

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY

COVERING DULWICH HILL, ENMORE, LEWISHAM,
SYDENHAM, TEMPE & PARTS OF NEWTOWN,

MARRICKVILLE, PETERSHAM, ST PETERS, STANMORE
CAMPERDOWN & HURLSTONE PARK



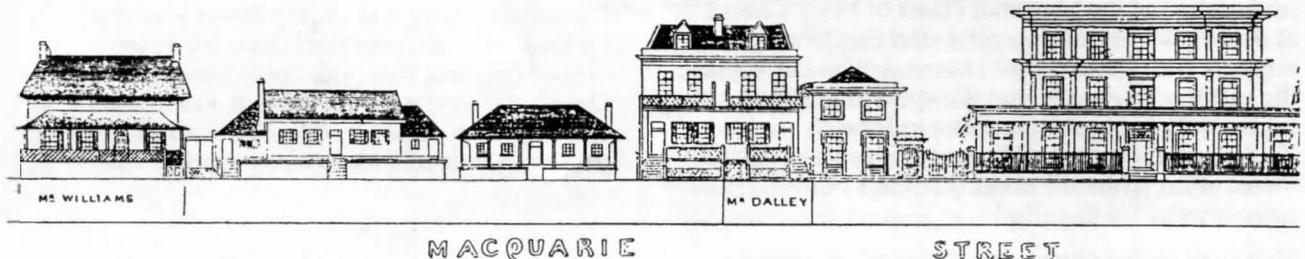
OUR NEXT MEETING

BOB IRVING'S SYDNEY THEN & NOW
Saturday 23 August 10.30 am
Petersham Town Hall

Bob Irving is a prominent architectural historian and (in partnership with Chris Pratten) a heritage and conservation consultant. For many years Bob lectured in architecture at the University of New South Wales, he is a former president of the Royal Australian Historical Society and a former

member of the Heritage Council of NSW. He co-authored the bible on styles *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture* and compiled *The History & Design of the Australian House*.

Bob's talk will be illustrated with images from the RAHS historic glass slide collection and from other published sources. Using dual projectors, these images of then and now will prove to be an evocative narrative of the changes we have seen in our city of Sydney.



(from Joseph Fowles' *Sydney in 1848*)

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL – WHAT'S A PEROTOMY?

The December 1955 Lewisham Hospital newsletter *Calvary* reported – *At the Lewisham Hospital Annual General Meeting, Rt. Rev. Mgr. E. O'Donnell warned that a very serious operation would be performed that afternoon, a perotomy (Latin pera – a wallet). The skilled surgeon had excellent results – £ 2,645 with mortality rate nil per cent.*

The Society sincerely thanks Harold Welsh for three years sterling service as treasurer. Harold will continue to serve as a committee member and facilitate the Society's incorporation as the Public Officer. We welcome our new treasurer Fay Nash, who is still sharpening her scalpel, with which she will open the envelope containing your membership renewal cheque (see adjoining box for fees).

NEW HERITAGE WATCH CONVENOR

Congratulations to the Society's new Heritage Watch/Classifications committee convenor Mark Maloney. Mark, who lives in what he believes to be the oldest house in Stanmore, has extensive experience in urban planning and heritage matters. He can be reached (after hours) on 9516 2788 if you have any heritage watch concerns.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Barbara Potter, Dulwich Hill; Margie & John Kennedy-Gould, Beryl Winter, Marrickville; Trish Kennedy & Joseph Pugliese, Newtown; Robin Appleton, Jane Gleeson & Kevin Jones, Petersham; Melinda Doolan, Kate Dunbar, Stanmore; St Peters Sydenham Tempe Neighbourhood Centre; Tempe Community Centre; Sheila Swain, Hunters Hill; Ray Edmondson, Kambah, ACT; Thelma & Tom Tait (Mary's brother), Lane Cove; Dorothy Brown, Manly; Deane McCarthy, Monterey; Ellie McKenzie, Narwee. Ellie is John Zinsmeester's sister.

WANT TO JOIN THE SOCIETY?

Membership is only \$8 for concession \$14 for individuals or joint concession and \$20 for households or organisations. Subscriptions due each July. Membership includes a monthly newsletter and the journal *Heritage*. Meetings on the fourth Saturday of each month.

