

# MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.

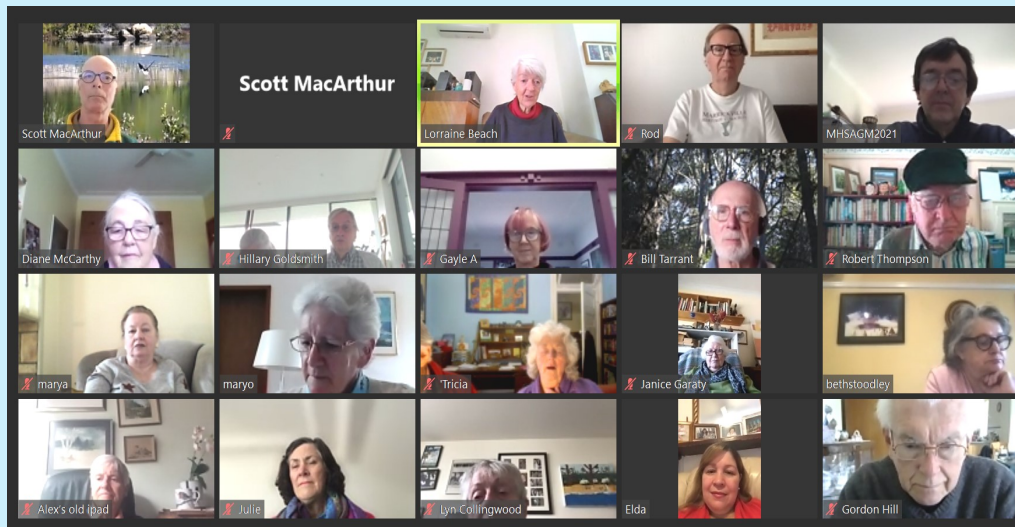
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## Annual General Meeting held at last!

Due to the Society's careful policy of 'no face to face meetings' since the COVID-19 pandemic began (our last meeting was the 'midget submarines' talk in February 2020), our 2020 AGM was deferred and later attempts and plans scuttled by various outbreaks. So it was a triumph that we held the AGM online on Saturday 28 August. Sincere thanks to all attendees—your patience, tolerance, loyalty and good humour were greatly appreciated as we navigated unfamiliar territory and got the business done.



Not the greatest photos of any of us, but a memorable event—our first online AGM!

Left to right from top: Scott MacArthur, Lorraine Beach, Rod Aanensen, Iain Carolin, Diane McCarthy, Hillary Goldsmith & Richard Blair, Gayle Adams, Bill Tarrant, Robert Thompson, Mary Barthelemy, Mary Oakenfull, 'Tricia Blombery (Stuart Grigg out of frame), Jan Garaty, Beth Stoodley, Alex Oonagh-Redmond, Julie Bishop, Lyn Collingwood, Elda Ribeiro and Gordon Hill. (Zoom 'screenshot': Scott MacArthur)

Reports to members on activities from July 2019 to July 2021 were presented to the meeting: President's report — **Scott MacArthur**; Financial reports—Treasurer **Diane McCarthy**; website and Facebook activities—**Rod Aanensen**; newsletter and journal—**Lorraine Beach**. All reports were accepted. Financial reports, usually handed to members on the day, are available by post or email on request. Other reports are below and on page 2.

Returning Officer, **Bill Tarrant**, declared all committee positions vacant and announced nominations for office bearers and committee positions. Elected were: President—Scott MacArthur; Vice Presidents—Lyndal Gowland; Jan Garaty; Treasurer—Diane McCarthy; Secretary—Mary Oakenfull; Assistant Secretary—Lorraine Beach; Committee — Rod Aanensen, Mary Barthelemy, Richard Blair, Iain Carolin, Trevor McGuire and Elda Ribeiro.

## President's Report – 2019 to 2021

This was the eighth time I have been President. I would like to thank all the members of the current Executive Committee who for more than two years have helped keep the Society on track through these challenging Covid-19 affected times.

**Gayle Adams** and **Judith O'Connor** are retiring from the Committee, having brought new insights and energy to our meetings and, after many years, **Ian Phillips** is giving up his Committee seat, but not his 'dad' jokes.

