OUR NEXT MEETING
Ron Ringer Sydney’s brickmakers & Austral Brick Company Limited of St Peters
Saturday 22 April 10 for 10.30 am
Herb Greedy Hall 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville
(Heritage Festival event)
Special Note Urban Strategy briefing straight after guest speaker: see item below right

In late 2004 Ron Ringer was commissioned by Brickworks Limited (BKW) to research and write a centenary history of The Austral Brick Company Limited (Austral Bricks). It was later agreed that a more fitting tribute to the brickmakers of Sydney should include a general history of brickmaking from 1788.

Austral Bricks, a wholly owned subsidiary of BKW since 1950, was incorporated in the opening months of 1908 when a group of prominent Sydney builders and investors met to form a brickmaking business. The pre-war growth of Sydney, especially in the eastern suburbs and across the inner city, presented many an opportunity to service the demand for bricks. From small beginnings, Austral Bricks became the largest and most influential brick manufacturer through the dynamic leadership and influence of brickmaster, William King Dawes who died in 1981.

In addition is a visit to the 1858 St John’s Anglican Church 120 Darlinghurst Road Darlinghurst for a free guided tour and refreshments (gold coin donation). Times above. More details May newsletter.
OUR LAST MEETING
CRUISING THE HARBOUR & PARRAMATTA RIVER

In lovely autumn sunshine on Saturday 25 March, almost 60 MHS members and friends had a great time cruising Sydney Harbour and Parramatta River from the Opera House to Homebush on board the historic MV James McCabe. Our tour guide, Gregory Blaxell (who addressed the Society on The River last November) told stories of the river from the early days of settlement.

Fortified by a morning tea break, we learnt how the harbour has changed. Industrial sites which replaced the tribal lands of the Aboriginal tribes, have now given way to open spaces or multi-storied developments – at Gladesville we could see Meriton Street, a name now synonymous with high-rise development. Darling Harbour has undergone complete transformation from dingy wharves to a vibrant complex.

Nancy MacAlpine standing on left, Lorraine Beach, looking back & Robert Hutchinson aboard MV James McCabe. See box on front page (photo: Scott MacArthur)

Greg told of the early land grants and settlers, stories of Goat, Cockatoo and Spectacle Islands, and the history of Yaralla and Abbotsford House – two of the few remaining grand homes which once lined the river. We saw the convict-built stone steps, all that remains of William Wright’s once-beautiful gardens and his home, Drummoyne House; old stone wharves used by Lysaghts; Ballast Point, the Putney ferry (the river’s only car ferry), and the Balmain coal mine sites. We heard how the Anglican minister’s wife and a man named Pope objected to the name Kissing Point: this was one of the few times Angicans and the ‘Pope’ agreed! We heard of William Searle, the Clarence Comet, Dawn Fraser Baths and much, much more.

After lunch – and what a lunch – we turned for home. The ferry might have been named after a Tasmanian bushranger, but we certainly weren’t robbed! Good food, good wine, good company and a good speaker were our rewards.

Joan Francis

Note Greg indicated the HQ of the formerly called Parramatta River Yacht Club; because of its acronym, PRYC, the name was changed to Parramatta River Sailing Club. The licensee of our launch is aptly named Margaret Shipp! Many thanks to Greg Blaxell assisted by Joan Francis, and to Lorraine Beach for organising this convivial day. Editor

The Land & Environment Court has once again proved itself as the developer’s friend by overturning Marrickville Council’s decision to refuse the application for development of 106 units at Warne Place Marrickville.

According to Jubilee History 1886-1936: A Brief Record of its History (1936) for St Clement’s Church Marrickville, the “first marriage celebrated in the new Church district of Marrickville took place on May 16, 1884. The parties were Walter Henry Fox and Alice Australia Woorf, the officiating minister being Rev. W.A. Leech”. No details are known about the couple’s offspring.

The Society was among a range of environmental and heritage groups to have a stall at the Riverworks Cooks River Environmental Sculpture Competition at Gough Whitlam Park, Undercliffe on Sunday 26 March. The competition was conducted by environmental group, the Mud Crabs in conjunction with Canterbury Council. The organisers see environmental sculpture as a good way to present solutions to environmental problems. Thanks to Sue, Ian, Richard and Lorraine for running the stall.

The Mud Crabs undertake monthly cleanups along Cooks River usually on the first Saturday of each month. Volunteers are welcome to call Chris 9558 2656.

