of Petersham Bowling Club where she held various committee positions. The bowling club, founded in 1896 and in Brighton Street, Petersham, is one of the oldest in Sydney. (A history of the club by Geoff Howe titled *The thirty pounds club: the history of Petersham Bowling Club, 1896-1996*, appeared in 1996.)



PETERSHAM BOWLING GREEN
AND PUBLIC PARK
1906.

Sketch 'Petersham Bowling Green and Public Park 1906' (artist unknown) included in the donated collection of photographs

The club continues to operate, transformed into an entertainment/social venue whilst 'social' bowls can still be played. Commendably, it is entirely operated by local residents.



First page of minutes dated 8 May 1896

Club'. Alfred Rofe Esq, Mayor of Petersham, was voted in as chairman. Detailed minutes are recorded until 7 March 1905.

It is a credit to Dot that she had the foresight to take possession of and retain this valuable document in her safe keeping. The minute book and photos were recently donated to the Community History & Archives Collection and are available to researchers on request.

Richard Blair

Operation Jaywick – the final chapter

In April 2019, Mervyn Rosen addressed the Society about Operation Jaywick (see report May-June 2019 newsletter, available on our website). An obituary in *The Telegraph*, London (and *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 6 September 2020) covered the life and times of Moss Berryman, who died on 6 August 2020 in Adelaide, aged 96. He was the last surviving member of Operation Jaywick, a daring WWII raid on Japanese shipping in Singapore Harbour by commandos from Australia's 'Z Force'.

One of Moss Berryman's fellow Australian commandos in the operation was Horace Stewart (Horrie) Young. Horrie and Hazel Mary Allen were married at Marrickville in 1942. They had a long life after the war; they both died in 2011, just five months apart, and are buried side by side in the Central Coast's Point Clare cemetery. Hazel was 88 and Horrie was 90.

Keith Sutton

COVID-19 impacts: a very personal account

At our first online committee meeting in April 2020, I recall President Scott MacArthur saying, with regard to our newsletter: 'It's important to record experiences during this pandemic; newsletters will be read in future, just as we are now reading accounts of what happened in 1918 with the 'flu epidemic.'

Scott repeated this recently, when forwarding an email from member **Irene Gannon**, who lives in Victoria. A member since 2000, Irene has a close affinity with our area. Described by Scott as a 'very personal description of the pain this disease is inflicting on us all, physically, mentally and emotionally', Irene's email says:

'Half of my family (now long gone) came from Marrickville, as well as Newtown. We in Victoria are sick of lockdown and I see nothing forward at the time of writing. Trying to keep one's sanity is hard. I have not seen my family for six months. I have an 18-month-old granddaughter who I have not seen and it is killing me, although my son Skypes so I can see her progress. They live in Geelong where they have freedom.

'My daughter has an 18-year-old son who has autism, and even though we Skype every couple of days, I miss him as we are very close.

'Everyone is suffering and when you hear of the constant cheating of people, it makes you feel angry. I live alone and whilst I have a lot of interests (including my family tree research) and am a bit of a loner, I have discovered that being a loner at this time is not much fun. All I can do (like many others) is go for a walk or stay inside, although Pilates is open as from next week, so I am looking forward to that. It is freezing here in Melbourne; very cold and wet as well. Hoping for better things to come.'

We hope for that too, for everyone, and we thank Irene for allowing us to share her email. She's optimistic some unknown relatives may read this, make contact, and wish to know more about their branch in her family tree! The Gannons were a prominent pioneering family in the Tempe area, and other connected family names are Young, Scott and Christie.

Lorraine Beach

First Fleet to Carrington Road manufacturing

The recent launch of Louisa King and Ali Wright's Carrington Road project (see Sept-Oct 2020 newsletter) prompted member **Joyce Roy** to tell us of her late husband **Paul Roy**'s family connection to the early days of manufacturing in Carrington Road, Marrickville.

Paul was a direct descendant of First Fleet convict John Nichols; there follows an absorbing family history that needs more space than we have here. Almost 100 years later, in 1884, Paul Roy's great-grandfather Duncan Roy, son of Scottish free settlers Thomas Roy and Elizabeth Cargill, married John Nichol's granddaughter Ruth.