We welcome **Mary Barthelemy** and **Elda Ribeiro**, both first time Committee members. And we welcome back to the Committee **Iain Carolin**, who has been organising Society archives for the past two years, in his spare time!

Vice President **Lyndal Gowland** has agreed to be our **Honorary Solicitor**, which acknowledges all of the *pro bono* specialist legal advice she has provided to the Society since she joined the Committee.

While the past year has been challenging for the Society, it is pleasing that our membership numbers remain stable and the Society is in good financial health. Our online presence, through Facebook and our website, has been flourishing under the guidance of **Rod Aanensen**. Our newsletter continues to its high standard, now under the stewardship of **Lorraine Beach**; **Richard Blair** having passed on the editor baton after an amazing 26 years. The Society's heritage watch activities have been particularly busy with the

revived property market renewing development pressures on heritage and character buildings throughout the inner west. Both the Church of Christ and Federation villa *Otaki* in Marrickville fell victim to developers, with *Otaki* being demolished before the DA for the new development was even approved.

In a worrying precedent, Council accepted argument from the Church of Christ developers that heritage buildings and 'affordable housing' could not co-exist. With many new 'affordable housing' developments proposed for our LGA, we expect more of these conflicts.

For the coming year, the Society is planning meetings and outings for when we can all safely meet in person again. After our successful 'virtual AGM' last month, we will try to organise guest lecturers online for our members.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank all of our members for their continuing support of the Society. I encourage you to be alert to threats to the heritage of our LGA – you are our eyes and ears!

**Scott MacArthur**

## Website and Facebook

Back in 2019 we relaunched our blog style website as a more standard format site. With some minor initial glitches, this was successful and the first new article was published in March of 2019.

It was hoped our site would be seen by a general readership as an interesting place to visit and that the Society would be at the front of people's minds when seeking to learn more about our area. I am pleased to say there are encouraging signs that this is beginning to happen.

In the first year, visitor numbers increased by 1,680%, admittedly from a very low base, but in the second year, visitor numbers increased from around 2,000 to almost 5,500. So far this year we have already had over 6,000 visitors. Many visitors come to us after reading stories in mainstream media, such as *The Daily Telegraph's* story (16 January 2021) on Thomas Holt and the Warren; they come from Facebook; and also via friends' referrals.

In the last two years about 200 visitors have contacted us seeking advice and assistance. These involve the usual family history enquiries and academics and school teachers seeking more general information.

We have been asked for information by artists (including the artist working on the Marrickville Metro), TV shows (including 'Restoration Australia' and 'Who do you think you are?') and authors (including a writer living in Canada).

And, of course, we have had people alerting us to houses that are at risk, including *Otaki* on Marrickville Road, which has indeed been lost.

Some of the more unusual requests have been for information on a house's original garden with which, amazingly, we were able to help; more information on the Marrickville Hospital ghost (we had none); and incredibly, someone asked was it true the new Winged Victory's bottom was modelled on Kylie Minogue. After

consulting the sculptor, I could confirm this was false, but he was very keen for the story to continue circulating.

I would like to thank all the people I have contacted over the last two years seeking information to pass on, including **Scott MacArthur, Lu Bell, Robert Hutchinson, Diane McCarthy, and Richard Blair.**

I also thank **Laurel Horton and Gayle Adams** for providing stories for the website.

Further, we have revamped our Facebook page with excellent design work by **Lorraine Beach** and a bit more input from all of us. We recognise that people today engage via Facebook and we should too. We now have over 500 members of the Facebook page and I encourage members to join the page and tell stories of our area. There are many people out there who are very interested and would love to hear them.

**Rod Aanensen**

## Newsletter, journal and activities

Our aim was for a seamless transition with the newsletter and we hope that's been achieved. We are working on the next *Heritage* journal with a goal to launch it early next year; we hope our 'runners' can come out of retirement to help with local deliveries!

We're mindful that social interaction is a major part of the Society's role, and we are working on plans for when we can hold an 'event'. We will have much to celebrate, and many people to thank, most of all our members. When it's safe and we can plan with confidence, it will happen.