Send cheque with name(s) address
and telephone

HERITAGE WATCH/CLASSIFICATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 1996/97

I have written this report on behalf of our late convenor John Zinsmeester. I was a member of that committee – it was a privilege to have worked with John, as it was to have known him.

The committee met each month either at an evening meeting or on a weekend street walk. As a requirement of the Society's constitution this committee has taken up many issues during the year. Some are perennial issues – the site next to Stanmore House **now** built on, effectively blocking any view of one of Sydney's most architecturally distinguished colonial houses; the villas on Marrickville Road **now** demolished; the old Marrickville Town Hall in Illawarra Road sadly was relinquished by Jessie Street Women's Library and **now** faces an uncertain future once again.

We were involved in other issues – two shops to be inserted in James Barnet's 1891 Post Office in Marrickville Road; Stanmore Fire Station has been acquired by Mastertouch and will be given a useful life as a working museum; urgent repairs are to be undertaken at the Maternal Heart of Mary Chapel at former Lewisham Hospital, and Steel Park remains with the people of Marrickville. However the major victory was that the spire of St Clements is presently being restored due to John Zinsmeester's tenacity. He was able to keep up the momentum while the other members of his committee were flagging!

Members of this committee attended an open day to celebrate the restoration of the heritage-listed West Street Campus of TAFE; the plaque ceremony to mark the crash of an RN Firefly in 1946 at Lewisham Hospital; Richard Blair and Mark Matheson took part in the Heritage Short Course, an initiative of Council and the Heritage Office of NSW, a basic training course for heritage watchdogs; and John and I went to Works Australia's information evening at Newington College to hear how their heritage buildings would fare in the insulation program.

Outside our area we protested about high rise apartments to overshadow Elizabeth Farm, Parramatta, and the future of the burnt-out Canterbury Sugar Mill. The natural heritage was not forgotten – we had input into the plan to refurbish Weekly Park, Stanmore, and into Agenda 21, that identified an environment strategy from now into the 21st century.

Submissions to the National Trust from the Classifications arm of this committee were nil! However we have been on street walks to identify heritage places to recommend to the Marrickville Heritage Study Review. (The consultants appointed to carry out that Study are our guest speakers here today.) While we are asked to contribute significant places MHS was not included in the Steering Committee.

John would want to thank his committee – Richard Blair, David Cass, Shirley Hilyard, Mark Matheson, John Wright and especially Anne Walter who took

the minutes and distributed them, and Council's heritage architect Libby Maher.

In last year's Heritage Watch report John expressed the hope that our lobbying, writing letters and attending interminable Council meetings would have a more successful outcome this year. Certainly there have been some wins for heritage and of courses some losses. Nothing changes. But 'tis better to have protested and lost than never to have protested at all!

Shirley Hilyard

HERITAGE WATCH

MHS has written to Council opposing the revised DA for development of the Art Deco former **Petersham Inn** (pictured below in 1949) and adjoining nine shops where 92 residences and parking for 80 vehicles on six levels are planned, on the grounds of its scale and a total change of character and height of the precinct. It would set a precedent in terms of streetscape. This 1938 heritage-listed building on the corner of Parramatta Road and Phillip Street was designed by Rudder and Grout (architects for Petersham Town Hall) and was once considered the finest Art Deco hotel in western Sydney. It suffered during the 1980s renovation and lost its clock, and the present colour scheme is inappropriate.



Mark Matheson is commended for coordinating the comprehensive list of items compiled after extensive consultation with MHS members and recently submitted to the study team of Tropman & Tropman for the **1997 Heritage Study Review**. Society members are strongly urged to submit their personal list preferably using the questionnaire provided. Copies of this are available from Libby Maher at Council or Richard (9557 3823).

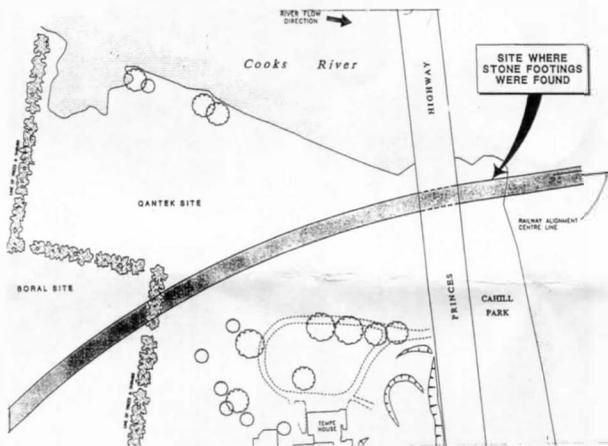
Pauline Roach and **Mary West** are now representing the Society at the quarterly **Agenda 21** forums.

