

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

CAMPERDOWN DULWICH HILL ENMORE  
NEWTOWN PETERSHAM STANMORE

LEWISHAM MARRICKVILLE  
ST PETERS SYDENHAM & TEMPE



## General Gordon Hotel re-opens after fire

The General Gordon Hotel at Sydenham, site of a hotel since 1885, is a listed heritage item of local historical, aesthetic and social significance, regarded as representative of Tooth & Co. architect Sidney Warden's Inter-war Georgian Revival style of hotels.



General Gordon Hotel on fire 30 July 2018  
(photo: NSW Transport Vlogs, YouTube)

So it caused a stir when, mid-renovation in July 2018, the pub caught fire and sustained major damage.

As is often the case when a heritage building burns, cynicism and unfounded speculation were rife; but to the owners' great credit, they made good on their stated intentions to restore the historic building. The General Gordon Hotel has risen from the ashes with a splendid rebuild and renovation faithful to its 1932 form. The exterior tiling, long since painted over, has been restored where possible; additional tiles to match the originals have been specially fabricated.



Works completed; ready for 26 February re-opening  
(photo: Lorraine Beach)

Perhaps this rebirth of the General Gordon is a harbinger of change for Sydenham, a suburb treated unkindly by 'progress' in the past three decades. Large swathes of Sydenham were obliterated after

compulsory acquisition by the Australian government, and subsequent demolition in 1995 of 195 buildings, including 152 homes deemed uninhabitable due to aircraft noise (Sydenham lies directly under a flight path to Sydney's airport, just 2 kilometres away). Families who'd lived there for generations were forced to relocate, mostly out of the area. In 2017, after 20 years of council neglect, Inner West Council demolished the area's 1884 church in Railway Road, despite a decade long struggle by a few groups, including MHS, and some councillors opposed to demolition, to save and repurpose it.

The 'under construction' Metro rail from Chatswood to Bankstown has a new station at Sydenham, supplementing the existing heritage station of the above ground rail system. Sydenham, along with its near neighbours Tempe and St Peters, is likely to experience an urban resurgence, as have most of Sydney's inner west suburbs. With its 'old but new' façade and attractive new interiors, the General Gordon looks set to once more become a favoured local social venue.

Congratulations to the owners on a job well done.

## COVID update

Lorraine Beach

We're really excited about the prospect of regular 'in person' meetings starting soon.

With vaccinations underway and new transmissions of the virus seemingly suppressed in the greater Sydney area, our Secretary, **Mary Oakenfull**, has been busy liaising with Council over bookings of venues, creating and lodging our COVID safety plan and preparing the requirements for when we can return to meetings. We hope to soon announce our AGM and a resumption of regular activities.

Scott MacArthur, President

## Marrickville Medal 2021

A reminder that entries for Inner West Council's **Built Environment Awards**, incorporating the **Marrickville Medal for Conservation** and the Urban Photography competition, will close on 8 March. Applications on Council's website. **Dr Scott MacArthur**, the Society's President, has been invited to be one of the judges for the Medal.



## Sid Cheesewright and his flying machine

Sidney (Sid) Harold Cheesewright was quite well known in Petersham in the late 1920s and 1930s as he owned a motor garage at 326 Stanmore Road, Petersham, and lived nearby. Sid and his friend Bill Johnson, a ground engineer, decided to build a plane and their efforts were described in various newspaper reports, including one on 7 July 1931 (*Coffs Harbour and Dorrigo Advocate*, p. 3: 'Built a Plane. Engine from

Urunga Crash'). Sid had always wanted to build a plane and took his opportunity when he bought the engine that had been in a plane that crashed at Urunga, south of Coffs Harbour, in December 1929.

That plane was flown by acclaimed airman Guy Menzies, who, in January 1931, made the first flight in a single-engine plane across the Tasman Sea. (Considered a daredevil, Menzies achieved other aeronautical accomplishments;

he moved to England, joined the RAF where he became a squadron leader, but died in November 1940 along with his crew while serving in Egypt.)

