

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.



DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN

OUR NEXT MEETING

**A walking tour of Abbotsford
with Ted Green**

Saturday 24 November 10 for 10.15 am start

Meet at Abbotsford bus terminus, end of Great North Road. Either drive; take 9.25 am ferry from wharf 5 Circular Quay; or catch 438 bus via Railway Square at 9.23, Leichhardt Town Hall at 9.39. Circular walk approx. two hours. BYO refreshments. Tour free. Enquiries Sue (weekends or after 5 pm weekdays) 0423 209 361. Plenty of time left to vote!

Once part of Five Dock Farm from land granted to Surgeon John Harris in 1806, the attractive suburb of Abbotsford takes its name from Abbotsford House, which was the name of Sir Walter Scott's home. This grand Victorian mansion was built by prominent physician Sir Arthur Renwick in 1878. AE Grace of Grace Bros purchased the property in 1906 before selling it on to the Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Co (Nestlé) which operated their factory on the site until 1991.



Abbotsford House (photo: Sue Miller)

Join MHS member and raconteur **Ted Green** and meander through the byways of Abbotsford; experience some of Sydney's convict heritage; visit the former Animal Quarantine Station and learn about the halcyon days of rowing on the Parramatta River. See other Federation style houses *Riverview* (c. 1915) and *Chatham House* (1912), Lysaght Wire Mills, Henry Lawson Park and where Lawson literally spent his final days; plus much more.

MHS FEES OUTSTANDING?

Should your 2007/08 MHS membership fees (due 1 June 2007) be outstanding you will receive a reminder slip with this newsletter. Fees remain: concession \$12, individual or joint concession \$20, household or organization \$28. Society's address below.

ESSAY COMPETITION: FLOOD OF ENTRIES EXPECTED!

Our Essay Competition is under way and entries are being received. 'Rumours abound that the post office is recruiting extra staff, but this is unconfirmed', said Competition Convenor, Keith Sutton. 'But seriously', he remarked, 'this is YOUR chance to win \$1000 (second prize \$500, third \$250).'

Essays (c. 1500-5000 words) must be nonfiction and generally relate to Marrickville LGA. Anyone, bar the executive committee, may enter the competition. There is no entry fee and more than one essay may be submitted. Address entries to Essay Competition, Marrickville Heritage Society PO Box 415 Marrickville NSW 1475 by 5 pm on Friday 29 February 2008.

Essays must be typewritten on A4 white paper. Photos and/or illustrations are welcome, but no originals, please, as entries will not be returned. For entry forms or any other information contact competition convenor, and Society vice president, Keith Sutton by email ksconsulting@optusnet.com.au or ring 9564 6948 or mobile 0408 169 721.

ALL SAINTS CHURCH PAPERS ON DISC

All Saints Anglican Church Petersham has donated to Marrickville's History Centre a two disc CD of the All Saints Monthly Papers 1890-1996. The papers contain a huge amount of local information including baptisms, wedding and funeral information and the names of those from the parish who enlisted during World War One and some for World War Two. There are also many advertisements for businesses. For more information or access ring Chrys 9335 2287 or Glenn 9335 2152 at the History Centre.


ANNUAL XMAS POT LUCK DINNER
Saturday 1 December 6 for 6.30 pm
 With the year-long election campaign finally over, come to our annual Xmas Pot Luck Dinner to be held in the recently reopened Reiby Hall, 37 Station Street Newtown (see article on back page), with outdoor as well as indoor spaces. Close to buses along Enmore Road and King Street, and to Newtown Station; parking somewhat limited. BYOD. Phone Lorraine on 8565 6511 or email to lbeach@iprimus.com.au to advise what food you will bring.



OUR LAST MEETING

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

With Aussie humour about death, role plays and raconteur manner, **Denis Gojak** wove in key aspects of professional heritage practice in his talk on Saturday 27 October at Herb Greedy Hall, Marrickville. Documentary research traced associations, colonial norms and successive cemeteries' exhumations. From Bligh's *Camperdown* Estate beginnings, his descendants sought 19th century respectability amongst a highly sectarian squattocracy elite. Pursued was how a private company's *gardenesque* layout ideals conflicted with shareholder profits, descending into gross malpractice causing the 1848 enquiry.