Duncan Roy was a farrier, blacksmith and coach builder. In 1888, he set up a forge business next to Rockdale Town Hall. Duncan and Ruth had three children, one of whom was Horace Aubrey Roy who, on his father's death in 1927, took over the business, Dufor Holdings, and began making motor parts and forgings of engine valves. His son, Leslie Claude Roy, who worked in the factory as a mechanical engineer, was Paul Roy's father.

A working partnership with another firm lasting many years led to a business amalgamation. Horace became a director of the newly formed Duly & Hansford, destined to become a major manufacturer in Carrington Road.

In 1979, Paul's father donated blacksmithing tools and other materials from those early days to Sydney's Powerhouse Museum. Joyce Roy has contacted the museum to ascertain the items' current status, and awaits their advice.

Heritage items from Rozelle

We've been contacted via our website by WestConnex's Rozelle Interchange Project, advising of their Heritage Salvage Distribution Program. Items salvaged from properties in Rozelle, demolished to enable the works, will be given away, hopefully to be 'sympathetically reused and integrated back into the local area'.

Items include doors, windows, mouldings, fireplaces, decorations, tiles and more. A catalogue, information including priority of distribution and a form for Expressions of Interest, are available on the website <rozelleinterchange.com.au/salvage>. EOIs close at 9 am on 19 November 2020. Our thanks to the Program's Natalie Kutcher for extending this offer to our members.

Cooks River audio tour

Kudos to Council's Community History team for this audio tour of pathways from Alexandra Canal to Marrickville Golf Club. Commentary by MHS member Prof. Ian Tyrrell. Well-produced, educative, and free online (izi.travel; audio tours; put 'Cooks River' in the search box). The Carrington Road Industrial Heritage tour is there too. Note **Richard Blair**'s review on their website—you'll have to forgive the misspelling, resulting in mispronunciation, of Ian's surname.

Summer Trivia Question

My name is Eva. I was born in Petersham, Sydney, in 1913. Fame came to me via my offspring. Who am I? Email marrickvilleheritagesociety@outlook.com or ring Richard 0413 335 897.

Spring Trivia Answer



(photo Richard Blair)

Situated behind 55-67 Livingstone Road, Petersham, this building is part of *Rathlin*, the house built for merchant Robert Miller, who lived there with his family from 1883 until he died in 1902.

Rathlin is described in Cashman & Meader's *Marrickville: from rural outpost to inner city* (1990, pp. 140-1) as 'one of the grand villa estates of the late 19th century'. An article titled 'Marrickville: A Prosperous and Progressive Sydney Suburb', in *Town and Country Journal* (12 August 1899, pp. 30-32), states: 'Rathlin, the family mansion of Mr Robert Miller, one of Sydney's oldest merchants, is one of the most substantially-built structures in the colony. It occupies a central and elevated position on the western side of Livingstone Road, the main road connecting Marrickville with Petersham. The grounds are spacious, and the well-kept gardens are to be classed amongst the best in the suburbs.'



Rathlin, 1899 (Trove, *Town and Country Journal* as above)

Robert Miller was a wholesale grocer, a glass and china importer and 'at one time owned all the land between Morgan and Frazer streets fronting Livingstone Road. He also owned brickyards on the site of the present Marrickville Park'. He was a philanthropist and as a keen churchman, co-founded Petersham Presbyterian Church.

Rathlin was briefly a girls' college (1916-19) before being acquired by the Salvation Army when the familiar landmark castellated façade was added to what became the Salvation Army Training College, which operated for around 60 years. The property was bought in the 1980s by the state government, redeveloped and converted into public housing.

Robert Miller is remembered in nearby Miller Street, whilst Napier Street is named after Robert's wife Isabella Napier Miller.

The source of the name *Rathlin* is not known, but as Robert Miller was a native of Londonderry, Northern Ireland, it is thought likely the estate was named after Rathlin Island, off the northernmost tip of Northern Ireland.

Thanks to John Chappell, who inspired the question and provided some of this information. This was a trickier photo ID question than usual, given the house is not visible from Livingstone Road.