Sid and Bill built the plane in Sid's garage in their spare time 'on the lines of a gipsy moth'. Bill constructed the fuselage and wings whilst Sid completed the fitting and turning work, at a cost of over £300. A test flight carried out by Flight-Lieutenant McDonnell of the RAAF at Mascot Aerodrome was successful. Sid learnt to fly and obtained his pilot's licence. It is not known how many flights he completed, although he was apparently engaged in commercial flying.

On the morning of Sunday 12 March 1933, Sid and a passenger took off from Mascot to take some photographs of Sydney Harbour. While passing over Newington College at a height of about 1500 feet, the engine failed and Sid decided to try and do a stall landing on Henson Park. Once the plane touched the ground 'the undercarriage collapsed, and the machine pitched on to its nose'. The plane sustained considerable damage, though the engine was intact. Neither Sid nor his passenger was hurt.

An account of the crash appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald* (13 March 1933, p. 9), 'Forced Landing in Marrickville Park. Two Men Escape'.

## FORCED LANDING IN SUBURBAN PARK.



The wreckage of a Gipsy Moth aeroplane, which made a forced landing yesterday in Henson Park, Marrickville. Both pilot and passenger escaped injury.

## FORCED LANDING In Marrickville Park. — TWO MEN ESCAPE.

The engine of an aeroplane in which two men were flying yesterday failed whilst the machine was passing over Stanmore.

The pilot made a forced landing in Henson Park, Marrickville, and the machine was badly damaged.

Both men escaped without injury. Sidney Harold Cheesewright, 32, proprietor of the Stanmore Garage, Stanmore-road, Petersham, and John Henry Makinen, 18, of 20 Holmesdale-street, Marrickville, took off from Mascot in the morning, with the object of passing over the city and then taking photographs of the harbour. Mr. Cheesewright was piloting his own machine, a de Havilland Gipsy Moth, and when passing over Newington College at a height of about 1500 feet, the engine failed.

"I knew that I had plenty of altitude," Mr. Cheesewright said in describing his experience, "and I could see a fair number of landing-places. I chose Henson Park, and circled round to come into the wind. The park looked rather small, and I decided to make a stall landing. Almost immediately, after we touched the ground, the undercarriage collapsed, and the machine pitched on to its nose."

Mr. Cheesewright said that the prospect of a forced landing in a busy suburb did not worry him. From the air, he said, numbers of parks and empty paddocks could be seen which were quite suitable for forced landings.

His passenger, John Makinen, treated the happening as a joke, and his chief regret was that he got so few photographs.

The propeller, undercarriage, and bottom wing of the aeroplane were damaged beyond repair. The fuselage was broken in two places, but the engine was unhurt.

The machine itself crashed in the country about two years ago, and Mr. Cheesewright purchased the wrecked aeroplane, and rebuilt it in his own garage. He has been used in commercial flying, and was uninsured.

Ambiguous heading aside, the landing was known to be in Henson Park, not Marrickville Park. It is not known if Sid, then 32, rebuilt his beloved flying machine or pursued his interest in aviation, but it seems he continued to operate his Petersham garage until he retired. In 1938 he married Eileen Prentice and they lived at 18 Albert Street, Petersham. They had two daughters: Beverley and Lynn, who died aged 10 months in 1947. Beverley married Roy Thompson and they had children. Sid died in 1978.

The passenger was John Henry Makinen, 18, of 20 Holmesdale Street, Marrickville. His interest in aviation clearly amounted to more than taking photos as in February 1944 he enlisted in the RAAF and served with No. 24 Squadron, becoming a Flight Sergeant. He was discharged in May 1946. He died in 1982. Probate papers indicate he had worked as a surveillance inspector and lived in Weston in the Hunter Valley.

One of Sid's closest friends was Charles Bushby, who lived in Chalder Street, Marrickville. Charles had a daughter Laurel, who, together with husband Raymond Young, joined our Society in 1996. Laurel remains a member and knew Sid and his family well. I thank Laurel for her assistance with this article.

