

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.



DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN

OUR NEXT MEETING

An Illustrated Walk Through Old St Peters with Mark Matheson
Saturday 28 July 9.45 for 10 am

Meet at St Peters Church Cooks River
187 Princes Highway St Peters
If wet, check with Mark 9559 5502 or 0409 617 778

People who don't know St Peters say it's just a place to drive through very quickly. People who know it better say it's a place with an historic church, some massive brick pits and where half of its interesting buildings were demolished by the development of Sydney's first highway.



From Sam Hood Collection (© State Library of NSW)

Mark Matheson has read most of the minutes of the old St Peters Council to winkle out some of the names, faces and facts and the anecdotes of the area. This illustrated walk visits twelve sites over two kilometres in a spiral route from the church to St Peters station. We see the pictures and see the sites associated with the man who had the death rattle, the dancing prince, the snaky politician and the headmaster who couldn't cope.

JUNE POSTAL NEWSLETTERS

Shortly after our June newsletter was posted a large number of envelopes were returned to the postbox because the address labels had come off while passing through the franking machine. As most envelopes contained renewal slips we could easily identify who they were for, and these were resent. It is likely some of our members actually received two newsletters, whilst others may have received none at all. If your posted June newsletter didn't arrive, let us know and we'll send another out. Contact details on back page. The labels were old stock with poor adhesive. We apologise for any inconvenience.

Marrickville Heritage Society congratulates both the ABC and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra on their 75th anniversaries this month.

OUR LAST MEETING

WHO'S WHO ON THE EXECUTIVE

Forty two MHS members attended the Society's 23rd Annual General Meeting on Saturday 23 June at Herb Greedy Hall, Marrickville. **Scott MacArthur** presented the president's report (see inside). This was followed by reports from the treasurer, **Stuart Grigg**, newsletter editor **Richard Blair**, journal editor **Mark Matheson**, essay competition committee convenor **Keith Sutton**, and Tasmania tour organiser, **Geoff Ostling**.

The returning officer for our annual election was MHS member **Bill Tarrant**, who declared all positions vacant. The following were elected: president, **Scott MacArthur**; vice presidents, **Mark Matheson** and **Keith Sutton**; treasurer **Stuart Grigg**; secretary **Nancy MacAlpine**; assistant secretary **Lorraine Beach**; committee members **Richard Blair**, **Robert Hutchinson**, **Sue Miller**, **Ian Phillips** and **Rowena Ward**. We welcome Nancy to the committee.

Pat Mullen and **Ian Rumsey** did not stand for re-election. Both had served for many years on the committee in various capacities. Pat: 1994-early 1995 (secretary), 2000-02 (c'ttee), 2004 (treasurer), 2005-07 (c'ttee); Ian: 2001-04 and 2005 (c'ttee), 2006-07 (vice president). See president's report for further comment. After the formalities we broke for a hearty lunch of pumpkin and minestrone soups made by **Lorraine Beach** and slices of **Robert Hutchinson's** delicious fruit cake.

Richard Blair

DUNBAR COMMEMORATIONS & DUNBAR FOLK OPERA

In the September 2006 newsletter we reported on this short folk opera (written by Jim Scanlan and Chris Purcell and first performed in the New England area) where a descendant of sole Dunbar survivor James Johnston encounters his ghost. The opera will be performed in Sydney over the weekend of 17-19 August to coincide with the 150 year commemorations of the Dunbar shipwreck.

There will be performances at the National Maritime Museum and two at St Stephens Church Newtown. St Stephens is holding a commemorative service on Sunday 19 August with a range of activities, including the opera. More details on back page.

WINTER TRIVIA ANSWER

The question was *Who founded Australia's first Women's Magazine, when and what was it called?* In retrospect the question was poorly framed because as **Graham Hunt** has correctly pointed out, the first Australian women's magazine was the *Australian Women's Magazine and Domestic Journal* 1882-1884; this was followed by the *Woman's World: Australian Magazine of Literature and Art*, 1886-87. Both were short-lived and published in Melbourne.