Council's expertise at delivering rates notices is not matched by its ability to circulate the latest *Marrickville Matters*, apparently accompanied by the Heritage Study Review questionnaire. A straw poll across the LGA reveals many members did not receive a copy: begs the question *does Marrickville really matter?*

SANDSTONE FOOTINGS FOUND AT CAHILL PARK TEMPE

During recent excavation for the railway tunnel at Cahill Park (east of Cooks River Bridge) for the New Southern Railway, a number of sandstone blocks were recovered and removed before their archaeological nature was identified. A site inspection speculated that the blocks formed a semi-circular structure either from the 1839 Cooks River dam or the 1897 bridge.

In 1839 Governor Gipps commissioned the dam which was completed in 1841 using convict labour. Whilst the dam successfully impounded water, flooding resulted upstream and the water dammed became increasingly polluted. Later a road was made across the dam wall to link St Peters with Rockdale. A timber bridge, incorporating tramlines to take trams to the Wollli Creek depot was built in 1897 with stone abutments at each end, and a low concrete wall and three tide gates on the eastern side of the bridge. Remains of the original dam are likely to have been removed by subsequent reconstruction of the area. This bridge was replaced in 1962.



The physical remains seemed consistent with their being the remains of the abutments for the 1897 bridge. In assessing the site's cultural significance it was determined that "the abutments of the 1897 Cooks River dam and bridge have important associations with the development of Sydney's transport network and more indirectly with the development of Sydney's utilities".

The archaeologist's report concluded that the remains were not considered to be of such significance that they should remain *in situ* or that further archaeological excavation was required. It recommended that railway tunnel excavation be allowed to continue on condition that: "1) an excavation permit under Section 140 of the Heritage Act be applied for; 2) when the remaining blocks are removed their location is accurately recorded by an archaeologist; 3) further excavation in the area be monitored by an archaeologist to record the remains of the abutment and in case further unexpected archaeological relics are uncovered".

(from report by Iain Stuart of HLA-Envirosciences for Airport Link Transfield Bouygues Joint Venture; provided by Kathy Jones, Public Affairs Manager)

OUR LAST MEETING ST PETERS HISTORIC WALK

No doubt the all pervading noise of aircraft and traffic has prevented the gentrification and canyons of high rise in St Peters. It does seem a shame that this same noise is breaking down some of the links with the rich past of the streets covered in Laurel Horton's walk on Saturday 26 July. Despite the use of aluminium, mock brick, pseudo timber and cement gardens, the good bones of some of the earlier houses in a unique precinct still remain. We saw streetscapes of dark brick built before the rule of the car, interspersed with a wide variety of Victorian and Federation architecture, corner shops, and fine sandstone kerbs and gutters in George, Frederick and Henry Streets.

The grassy school grounds are a treasure – a truly horizontal landscape surrounded by low scale homes, paling fences and a marvellous rusty corrugated iron shed, complete with an unusual nine-paned window and awning, right of lane to Silver Street. A blue-painted corrugated iron shed nearby caught our eye, plus an absolutely splendid cast iron gate and posts at 23 Silver Street.

The old corrugated iron sheds are fast disappearing and not now being built and old paling fences are being replaced with tacky metal ones. Thanks to Laurel for showing us around this very old suburb (the first planned and properly laid-out village in Australia) and the splendid St Peters Church, and for providing brunch in the church hall afterwards.

Daphne Kingston

ARCHITECTURAL PUBLICATIONS

Winter it brings on the release of architectural tomes – Graham Jahn's *Sydney Architecture* (\$35) depicts over 500 buildings with description; Patrick Van Daele's and Roy Lumby's *A Spirit of Progress* (\$95) the first comprehensive book on Australian Art Deco architecture; and James Broadbent's masterwork *The Australian Colonial House: Architecture and Society in New South Wales 1788-1842* (\$185) will prove to be a classic. At that price one may want to await the paperback, but have no fear – quality architectural publications retain their value well. MOS is selling vintage stock including *Marrickville* (1936) at \$120 a copy.

