

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.



DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

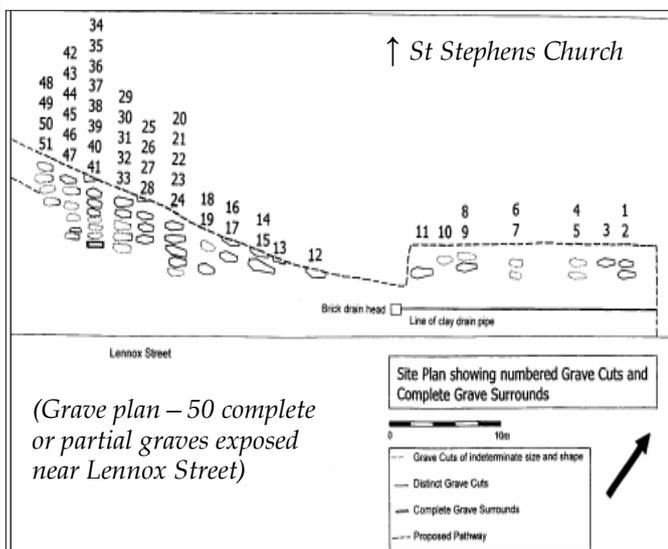
MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN

OUR NEXT MEETING

Resurrect the dead: Recent archaeology at Camperdown Memorial Rest Park with Denis Gojak

Saturday 27 October 10 for 10.30 am
Herb Greedy Hall 73 Petersham Rd Marrickville

When Camperdown Cemetery opened in the 1840s it was THE place to be buried if you were a Sydney Anglican. It was Sydney's first cemetery laid out on the new *gardenesque* principles, heralding a time when a visit to the cemetery would become a fashionable outing. The cemetery company clearly thought they were on to a winner, but soon problems began. The paddocks around the cemetery had been replaced by houses whose occupants didn't want a cemetery with its smells, flies and creepiness. The company found they had to also bury the destitute, which cost money, and even landscaping as an attraction meant less payable ground for burying. A succession of problems in the 1860s resulted in Camperdown's closure, and the establishment of Rookwood, far away in the bush where neighbours would never become a problem.



Recent archaeological work in Camperdown Memorial Rest Park has highlighted the cemetery and its operation. This talk will look at how the cemetery developed and the problems that resulted in its closure. Exposure of graves gives us insights into how practice differed from principle. We will also hear from the gravedigger Mr Tubby and various angry locals on what they thought about the cemetery. Director of Banksia Heritage + Archaeology, **Denis Gojak** has completed two monitoring projects in conjunction with Marrickville Council's recent landscaping of the Rest Park.

Newtown Festival 11 November
Camperdown Memorial Rest Park

YOUR ESSAY COULD BE WORTH A THOUSAND DOLLARS!

At the end of each episode, the 1960s US television series said 'There are eight million stories in *The Naked City*, this has been one of them . . . !

The suburbs that comprise Marrickville Local Government Area (LGA) may not be home to quite that many, but nevertheless, one would think there are many untold stories out there, all looking for an author. Why not have a crack at writing a story in article or essay format (non-fiction only, please) and enter the Marrickville Heritage Society Essay Competition as publicised in our last newsletter? You can write on any subject you chose, so long as it has some connection with Marrickville LGA.

The competition is open to anyone (with very few exceptions, as outlined on the entry form). There is no entry fee, and there is generous prize money. You may submit more than one entry. Other requirements and conditions are on the entry form. The competition closes on Friday 29 February 2008. Entry forms were enclosed with our last newsletter, but if you require another form or if you have any questions, contact our convenor Keith Sutton on 9564 6948.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Clare Marshall, Jane Robertson, both of Dulwich Hill; Graham Ashton, Mary-Ann Johnson, Karlene Thompson, Wendy Tibbetts, Elizabeth Wallace, all of Marrickville; Dan Lunney, Stanmore; Elizabeth Gainey, St Peters; Joy Berville, Campsie; Steve Watson, Canterbury; Lindsay Smyth (rejoined), Chippendale; Irene Carder (rejoined), Earlwood; Anne-Maree Johnston, Erskineville; Yvonne Folkard, Kirrawee.

HOW TO JOIN THE SOCIETY

Send a cheque or money order made out to Marrickville Heritage Society with your name(s), address & phone number(s). Address below. Ring Richard 9557 3823 for a brochure or further information. Membership includes monthly newsletter, journal *Heritage* and monthly talk or outing. Concession \$12, individual or joint concession \$20, household or organization \$28. Membership valid until the end of May 2008.