Meanwhile we can't overstate our desire to collect and publish as many of our members' local history memories, knowledge and anecdotes as you care to share. It's our job to record our local history – please send us your notes and stories, whether short or long. They are all part of our local history, and we want to collect and record them.

**Lorraine Beach**

## Women's liberation in Petersham

For many historians the most notable feature of the **Petersham Inn** at 386 Parramatta Road (opposite Catherine Street) is its striking Art Deco architecture. But did you know that a series of events took place there in 1970 that were important in the development of the women's liberation movement?

It was in 1969-70 that several women's groups came together to form a loose coalition that would be later referred to as Sydney's sexual liberation movement. Their aim was to bring about change by circumventing the electoral system, and their methods included 'protest action' campaigns directed at specific areas of complaint.

One of those groups was the Working Women's Group which, in October 1970, raided the Petersham Inn and demanded to be served in the public bar. At that time women were not allowed to drink in the public bar of hotels, but instead had to go to the



ladies lounge and pay more for their drinks or sit in the car outside and have drinks brought to them by the men they were with. The Petersham Inn seems to have been an arbitrary target as it was illegal for any NSW hotel to serve women in the front bar.



Women protesting against gender segregation in the Petersham Inn. This photograph appeared on the front page of the *Tribune* newspaper on 25 November 1970.

(photo: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales and courtesy SEARCH Foundation)

Along with members of other women's liberation groups, the Women's Working Group would go on to stage two more raids on the Petersham Inn in October and November that year. There was a certain sense of fun about these events and on one occasion some women dressed up as men and vice versa, with *The Sydney Morning Herald* reporting that the women posing as men sported an artistic array of pencilled moustaches, while the 'women' in mini-dresses were equally conspicuous with their hairy legs and chests. Regular customers appeared to enjoy the stand that the protestors were making and bought them drinks when they were refused service. Other hotel raids in Manly and Brisbane took place around the same time but some of these were more confrontational.

The Petersham Inn invasions received coverage in the press and that was, of course, the aim of the exercise. At the time it might have seemed that desegregation of public bars was a trivial matter compared to the more serious issues those early protestors were demonstrating about including, for example, abortion law reform. But the raids were important symbolically because, as participants maintained, they focused attention on the

way that women were discriminated against generally in a wide range of areas.

By the end of that decade women were indeed allowed to drink in public bars in NSW. A great deal else has changed dramatically in the forty years since then, but the struggle for women's equality is still not over. And I wonder what those women's liberationists of the 1970s would think of the Petersham Inn as it is now. Currently the hotel, when not in Covid lockdown, houses the Strip Inn club, a 'hot sports bar and party venue', which features 'Sydney's hottest barmaids, waitresses and showgirls'.

**Sources:** Sue Wills, *The politics of sexual liberation*, PhD thesis, University of Sydney, 1981; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 November 1970; *Tribune*, 28 October 1970; *Tribune*, 25 November 1970; Facebook @StripInn.

**Megan Hicks**

## A farewell to three troopers

The Society has countless members who've been with us for many years but rarely attend events, and are thus perhaps little known to other members. We sadly report the deaths of three such long time members.

Member **Yvonne Preston** advised us of the death of **Myrddin Lewis Phillips**. Those who joined our 'Braidwood trip' in 2009 will remember Myrddin, as I



Myrddin Phillips  
(photo: Yvonne Preston)

do – distinguished, warm and a complete gentleman.

Yvonne said that though never an active nor a vocal member, as Alzheimer's steadily undermined his faculties over a 15-year period of decline, he still enjoyed outings and being with people. Myrddin died of complications from Alzheimer's in June, just shy of his 94<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Irene Elsie Carder** was born in Annandale in 1929 and died in July, aged 91. We last saw Irene at MHS's special viewing of the new Marrickville Library when **Ian Phillips** kindly enabled her attendance. In recent years, she lived at Thomas Roseby Lodge, having for



Irene Carder  
(photo: Bill Carder)

decades been a Deaconess of the Uniting Church. Irene was a 'five certificate' nurse. Her brother **Bill Carder** says Irene spent many years as a District Nurse in outback towns. He described her as 'the piper of children'; a much loved sister and auntie. Irene joined MHS in 2007 and was also a long term member of the local Croquet Club.