**Richard Blair**

(Newspaper articles and photo courtesy of [trove.nla.gov.au](http://trove.nla.gov.au))



## A story from under the floorboards

We are often contacted by readers with artefacts they think are worth preserving. One such contact was a family renovating their home in Erskineville. On lifting some floorboards they found a number of glass bottles. I took possession of the bottles and did some digging. This is what I found.

**Four Shelley's bottles;** probably for carbonated, flavoured drink. Branded with a shell with a large 'E' inside it (it is one of those 'get it' jokes).



Shelley's bottle  
(photo: berts.com.au)

John Augustine Moore ('Jam') Shelley started Shelley's Aerated Water and Cordial Factory in Broken Hill in 1893. He died in 1927 and sons Matt and Herb took over the company, moving to 50 Smidmore Street, Marrickville as Shelley & Sons. The site has been absorbed into Marrickville Metro, but Shelleys Lane (between Llewellyn and Juliett Streets) is a permanent reminder.

The family stayed in Marrickville until 1968 when they sold Shelley's to Coca-Cola Amatil and moved to Taren Point as Bert's Soft Drinks. That company continues today.

**One Henry Jones & Company (Sydney) bottle;** probably for sauce. The company was started in 1891 in Hobart by Henry (later Sir Henry) making jams and marmalades and, later, sauces. Henry moved to Melbourne in 1895, buying a large building to make jams etc. In 1903 he formed IXL company and created the IXL brand, which is still on the shelves today. At one time IXL had 30% of the Australian market in jams! The company was eventually bought by SPC Ardmona and is now owned by Coca-Cola Amatil (trend emerging).

**One 'The NSW Bottle Company' bottle;** probably for beer. This company started in 1916 and was owned by Tooth & Company and Tooheys. It supplied bottles to both its own and other brewers. It also had a bottle recovery program; thus, the bottle has 'This bottle is property of . . .' written on it. They also put the date of manufacture on the bottles and this one has 1932 on its base. The company was deregistered in 1990. There are a number of these bottles in the Sydney Quarantine Station Moveable Heritage Collection.

**One Lackersteen & Company tomato sauce bottle.** Founded by Augustus Lackersteen in the 1870s, the company also made chutneys, jams and marmalades. This bottle has a lot written on it and dates from after 1920. It includes the company trade mark made up of Augustus's initials, and 'This bottle is the property of . . .'. It seems the company

closed sometime after 1945. Lackersteen lived in a mansion called *Glendower* in Ryde; unfortunately it no longer exists. The site is the operations yard for Ryde Council, and looks just as beautiful I am sure!



The Lackersteen mansion *Glendower*

**Angela Phippen**, historian, Local Studies Librarian for City of Ryde, MHS member and past MHS committee member, talked about *Glendower* in her presentation of 'Demolished Houses of the Parramatta River' to MHS in February 2010. This photo features in City of Ryde's pamphlet of the same name. Report on Angela's talk in the March 2010 newsletter on our website.

There is also one of these Lackersteen & Company sauce bottles in the Sydney Quarantine Station Moveable Heritage Collection.

**Two Dairy Farmers Co-op Milk Company pint bottles.** The Co-op was started in 1900 with a large number of farmers from the Illawarra region. They set up a Sydney bottling plant in Ultimo in 1935 but they had plants elsewhere from the 1920s, so it is hard to date these bottles. The company is now owned by Kirin Holdings (a Japanese beverage company).

### The message in the bottles

So, looking at all of this, I would guess these bottles turned up at the Erskineville house in the 1930s. They could have been left by men working on the property – who had cups of tea with milk, ate meals topped with tomato sauce, and drank beer and soft drinks for refreshment or as an end of day treat.

**Rod Aanensen**

### St Peters Cooks River History Group

**Laurel and Bob Horton** have kept busy during restrictions. Their group's YouTube channel has 29 local history videos including 'Highlighting History of Suburban Sydney', walk guides, history notes, photos and more – all expertly put together with excellent narration. Access the videos via YouTube – search 'st peters cooks river'. Laurel rightly says it's a way to keep in touch with local history in the absence of meetings.