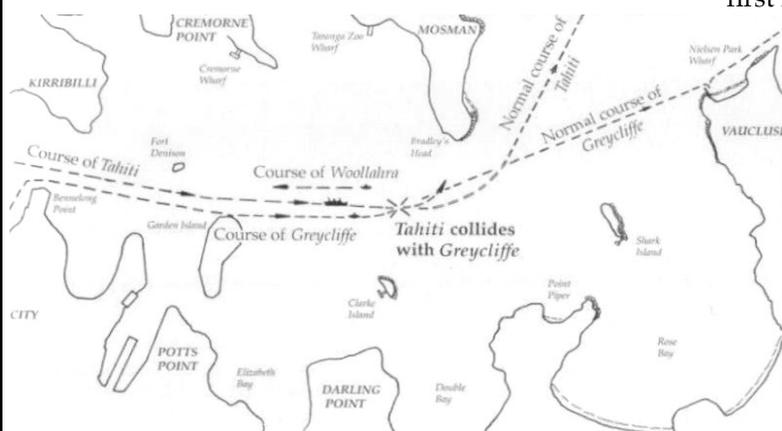
Smells and polluted waters flowed off the clay ridge into a densely populated New Town of property speculators mixing with the unsanitary ills of, by then, inner city. The last layer was the 1930s 'rest parks movement' to what we see today. Physical evidence tells tales note how topography and underlying soils revealed multiple bodies lay in plots not 'six foot down', and most only five foot long. Denis's ongoing involvement began with my approach when I was Marrickville Heritage Advisor (with Marrickville Council), so it is fitting I write this summary of his excellent presentation.

Sue Jackson-Stepowski

Note: There were 15,734 burials 1848-1867; the cemetery closed on 1 January 1868, but due to pre-purchase

80TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREYCLIFFE DISASTER & CAPT WILLIAM BARNES

Having recently commemorated Australia's greatest maritime disaster (*Dunbar*), it is timely to remember the 80th anniversary of Sydney Harbour's worst disaster which took place on Thursday 3 November 1927. This was when the Watsons Bay ferry *Greycliffe* collided with the Royal Mail Steamer *Tahiti* off Bradley's Head, resulting in the death of 40 people (all from *Greycliffe*) with dozens more injured. At the helm of *Greycliffe* and relieving the regular master was Captain William Thomas Barnes (born 1875), a most experienced ferry captain, having received his Harbour & Rivers Steamer Masters Certificate in 1894. Barnes survived the collision and was "found clinging to a raft and was taken aboard the ferry SS *Kurraba*. After recovering, [he] returned to the water in *Burra-Burra's* lifeboat to help rescue others" (Brew, p. 133).



Photographers of Cooks River and Wollie Valleys Sought for Exhibition

The Two-Valley Trail runs 13 km through bushland, parkland and playing fields from Bexley North station to Campsie station along the Wollie Creek and Cooks River Valleys, via the junction of the two waterways at Undercliffe/Tempe. The Trail is easily walkable, but not well known in Sydney. In order to promote the Trail and the two valleys locally and more widely, five local volunteer groups are working together on a number of projects. The groups are Cooks River Valley Association, Friends of Ewen Park, Mudcrabs, RiverLife Interpretive Tours, and Wollie Creek Preservation Society.

To help promote the launch of the Two Valleys Trail in March/April 2008 they are running a quest for photographs showing the great views and hidden treasures to be found in the Cooks River and Wollie Creek valleys for an exhibition to be launched in April 2008. The photographs will go on public exhibition, be placed on the internet, and be used to illustrate a local calendar, educational materials and a planned book about the area. **It is not a competition; there are no prizes other than inclusion!** Photographs will be selected based on photographic calibre, of course, but also on interest and overall considerations of variety and range.

Photographs need to be submitted by **3 December**. Details of what is sought, entry conditions and submission arrangements can be obtained by visiting www.crva.org.au or www.wollicreek.org.au or by emailing info@wollicreek.org.au or by phoning 9554 3176 or 0405 549 356.

There followed a Court of Marine Enquiry, a Coronial Inquest and an Admiralty Court. In brief, it was concluded that whilst *Tahiti's* speed was excessive, *Greycliffe* had deviated from her usual course. Brew writes (p. 87): "The cause of the collision, therefore, must be attributed to *Greycliffe's* helmsman" [Barnes]. *Greycliffe* was registered in 1911 and was 125 feet long. *Tahiti* was built in 1904 and was 460 feet long. Requisitioned by the New Zealand Government in 1914, it was a troopship during World War One. It sank on 18 August 1930 in the Pacific with no loss of life! The comprehensive story of the disaster and its victims is related in *Greycliffe - Stolen Lives* by Steve Brew (Navarine Publishing, ACT 2003).

In 1927 Capt Barnes was living with his second wife, Maud and daughter Irene, at 114 Wardell Road Dulwich Hill. He had five other children from his first marriage. Barnes died in 1953 aged 78. It is believed Irene continued living at this address until her death in 1987.

Some members will recall *Greycliffe* survivor Ken Horler's talk at St Stephens Church Newtown in October 2001 (which was written up in the November 2001 newsletter). Sadly Ken passed away earlier this year aged 94.