And before then in 1878 was *The Australian Ladies' Annual* edited by FRC (Francis) Hopkins and also published in Melbourne. This was actually a book — a collection of 18 literary works, all by female writers, including Louisa Anne Meredith, Ada Cambridge and Jessie Couvreur who wrote under the pseudonym *Tasma*. One of *Tasma's* two contributions, *Concerning the Forthcoming Melbourne Cup* was significant in that the book was published on Melbourne Cup Day 1878. The editor states in his preface that “no book written exclusively by ladies has been yet published in this ... country.” However, whilst all the contributors were women, the editor was a man. It seems no further such annuals appeared.

The question ought to have asked which was the first Australian magazine to be produced entirely by women and to focus on women's rights. Four MHS members pre-empted this and answered correctly. The magazine was *The Dawn* which was published monthly in Sydney from 15 May 1888 to July 1905, a period spanning 17 years. It was founded by **Louisa Lawson** (pictured below), mother of her more famous son, poet and short story writer Henry Lawson. **Norman McVicker** advises Louisa initially “used the



pseudonym of Dora Falconer. She carried out the social reform she had started on *The Republican*. Its object was to circulate papers written by women for women. She used women to put together the paper and to print it. There was a confrontation with the male union but she won.”

Louisa, born in 1848, lived with her family in the early 1880s in Enmore Road Marrickville, taking in paying lodgers. She later retired to her stone cottage in Renwick Street Marrickville and died in Gladesville Hospital in 1920. The Louisa Lawson Reserve in Marrickville was so named in 1979 in her honour.

In 1901-02 *The Australian Women* was published monthly in Sydney looking at social life and customs in Australia. In August 1902 *The New Idea: A Women's Home Journal for Australia* began and was edited by a man named T Shaw Fitchett. It remained in his family for nearly 50 years. Despite several takeovers, *New Idea* has proved a real stayer and has remained

relevant and attractive to customers. On 25 November 1924 *The Australian Woman's Mirror* was founded by Ken Prior, then manager of *The Bulletin*. *The Mirror* encouraged Australian writers, and was mostly written by its mainly women subscribers. It continued until June 1961 when it was absorbed into Frank Packer's *Everybody's Magazine*. *The Australian Women's Weekly* started on 10 June 1933 and, of course, still thrives, albeit as a monthly magazine.

Thanks to **Shirley Doolan**, **Shirley Hilyard**, **Diane McCarthy** and **Norman McVicker** for their answers; and to **Graham Hunt** and the **Internet** for additional information; also to **Doug Mackenzie**, who recently bought the 1878 Ladies Annual at an antiques fair and is researching the publication.

Richard Blair

LOUISA LAWSON'S HINTS

One of our members **Keith Smith** has a family link with Louisa Lawson. His maternal grandparents had a farm at the bottom of Warren Road adjacent on one side to the Illawarra railway line and on the other to Louisa in Renwick Street. Keith's grandmother used to give Louisa free milk from her cows and remembered Henry Lawson sometimes visiting his mother.

Louisa Lawson's great granddaughter, **Olive Lawson** edited *The First Voice of Australian Feminism: Excerpts from Louisa Lawson's The Dawn 1888-1895* Simon & Schuster, 1990. Olive introduces and annotates this collection of writings from the years 1888-95, regarded as the years of the journal which had the greatest impact.

One article was called *Household Hints*, many which have little relevance today. However, under the sub-heading *Economy* is a short piece on *Slops*, which may have clear contemporary implications. It is not indicated in which issue of *The Dawn* it originally appeared, but it is on page 347 of Olive Lawson's book:

“Good use for house slops: If you save all the slops from the house, the wash water, and suds of sundry occasions during the week, you will find that you have a supply of nutriment at hand to draw upon which is far richer than you had any idea of. It will not make a poor soil permanently rich, but will afford sufficient nutriment to nourish such plants as you grow in it during the summer in a very satisfactory manner. Annuals planted on a stiff clay that had been thrown out of a cellar, watered regularly with suds and slops, surpassed in growth those grown in the garden.”