OUR LAST MEETING

Marrickville Members

Make Magic Memories at The Mint

On Saturday 22 September curator **Robert Griffin** led 30 enthusiastic MHS members on a magical tour of the past meeting the present at The Mint in Macquarie Street. His vast knowledge of the history and his wonderful style kept us riveted as we wandered through the old and the new.

The Mint was built (1811-16) as part of the hospital complex by a company granted sole rum import rights in exchange. Following the discovery of gold in NSW in 1851, the government of the day attempted to curtail the black market distribution of gold and requested a Sydney branch of the Royal Mint. After much debate, within Britain and other Australian states vying for the "honour", permission was granted to Sydney in 1853, arguably the start of the first rivalry between Sydney and Melbourne! The Mint was built completely from prefabricated materials shipped out from the mother country and took only one year to assemble with local sandstone cladding. It operated until 1926 with complaints of pollution resulting in a bigger chimney being built in 1890 – some things never change, really!

On three occasions the government planned to demolish the Mint, once to replace it with a continuous building from the Hyde Park corner to the State Library site. Two wars and a depression intervened and the plans had to be abandoned – a positive side-effect of these calamities!

The "Rum" hospital has gone through many incarnations since – officers quarters, parliament's ministerial car depot, offices for Government Insurance, family endowment and Housing Commission. Now it has become the headquarters of the Historic Houses Trust and the architectural works sympathetically juxtapose the new with the old. The Trust has designed it to be a people's place where the public can wander through, have lunch in the courtyard or the café, make use of the marvellous Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection and soak up the history of a survivor.

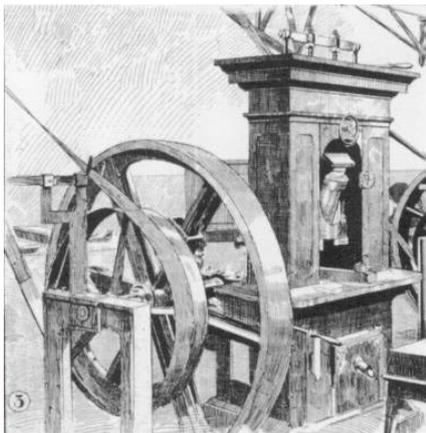
Anna Lee

Note Awards for the Mint refurbishment in 2005:

- **Sulman Award** for public architecture
- **Greenway Award** for conservation
- **Lachlan Macquarie Award** for Heritage
- **Master Builders Association Award** for construction

Robert drew our attention to an old wall containing bricks made in Newtown, with *Newtown* stamped into the "frog" of the brick. Many thanks to **Robert Griffin** for his illuminating tour and to **Shirley Hilyard** for her tour coordination.

A melting press, like the one depicted here, is extant at the Mint (Town & Country Journal 14 July 1888, Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales)



ANOTHER DUNBAR SURVIVOR – THE 1838 DUNBAR BIBLE SAGA

Among the items on display at the 150th anniversary *Dunbar* Commemorative service at St Stephens Anglican Church on 19 August was the so-called *Dunbar Bible*, which is in the care of the church on behalf of the Camperdown Cemetery Trust. On 21 August 1857, the day after the tragic shipwreck of the *Dunbar*, two kilometres south of Sydney Harbour's South Head, parts of the wreckage washed up on Forty Baskets Beach, near Manly. Brothers, Daniel and William Whealey, searching the wreckage, found a watertight metal deed box containing a hardcover Bible, in surprisingly good condition, apart from some water-staining.

The Bible was to remain in the Whealey family for 97 years until 1954 when Whealey descendants presented the Bible to the Camperdown Cemetery Trust, in whose care it has remained. Examination of the Bible reveals it was printed at Pitt Press, Cambridge by John William Parker, printer to Cambridge University. The date 1838 appears at the beginning of the New Testament. On the inside page is the written "Daniel Whealey August 21 1857" and the Bible quotation, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and love and favour rather than silver and gold. The rich and the poor meet together; but the Lord is the maker of them all" (Proverbs 22: 1-2; words and spelling differ slightly from Bible text).

It is not known who originally owned the Bible. Stuck on the inside cover is a label, dated 19 September 1869, and headed Juvenile Temperance Association of NSW, certifying that William Whealey is a member. (This society was founded that year.) A cutting inside the Bible reveals the Bible was presented to St Stephens Church because of the association of Camperdown Cemetery with the wreck.

Daniel and William Whealey were two of up to 12 children of John and Jane Whealey (or Whaley). John "and his father, also John Whaley, had been convicted together in County Antrim, Ireland in March 1821, each being sentenced to seven years' transportation." John Junior was then 16 years old. They were sent to Parramatta and were assigned to Gregory Blaxland. He received his Ticket-of-Leave in 1827 and later acquired land in the Manly area, making him one of Manly's first settlers. He supplied milk to the Quarantine Station and in 1851 was listed as being a woodman. Around 1855 he received a grant of 20 acres (c. 8 ha.) at Forty Baskets Beach.