Richard Blair

Webwise

marrickvilleheritage.org.au

The COVID pandemic has caused quite a change in our behaviour, either by decree or by choice. One change has been the increase in people visiting our website and Facebook page.

The website has already doubled the number of visitors it received for the whole of last year. The article about Marrickville's response to the pneumonic 'flu pandemic of 1919 was especially popular and since July has been read over 1,200 times. We receive at least one enquiry a week as people research their families or houses, and seek to learn more about our area. We try to answer people directly or point them in the right direction to continue their research.

Our Facebook page has seen a recent surge, with a 20% increase in joining requests this year. We hope this page broadens our accessibility for people to let us know about development issues and also to tell stories about our little part of the world.

Rod Aanensen

The secret is out – Marrickville is 'cool'!

Time Out is a London-based magazine delivering 'insider' tips on local culture, the arts, music, travel, food, film and things to do in 328 cities in 58 countries. Accessible online worldwide, it is printed and handed out in some cities – all free. *Time Out* recently published its 2020 list of 'the 40 coolest neighbourhoods in the world', ranked for 'fun, food, culture and community'. Marrickville holds number 10 position – placed between Haut-Marais in Paris and Verdun in Montreal.

Time Out says: 'Marrickville has managed to remain affordable and inclusive, largely thanks to the continuing absence of soulless high-rise developments and juggernaut hospitality franchises. Long may it last.' Indeed.

COVID-19 restrictions continue

Although our activities have been cancelled since March 2020, committee meetings have continued, as has our core work of 'heritage watch', DA submissions, producing newsletters, maintaining the website and dealing with various enquiries that come our way. While meetings, outings and the AGM are yet to be deemed 'safe', we are endeavouring to organise a guest speaker for a webinar and will advise further when arranged.

No Pot Luck Dinner in 2020

For the first time since 1989, our traditional end of year celebration, Pot Luck Dinner, will not be held this year. We look forward to planning a special, celebratory group event when restrictions are lifted.

Meanwhile, we wish everyone health and happiness for Christmas and the New Year.



Did you forget something?

A gentle reminder that MHS fees were due on 1 June. Contact Diane (details in box at right) for 'how to' help or MHS account information.

Mellow Yellow: Meadow Lea – the house and the margarine

For a layman, the inimitable nonagenarian **Ted Green** has an imposing amount of knowledge of so much of Sydney's history and architecture (and much else!). When it comes to question time after a talk, Ted sometimes stumps guest speakers or bestows upon them fresh information.

A lifelong enthusiastic bushwalker, he has belonged to many heritage/historical societies across Sydney and has led walks, including a MHS walk around Hunters Hill. Having grown up in the Newtown-Stanmore area, he later lived in Bundeena and Willoughby for many years.

Ted recently passed on a leaflet which features the magnificent Art Deco style residence in Sydney Road, East Lindfield, *Meadow Lea*, built around 1940 for James Armstrong, and listed as a heritage item in Ku-ring-gai Council's LEP. According to the leaflet, the house 'features a double staircase and projecting canopy supported by columns and the garden, fencing and gates all intact . . . tennis court, swimming pool . . . [and] internally there is a circular staircase, ballroom and a cocktail bar.'

In 1948 *Meadow Lea* was sold by Armstrong to restaurateur Azzalin Romano, who owned *Romano's* in Martin Place, one of Sydney's premier post-war nightclub restaurants, as well as, for a time, the champion racehorse *Bernborough*, before selling him to movie mogul Louis B Mayer.

Ted's leaflet incorrectly indicates that James Armstrong was with Marrickville Margarine [sic]. Armstrong did work in margarine but was sales manager for Oliver Triggs, the founder of the Meadow Lea Margarine Co., and became a co-owner until 1945.

Oliver Triggs relocated from Melbourne to Sydney in 1931 and founded the Meadow Lea table margarine brand in 1932 in Wellington (now Chelmsford) Street, Newtown. Meadow Lea was one of the earliest brands of table margarine manufactured in Australia. Some claim it to be the earliest, although this is a matter for dispute. What appealed to Ted most of all in this story is that *Meadow Lea*, the house, 'has always been painted the colour of margarine'.

Richard Blair



Meadow Lea (photo North Shore Times, 26 February 2014)

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