Louisa was not one to mince her words. In a separate section (p. 348) titled “*Don'ts*” for *Husbands* Louisa writes: “Don't hang about the kitchen with advice here and a suggestion there, unless your wife has the same privilege at your place of work or business.” Boom-boom!

Richard Blair

TASMANIA TOUR: 8-18 NOVEMBER

Still time to book for Geoff Ostling's MHS tour. Final itinerary and price should be available soon. Deposit of \$500 per head due by 1 September. Ring Geoff on 9568 3029 or 0425 359 264 for more info or to book.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2006-07

At the end of my year as President, I would like to thank all the members of the current executive committee who have helped keep the Society on track in a busy and challenging year. A special thanks goes to Ian Phillips who successfully undertook the role of Secretary at the 2006 AGM, when no-one else would. Ian is now handing the baton over. Pat Mullen and Ian Rumsey, two long serving members of the Committee, will be stepping down this year, and I thank them for their enthusiasm and support of the Society over the years.

It has been an interesting year with terrific excursions, especially I thought, the journey to the head of the Cooks River to see the wetlands reclamation work, and then to Burwood to link up with the Burwood Historic Society. Their intimate knowledge of their area gave us special insights into their heritage properties, particularly the Apian Way.

We also had another terrific harbour cruise with Keith Robinson assisted by the indefatigable Ted Green, who also led a Lower North Shore harbour walk. Our Pot Luck Dinner was a wonderful evening at members Tony and Anna's beautifully restored home in Dulwich Hill. Anne-Maree Whitaker and Catherine Warne were also on hand to introduce their new book, *Pictorial History Marrickville*, and many copies found their way into Christmas stockings.

We were also favoured with some very interesting talks, including MHS members Megan Hicks speaking on pavement signs and Laurel Horton on Rev. Stanley Howard's letters; and Paul Storm showing us some of his amazing collection of Australiana and Michael McCowage on heritage colour schemes.

The Society was active in trying to raise the profile of heritage in Council's eyes as it is developing its new Local Environmental Plan (LEP). The fates of the old Draft Conservation Areas and the moribund Heritage Study Review are dependent on the Councillors recognising that our heritage items can only be protected by specific policies and controls, rather than, at best, planning indifference that will permit many inappropriate demolitions and developments, in the guise of 'urban consolidation'.

The Society was also frustrated with the delays and confusion that saw the Old Marrickville Town Hall slip from Council's grasp and into the hands of a low profile Greek community group. The Society hopes that guarantees about public access and promised restoration works will be met.

On the other hand, it was gratifying that the Planning Minister, Frank Sartor, stepped in to put a temporary heritage order on the former Coptic Church in Sydenham, threatened with demolition if Council's engineers had their way. A new community use for this important building, rather than demolition by neglect, is certainly warranted.

The coming year will certainly be challenging and interesting, with our essay competition promising to uncover hidden literary and historical writing talents. We are also actively pursuing options for an office for the Society, so that we can expand our activities from secure premises. Later in the year, I am particularly looking forward to Geoff Ostling's tour of Tasmania, that promises to be a real highlight.

With so many pressures for development in our area, from owners, developers, Council and the State government, we will all need to be keeping our eyes open and our ears to the ground for threats to our heritage. To paraphrase Thomas Jefferson, 'The price of heritage is eternal vigilance'.

Scott MacArthur, President

Trace Your Burglar Ancestor! Sands and Other Records Online

Was one of your ancestors a burglar? Did your distant relatives come from the shady side of the family tree? You might be able to find out by using a newly established online directory *Australian Convict Index 1788-1868*.

On a more serious note, all *Sands Directories 1861-1933* also are listed, as are a *Who's Who of Australia 1921-1950* and an *Anzac Memorial 1914-18*. For those of us who may be fascinated by the obscure, then we may peruse the *1911 Census of Canada* and the *Maryborough (Queensland) Immigrants 1861-91*.