Daniel is believed to have been born in the late 1830s. He became a "waterman or boatman at North Harbour" and died in 1881. William was born 27 October 1844. He married Annie Swift in 1868, they had eight children and he died in 1908. Jane Whealey (nee Shadwick or Chadwick) died in 1880 aged 63 from drowning. The inquest could not ascertain how her drowning happened, though she was observed to have been drunk not long before. John died in 1885. (Sources: Shelagh & George Champion *Profiles of the Pioneers in Manly, Warringah and Pittwater*, The Champions, 1996, pp. 78-80; BD&M information from Rod Cox; thanks to Rev Peter and Marcelle Rodgers, St Stephens Church, and Susan Pinson.)

Richard Blair

ROSEBY'S 1887 TIME CAPSULE

(This excerpt by **Rev Russell Davies**, ex Minister, Roseby Uniting Church, Marrickville, is from *With the wind in our sails: a history of Roseby Memorial Church 1871-1996*, pp. 16-17)

When we demolished the 1887 Sunday School hall to make way for a new retirement village, we salvaged the old foundation stone. Because it was over 400mm thick, we asked a stonemason to cut off two slices – the front 110mm to save as a memorial stone, the next 110mm to make a foundation stone for the new hostel.

Imagine our surprise when the stonemason discovered a time capsule nestled in a cavity cut into the bottom of the second slice. Records had not been preserved, and nobody knew the time capsule was there. The diamond saw revealed the edge of the glass, grinding away just its thickness. If the cut had been 3mm thinner, we would never have known the capsule was there; if it had been 3mm thicker, the saw would have destroyed the bottle and its contents.



When the stonemason showed the capsule, a glass preserving jar (pictured below), to Roseby property officer Bill Weekley, Bill brought it along to show the congregation. Seeing how tightly packed the contents were, we arranged for the [then] Marrickville Council archivist Rhona Clement to get them safely out of the container. She did so with a pair of forceps – like delivering a baby, she joked, and nearly as precious. The fragile papers were de-acidified and preserved. The originals were lodged in the Uniting Church archives at Eskdale House; copies were made for local use.

As well as an issue of the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* from 1887, the capsule contained copies of *Australian Christian Life*, *The Australian Independent*, the national Congregational newspaper of the day, *Marrickville Messenger*, the local church magazine and a two page letter dated 16 July 1887 from the minister and church secretary. The church was obviously flourishing at the time; the letter reports a Sunday School of more than 340 pupils, 30 teachers, a library of 350 volumes, a branch just started at Dulwich Hill with some 90 pupils, and another one about to be opened at Kogarah. It was obviously fiercely patriotic recording, “The Jubilee of our beloved Queen Victoria has just been celebrated with great enthusiasm throughout the British Empire. Lord Carrington is Governor of New South Wales, Sir Henry Parkes, Premier.

The 1887 Sunday School hall cost £210 to build. By contrast, the 40-bed aged care hostel which replaced it cost over \$3 million. Some things have changed; one sermon advertised was on the theme, “Spinster life –

Conversation and Gossip”, hardly a theme one would dare to advertise today. But other things remain the same. One advertisement promised to cure “Brain Fag – a deficiency of nerve power and insomnia, so common among ministers and others ... ”

The front slice of the old stone has been placed in a memorial area near the font along with other historical stones from the parish. The back slice was inscribed to make a foundation stone for the new hostel, unveiled and dedicated on Sunday 1 November 1992. A new time capsule, with copies of the old documents, plus similar details recording the life of the church in 1993 was placed in a similar time capsule behind the dedication plaque near the hostel front door, to be opened in 2043.

* * * * *

Notes: The hall’s memorial stone was laid by Joseph Graham, Mayor of Marrickville. Full text of The Rev Dr Robert Dey’s 1887 letter is in the booklet. Council gave approval to demolish the heritage-listed hall conditional upon major restoration of the church. Photo of preserving jar and letter: Mrs Noal Davies.

A TEMPE MARVEL

With no fanfare or fuss, a simple workers cottage in Barden Street Tempe has been 'unmodernised' to return it to its original Victorian appearance. Until recently, this unremarkable pair of small workers cottages on very narrow blocks had matching modern aluminium cladding, aluminium framed windows and steel mesh gates.