## Webwise

marrickvilleheritage.org.au

Keep an eye on our website for: new postings by webmaster **Rod Aanensen**; good reading from the many stories there; access to all MHS newsletters from 1984 to 2020. Visit our Facebook page; join up and share your local history photos or yarns.

## Quirky front gardens competition

Lunch for two at *Petty Cash Café* (near Enmore Park). That's for the winning photographer of the quirkiest, most whimsical garden in our local government area. Send your photo to us – email addresses to the right and below, or postal address at foot of front page. **Entries close 31 March**. Be sure to ask the owner's permission to publish the photo (but not the address) in our newsletter.



## Autumn Trivia Question

Where would one find this stone column (left) and what is its significance?

Contact Richard at Society's email address below or 0413 335 897.

## Midsummer Trivia Answer

Billiards. Conjures up all manner of images and associations: men with eyeshades stooping over long tables in smoky saloons with cue in hand; illegal gambling; SP bookies; police raids; truancy; petty crime; drinking; Walter Lindrum.

A cue game dating back centuries, billiards started to gain popularity in Australia after manufacture of billiard tables

began here during the 1850s and pubs became licensed to have billiard rooms. The game was particularly popular amongst the working class. It was the early closing of pubs at 6 pm introduced in 1916 that led to the rise of billiard halls in Australia and they flourished everywhere for decades. The end of six o'clock closing in the mid-1950s, greater police regulation and the introduction of TABs marked the gradual death knell of the billiard hall, with most gone by the early 1970s. Whilst billiards is still played, by the 1970s snooker and pool had become much more popular in pubs and clubs.

The sign shown in the last newsletter is in a cluster of shops near the junction of Addison and Enmore Roads, Marrickville – directly opposite the Victoria on the Park Hotel and across from Enmore Park. It may be the only remaining such sign in the local area – although members will no doubt let us know

of any others in the Inner West of Sydney. In any case, this sign is worthy of retention; vigilance is



17 Addison Road, Marrickville tiled sign in context of its intact shopfront (photo: Lorraine Beach)

[Books and curios—Sunday 10 am to 4 pm]

needed should a DA ever be lodged that would lead to its loss. Member **Paula Gard** drew the sign to my attention, stating: 'It is a shop that sells second-hand books, etc. I'm not sure how long it has been there, and I have never been into it, as it's open only briefly (on Sundays I think).' Paula has a long memory: 'I remember there being a butcher, hairdresser, exhibition space, printer, newsagency and food outlet located there.' Paula points out how that part of Marrickville has always been well served by public transport, including, once, the 'tram route, the corner [being] shaped in a broad sweeping curve to accommodate the tram lines.'

Congratulations to four MHS members who knew the sign – **Lorraine Beach, Megan Hicks, Elda Ribeiro** and **Ali Wright**, who said: 'For the first time I know the answer to the trivia question. I have admired the tiling on many occasions: it is on the shopfront of 17 Addison Road between the metal shop and a Thai restaurant.' None owned up to ever having frequented the premises, nor were they asked!

An informative article about billiard halls in Australia is accessible online: just enter the search phrase: 'rise and fall of billiard saloons'.

**Richard Blair**

## A milestone, a move and a loss

Esteemed member **Joy Lewis** recently turned 102! Our regards to Joy, and thanks to her grandnephew, member **Brett Johnson**, for sharing the news. After more than 100 years in the same family, **Joan Francis's** Five Dock house will be sold. Irrepressible as ever, Joan is moving into a retirement village. On a sad note we report the recent death of long time Marrickville resident, member **Moya Heinrich**, aged 85. We offer our condolences to Moya's loved ones.

### President & Heritage Watch

Scott 0416 152 501 | sbtarmac@gmail.com

### Treasurer

Diane 9588 4930 | diane.mccarthy@optusnet.com.au

### Newsletter

Lorraine 0416 224 472 | lbeach@iprimus.com.au

### Webmaster

Rod 0431 487 375 | mhswb@exemail.com.au