The directory service is available on a 'pay-as-you-view' basis for \$A 9.95 for 10 record views for 14 days. It's also available on an annual basis of \$10 per month i.e. \$A120 per annum. Interested readers should check with the website directly to ascertain which fee system would be most appropriate for their needs. You will need to obtain a log-in password.

Full details of all directories available and fees payable are available from the host website www.ancestry.com.au

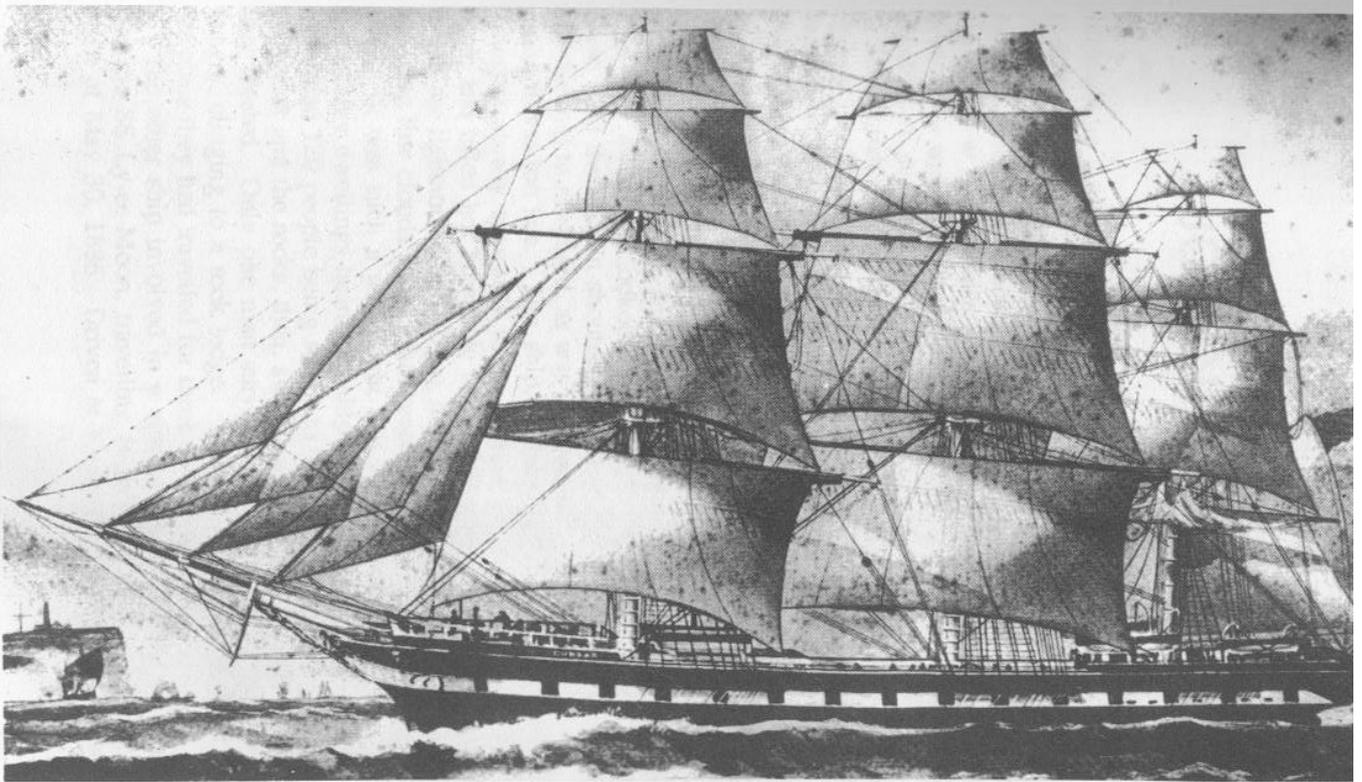
Keith Sutton

MYSTERIES DEMYSTIFIED

- **Bruce Welch** advises that the mystery beach in the June newsletter where the road-marking vehicle was photographed is **Newport Beach** looking back from the bend towards Bilgola. Thanks Bruce.
- Regarding the house name in **Camden Street Newtown - Cobra** - two members suggest a Dubbo connection. There is a Cobra Street in Dubbo. To the north east of Dubbo on the road to Dunedoo lies the town of Cobbora which was "the first white settlement in the Talbragar Valley region". Cobbora was once known as Cobra run. Thanks to **Rod Cox** and to **Shirley Doolan** who adds that "of more significance to the history of Dubbo is the fact that all the streets running north and south from the Macquarie River are named after the governors of NSW in date order starting with Phillip."

POSTCARD CORNER

Member **Susan Pinson** has sent a photocopy of a postcard showing Queen Victoria Markets Sydney. In front of the QV building is a tram and horse and cart, but virtually no cars - clearly an old postcard. The postcard was sent from Romford, Essex and post-marked 7 Feb 1972. Of more interest, it is addressed to Paddy and Cyril Pearl, 128 Windsor St, Paddington, Sydney. The message reads, "I sent 'The Act of Creation' to Koestler to be autographed and he returned it after 3 weeks inscribed, signed and dated." The card is unsigned, but an odd symbol appears after the word 'dated'. It is not clear whether the symbol is the postcard sender's 'mark' or a symbol written by Koestler, who was into symbols. Arthur Koestler's *The Act of Creation* was published in 1964; he also wrote *Darkness at Noon* and *The Sleepwalkers*. Cyril Pearl was a journalist who wrote books including *Wild Men of Sydney* and *Morrison of Peking*.



(Picture: Maritime Services Board)

**Wreck of the *Dunbar* Commemorative Service
St Stephens Church, 189 Church Street Newtown