STS SENIORS PROJECT
Sydenham, Tempe, St Peters: A history is a new project involving seniors of these areas. The STS Community Centre is interested in talking to any seniors who have lived here and hearing about their recollections of living in this unique part of Sydney, what they love about it and how it has changed over time. Contact Shane Higoe or Margot Barnett on 9519 6788 Monday–Wednesday to arrange a suitable time and place to meet. Stories from the project will be exhibited at STS Community Centre, in St Peters Town Hall, 39 Unwins Bridge Road, St Peters from late June.

We note the passing on 18 February of Heathcote Clifford (Cliff) Mallam aged 96 of Camden. Cliff was Labor Member of State Parliament for Dulwich Hill (1953-1968) and for Wollondilly (1971-1981). Many years ago the area incorporating the former Dulwich Hill Tram Terminus (now 426 bus) loop was renamed Mallam Reserve in his honour.
Enmore School, Metropolitan Road Enmore
(Jubilee Souvenir of the Municipality of Newtown 1912)
CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

Saturday 22 April
Ron Ringer: Sydney brickmakers & the
Austral Brick Company Limited of St Peters
Details on front page

Saturday 27 May
Darlinghurst Gåol tour with Deborah Beck
& St Johns Anglican Church Darlinghurst

Saturday 24 June
Annual General Meeting

Industries of Marrickville: An Exhibition
of Historical Photographs
11-13 April 10 am-4 pm
Petersham Town Hall foyer

2006 Marrickville Medal for Conservation

The Marrickville Medal for Excellence in Conservation was presented on Wednesday 5 April in a ceremony at Petersham Town Hall. All commercial and residential projects that contributed to the heritage values of the area and were completed in the last three years were eligible for nomination.

The Medal was awarded to the adaptive reuse of the Newtown Silos for apartments (formerly Crago Flour Mills) ‘for the thoughtful retention and interpretation of significant industrial fabric within the residential adaptive reuse of a landmark structure.’ The judges noted that the project was an ‘excellent example of creative and innovative adaptive reuse of a redundant industrial structure. The concrete silos, which are a landmark on the Newtown skyline, have been given a new life through their successful conversion to apartments.’

The judges also congratulated the architects, Tonkin Zulaika Greer, ‘for their comprehensive, consistent and creative approach to the adaptive reuse of the buildings and particularly for their creative approach to the interpretation of the former use of the structures’ (photo of silos: Scott MacArthur).

The repair of the vandalized Eliza Donnithorne gravestone in St Stephens Cemetery Newtown was

Highly Commended ‘for the rapid response and community-led repair and restoration works that demonstrate best practice in heritage conservation. It indicates ‘the very high regard in which both the local and broader community holds Miss Eliza Donnithorne’.

The construction of the Bentonite Leachate Cut-Off wall to prevent contamination of the Alexandra Canal as part of the Tempe Lands remediation was also

Highly Commended ‘for its innovative, technically sophisticated and visually unobtrusive solution to an environmental problem while protecting the state-significant Alexandra Canal.’

The restoration of the historic shopfront at 417a King Street, Newtown and its adaptive reuse as a home office was Commended. The development had created ‘a highly functional and elegant combined living and working environment within a dilapidated heritage building’ – a ‘terrific example of a building being given a new life’.

The judges Commended a former hostel at 8 Warren Street, Marrickville that was badly mistreated while in government service: timber floors had rotted, the plaster was falling off the walls and none of the original fireplaces remained. What was intended as a quick refurbishment turned into a four-year labour of love, with all family members involved.

The judges also
Commended the works to a large Federation style house at 18 Darley Street, Marrickville for a dual occupancy subdivision for three generations of one family. Impressive was the ‘sensitive design response to a prominent period house on a corner site to create a discreet and well-disguised dual occupancy’.

A former coach house or stables building at 6 Summer Hill Street, Lewisham has been sensitively transformed into ‘a charming modern abode that is stylish yet unobtrusive and sympathetic to its neighbours’. The judges Commended the project as ‘a clever infill solution on a small, constrained site to make a positive contribution to the streetscape’.

The judges of the Medal were Catherine Forbes, architect (Design 5-Architects), Lorraine Beach, MHS President, and Scott MacArthur, architect and MHS member. A report on the awards ceremony and the results of the first People’s Choice awards and the Special Achievement award will be in our May newsletter.

Scott MacArthur

A sign outside a Leichhardt church has been spotted topically asking: “Where the bloody hell were you last Sunday?”