We regret the recent passing of MHS member Father Gregory Kirby, 80, from the Passionist community of St Brigid's, Marrickville.

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CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

SATURDAY AUGUST 23

Sydney Then and Now with Bob Irving
Details on front page.

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 27

Goat Island tour

SATURDAY OCTOBER 25

Bronwyn Layton on tradesmen's bills of the
St Josephs Building & Investment Society.

WINTER TRIVIA ANSWERS – LOCAL POETS & NOUGHTIES

Among well known poets who lived or worked in the area were Dame **Mary Gilmore** who as Mary Cameron taught at Stanmore Public School from 1891 to 1895 before heading off to Paraguay; **Henry Lawson** who with his wife Bertha in 1898 lived in Newtown and later at 20 Dulwich Street, Dulwich Hill, with her sister Hilda and husband Jack Lang (later twice state Labor Premier who opened the Harbour Bridge before being dismissed from office by Sir Philip Game); and Henry's mother **Louisa Lawson**, who wrote prose and verse, and spent the last fifteen years of her life in an old stone cottage in Renwick Street, Marrickville.

Previously **Henry Kendall** worked in Newtown with a confectioner in 1857 and lived with his mother, sisters and twin brother Basil in Newtown for some years from the late 1850s. In 1863-64 the family lived in Wellington (later changed to Chelmsford) Street and in 1865 Henry lived in Silver Street, Marrickville. By his death in 1882, he was described (by T. Inglis Moore) as the finest poet Australia had produced. Curiously the two poets Henry were also linked in death. Louisa Lawson was among Kendall's admirers, but appalled at the way Kendall's grave at Waverley Cemetery was neglected she acquired the ground surrounding his grave. Kendall was reinterred in a more prominent site and when Henry Lawson died in 1922 he was buried in Kendall's original plot.

* * * * *

As for the name for the first decade of the 21st century Cheri Lutz cites a SMH wit who suggested the *noughties* [rhymes with *forties*]! Mmmm.

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST AERONAUTICAL FATALITY IN 1856!

This newsletter has given a lot of coverage to the Petersham and Lewisham plane crashes of 1945 and 1946, but Camperdown Cemetery contains the headstone of the first victim in connection with flight in Australia on 15 December 1856. The victim was an eleven year old boy named Thomas Downes who died as a result of a riot that erupted after a failed balloon ascent. A hot-air balloon is carved on the hard-to-read headstone. He was the son of William and Mary Downes.

A Frenchman Pierre Maigre attracted a crowd of over 10,000 in the Sydney Domain, but his 160 feet in circumference balloon failed to ascend. Many thought it was a hoax and there followed *the biggest bonfire and riot ever seen in the Domain resulting in the*

death of Thomas Downes when the crowd pulled down the two 50 foot poles which had been holding the balloon.

Dr Charles Nathan (who co-introduced anaesthetics to Australia in 1847 and treated the wounded Prince Alfred at Clontarf in 1868 after being shot) attended the dying boy. Charles and his father, Isaac Nathan, Australia's first composer, were also buried in Camperdown Cemetery.

This curious local memorial was brought to my attention by Neil Follett of Lilydale, Victoria who is researching aviation monuments and memorials in Australia and has over 450 listings. Many members will recall the item *Marrickville airman far from home* in the August 1993 newsletter about RAAF Warrant Officer Neville Ryan of Marrickville who died on 8 March 1945 and is buried on the island of Terceira in the Azores. The Honorary Supervisor for War Graves there is Maureen Diehl who is also our most remote MHS member.

Richard Blair

PRE STATE OFFICE BLOCK



This old beehive well was unearthed during 1960s excavations prior to building the *Black Stump* or State Office Block (1967) soon to be demolished. The well was completely intact and the water spilling from it was fit for drinking. Previously, the Government Printing Office, the old Public Library and five fine houses (one occupied by Dr Charles Nathan) stood on this site (photo: 1967 Dept of Public Works publication).

MHS scored a home run in its stall at Petersham Park on 3 August in celebration of a hundred years of baseball at Petersham. Thanks to Robert, John, Peter, Richard, Shirley, Mark, Cheri, Libby and to Margaret for her gorgeous hippeastrums.

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HERITAGE WATCH Mark 9516 2788
INFOLINE Harold/Gwenda 9569 5183