Sunday 19 August 10 am**

Members are invited to attend this special service commemorating 150 years since the tragic wreck of the clipper ship *Dunbar* off Sydney Heads on 20 August 1857.

- On view will be the *Dunbar* Bible and other possessions washed ashore
- Interview with curator National Maritime Museum curator Kieran Hosty about his newly-launched *Dunbar* book which will be on sale
- Interview with direct *Dunbar* descendant Kevin Waller, former NSW State Coroner
- Entertainment by Australia's best-known folklorist Warren Fahey presenting *Dunbar* pieces
- Performance of *Dunbar* folk opera by the New England Regional Art Museum
- *Dunbar* graveside reflections & Cemetery tours
- Morning tea and bell peal

The *Dunbar* folk opera will also be performed on **Saturday 18 August at 7.30 pm** with entry by donation at St Stephens Church. This evening is still being planned so there will probably be other related activities. If you are interested in attending please advise Richard on 9557 3823 or by email.

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On **Friday 17 August 6.15 pm** at the **National Maritime Museum** in Darling Harbour, curator Kieran Hosty's book on the *Dunbar* shipwreck (published by the NMM) will be launched plus a screening of a History Channel segment and a performance of the *Dunbar* folk opera. Cost \$20, members \$15. Bookings essential: 9298 3644.

There will be other performances of the folk opera at the NMM that weekend. For more details visit www.anmm.gov.au

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

Saturday 28 July
**An Illustrated Walk Through
Old St Peters with Mark Matheson**
Details on front page

Saturday 25 August
**Words Can Be Bullets: a political history
of New Theatre with Lyn Collingwood**

Saturday 22 September
Tour of The Mint with Robert Griffin

Saturday 27 October
**Resurrect the dead: Recent archaeology at
Camperdown Mem. Rest Park: Denis Gojak**

MHS members are invited to **St Peters Church** 187 Princes Highway, St Peters on **Sunday 22 July 4.30 pm** to a recital 'With Love from Argentina' with The Solar Chamber Orchestra featuring accomplished guitarist Richard Charlton playing Handel's Water Music and works by Pujol, Powning, Mores and de Boismortier. Entry is by donation to music fund (which includes a light meal of soup and buns served after the concert).

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