**Michael Skennar**, born in 1927, attended Marrickville West and Tempe public schools and spent his early working life locally at Duly & Hansford, Malleable Castings, Australian Woollen Mills and Emery & Bradshaw's bakery. Aged 18, he enlisted in the army, served with the Occupation Force in Japan and on the



Michael Skennar  
(Thanks to member Anne Morgan, Michael's daughter, for this photo and her help)

front line in Korea. Michael's splendid certificate, 'The Call to Arms', was reproduced on the inside cover of MHS's journal *Heritage* 14. He came home, married, raised a family and continued to serve via many community organisations. Michael was 94.

Our condolences to loved ones and families of three fine people.

**Lorraine Beach**

## Ten Ordinary Men

In a former life, the Addison Road Community Centre in Marrickville was an army depot, responsible for registering and preparing thousands of soldiers for war between 1916 and 1975.

**Addison Road Community Organisation** is close to publishing a book that documents the stories of 10 of the men who enlisted at Addison Road during World War I. Titled *Ten Ordinary Men: The ANZACS of Addison Road*, it highlights the different experiences of 10 of the 51 WWI servicemen we know of and commemorates their service and sacrifices.

One of the 10 was captured as a prisoner-of-war, another gave first aid in the Egyptian desert; another was awarded for 'conspicuous service', while another spent 35 years at Callan Park mental hospital after the war. Two never made it home. Written by Vanessa James, who works on Addi Road's Living Museum program, the stories are sobering and fascinating, connecting our 'little' place with an epic event of global resonance.

Preparation of the book was supported by a Saluting Their Service Commemorative Grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs and we are now looking for funding to get it printed; we hope to publish by Armistice Day this year.

The book is illustrated by Robyn Chiles, an artist with a studio in one of the WWII huts at Addi Road, who drew this image of two soldiers from the Anzac Corps Cyclist Battalion, to which many of the Addi Road enlistees were assigned.



If you are a descendant of an Addi Road Anzac, or are researching related aspects of local history, the servicemen featured in *Ten Ordinary Men* are: William John Costello Cowan, Horace Rupert Dunford, George Redman Featherstone, Llewellyn John Law, Lester Verna Litchfield, Reginald George Marshall, Reginald Arthur Rokes, Thomas Henry Taplin, Leonard William Amery Watson, Frederic Ernest Whitehead.

We would love to hear from any MHS members who might recognise one of the names or want to know more. Contact <programs@addiroad.org.au>.

**Mina Bui Jones** Programs Manager, ARCO

## Winter Trivia Answer

Usually for every correct answer received there are probably about five times that number of people who know the answer but don't, for whatever reason, respond. Eight members correctly responded, in order of receipt: **Andrew Burns, Diane McCarthy, Jan O'Reilly, Heather Smallbone, Colin Hesse, Mary Oakenfull, Kay Leecount and Keith Anderson.**



A butcher occupied this Marrickville corner shop from 1912 to about 2013 (photo: Google Earth)

Unsurprisingly, the animal images, on the façades above the awning, signify it was a butcher shop. It is on the north east corner of Illawarra and Warren Roads at Marrickville. One respondent fondly recalls sawdust on the floor, customary in butcher shops in bygone years.

After the last butcher shop closed, Cornersmith opened their 'Picklery' and cooking school. A message on their website reads: 'Unfortunately, due to redevelopment, the Picklery is closed'. A DA has been approved for a six storey building with basement parking, ground floor commercial spaces and residential units. The Heritage Impact Statement says the façade and signs will stay and a DA condition says 'any stone kerb adjacent to the site is of heritage value and is to be preserved'.

Thanks to member **Monica Oppen** for suggesting the question and forwarding photos and information.

**Richard Blair**

## Spring Trivia Question



Where would one find this plaque in the Marrickville area?

Contact Richard 0413 335 897 or email <marrickvilleheritagesociety@outlook.com>.

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