The owners of the cottage on the right realised there was more to the house than met the eye and set about investigating what was hidden under all the cladding. When they took off the aluminium, they found some of the original wide rusticated weatherboards, that they repaired and then installed matching new boards where the old ones were missing. They replaced the old wide aluminium window with a traditional timber framed double hung window with fritted glass. They also replaced the finial on the front gable and timber fretwork brackets on the front verandah. This thorough but very simple make-over finished with a final flourish of a lick of paint and a new timber picket gate.

A frumpy house has been transformed into a smart cottage that enhances its neighbourhood – and increases its resale price! This project is a fresh reminder of how rewarding it can be to make the effort to regain our lost or concealed past.

Scott MacArthur

PETERSHAM PARK

Box brush trees arms uplifted
above a scorched, dead earth
beseech the heavens for rain.

A week later, I walk on an
emerald green carpet, delight
in early buds on pruned rose bushes

the grandeur of Moreton Bay figs,
ancient root systems
sprawled along the surface.

Poinciana's red blooms overhang
band stand's lace iron work
palm fronds rustle,

spectators' cheers for baseball
teams, crack of bat on ball
drowned by siren's screech.

The aroma of steak sandwiches,
fresh coffee for afternoon tea
tease me as on a balmy Sunday afternoon

I meander between benches and seats
until descending aircraft's roar recalls
again twenty first century realities.

© Eileen Jones (30 July 2007)

MERRICKVILLE & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

No, this is not a misprint; and it is not a quote from a Kiwi who neither knows our Society's correct name nor how to pronounce the name of our district! Merrickville & District Historical Society is an active group in Canada. Merrickville, Ontario is on the Rideau Canal about midway between Kingston and Canada's capital, Ottawa.

Apart from the uncanny resemblance in name, a check of their website reveals that in 2003 they had a Merrickville Remembers Project; and would you believe they have a Merrickville Walking Tour! And on it goes. Needless to say, their name has nothing to do with Marrick, but is named after a William Merrick. Their associated websites reveal a link with Miricks in America from around 1600, or take the Merrick name back to 410 AD. Merrickville & DHS has a great website. Check through Google. Well worth a look!

MARRICKVILLE FESTIVAL

The Society thanks all those who helped on our successful stall at the annual Marrickville Festival on Sunday 9 September. The Society attracted six new members and our walking tour maps again proved popular. Thank you Keith, Mark, Nancy, Scott, Shirley, Sue, Susan, Voran and Wendy. Special thanks to Margaret Sinclair for her perennial tasty marmalade and to Diane for the jar labels.

PRESIDENT Scott 9559 5736
HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736
TREASURER Stuart 9560 8070
ESSAY COMPETITION Keith 9564 6948
NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823

ISAAC NATHAN & HIS DON JOHN OF AUSTRIA: HISTORIC PERFORMANCES

As advertised in Sydney Morning Herald on 29 September (Spectrum, p. 40), "Discover Australia's intriguing musical heritage. *Don John of Austria*, by the remarkable Isaac Nathan, was the first opera written and produced in Australia. For the first time since 1847, it will be performed here by a stellar cast of singers led by Nathan's descendant Alexander Briger." It features Steve Davislim, Cheryl Barker, Sally-Anne Russell and the Sydney Philharmonia Choirs directed by Rodney Fisher.

Isaac Nathan (c.1790-1864) was born in England.* "He was closely associated with the court of George IV and a friend of Byron, with whom he collaborated in the Hebrew Melodies (1815-19). For financial reasons he settled in Australia in 1841. Nathan made a lasting contribution to Australian musical life – he founded a singing academy in Sydney, was choirmaster of the cathedral, set up a publishing business, gave concerts and opera performances, and taught. He also transcribed much Aboriginal music. Nathan composed the first Australian operas and many patriotic songs and odes. Sir Charles Mackerras is one of his descendants" (*The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Music* edited by Alan Isaacs & Elizabeth Martin, Gallery Books, New York City, 1990, p. 256).



Isaac Nathan
by an unknown artist
(courtesy of
National Library of
Australia)

Nathan died on 15 January 1864 while alighting from a horse-drawn tram in Pitt Street Sydney – "when it started again before he was clear of the rails, he was crushed beneath its wheels" (Irvin). He was buried in Camperdown Cemetery.

Don John of Austria was first performed at the Royal Victoria Theatre in 1847, but according to Eric Irvin (*Dictionary of the Australian Theatre 1788-1914* (Hale & Iremonger 1985, p. 210), the opera was a failure. However, it is one of his few manuscripts to survive. This concert performance, sung in English, will be at the City Recital Hall, Angel Place on 18 and 20 October. Check papers for booking details.

* Birthdate variously given as 1790, 1791 and 1792

The Society's tour of Tasmania scheduled for November has been regrettably cancelled.