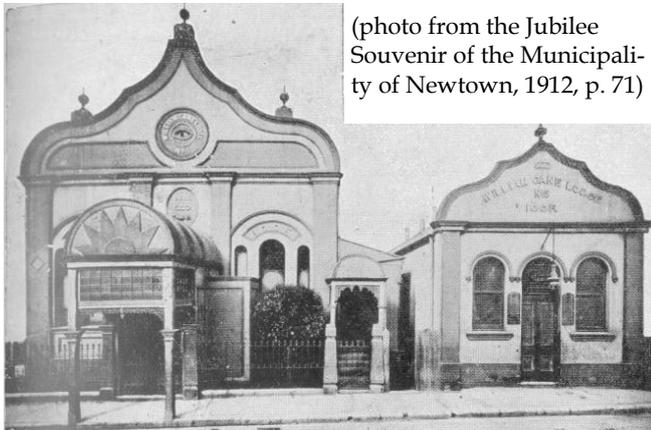
Richard Blair

Tahiti and Greycliffe's paths through Sydney Harbour on 3 November 1927 (© John Brew) from Steve Brew's "*Greycliffe - Stolen Lives*" p. 37

THE DARKER SIDE OF NEWTOWN

Rebecca Ward has produced an intriguing booklet for The National Trust of Australia (NSW) called *The Darker Side of Newtown and Surrounds: A Self Guided Tour for the Misguided*. This quirky publication should have broad appeal with its numerous potted entries having headings such as Decapitation by Train, Death by Shopping, Bridegroom of Death, Decorative Phallus, Death by Skipping Rope, Ancient Order of Druids, Murder in the Cemetery, Poisoning the Constable's Wife and Mutilated Remains.

A site map is included and most entries are accompanied by a photo or illustration. All stories are sourced with much material drawn from local newspapers such as the *Newtown Chronicle* and *The Weekly Review*. Further afield are The Notorious Baby Farmers in Macdonaldtown, Ghost Sighting in St Peters, Dr Vause's Private Insane Asylum in Tempe and the Petersham Plane Crash. One minor quibble in the Sources is that *Marrickville Remembers* was published by Marrickville Heritage Society in 1997, through funding from The Department of Veterans' Affairs.



(photo from the Jubilee Souvenir of the Municipality of Newtown, 1912, p. 71)

Oddfellows Hall on left was home to the Lodge of the Ancient Order of Druids a century ago; William Gane Lodge on right. Featured in the booklet, these quaint buildings are extant at 71 and 69 Wilson Street Newtown.

The local preoccupation with the macabre is hardly surprising given the substantial former Camperdown Cemetery and the extant St Stephens church cemetery, both near the heart of Newtown along with the never-ending fascination with the saga of Miss Donni-thorne. Is it no wonder Enmore Road has become the Gothic Centre of Sydney? Indeed the book acknowledges *Le Cabinet des Curiosities* at 97 Enmore Road Enmore where the book is on sale (\$5). It can also be purchased in some King Street bookshops and through the National Trust (plus postage).

MORE HOUSE NAMES

It's not only Newtown that has house names derived from places. MHS member Wendy Dyson has spotted a number in **John Street Petersham**: 11A *Inglewood*, 42 *Iona*, 46-48 *Bywong*, 52 *Kia Ora*, 58 *Cambewarra*, 60 *Berry*, 70 *Lambridge* and 72 *Ebor*. Wendy also cites a pair of semis at **117-119 Edgeware Road Enmore** curiously named *Paeon* and *Horae*. Further east is a batch of ten semis **38-56 Lennox (formerly Charles) Street Newtown** over whose facade is inscribed *Church Avenue*, reflective of nearby St Stephens Anglican Church. It is not an earlier name for Lennox Street.

2007 RAHS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

your history @ national capital

The 2007 Royal Australian Historical Society State History Conference was held on 20-21 October at the ANU in Canberra. **Angela Phippen** and **Robert Hutchinson**, both members of the Affiliated Societies Committee, represented Marrickville Heritage Society. Over 100 people attended from across the state.

Prior to the conference, I was among the visitors who toured major institutions — the National Library of Australia, the National Archives of Australia, the National Museum of Australia (including a look at one of its repositories) and the Australian War Memorial. We went "behind the scenes" at some of these. One message was the need to take care of records and collections, even if you don't have a museum. All records and objects are valuable, and should be maintained in the best possible manner.

After the opening address by the RAHS vice president Dr Anne-Maree Whitaker, and the presentation of the cultural grant cheques, the keynote address '*Magic to stir men's blood*': *Canberra's big ideas, plans and planners* was presented by David Headon, historian and former Cultural Adviser to the National Capital Authority. The varied papers included Brian's Madden's *Canberra means 'meeting place': But does it?*; and *Public Bar to Private House* from Sarah Lethbridge, Senior Archivist, Noel Butlin Archives. These archives hold the records of major national companies such as Tooth and Co. We visited these important archives which are part of the ANU. The final paper was on *The Cavalcade Collection: a museum without walls* from Helen Parsons of the Cavalcade of History and Fashion, a group I had done exhibitions for in the 1970s.

The RAHS is to be congratulated on its smooth running of the conference. Thanks to the MHS executive committee for giving me the opportunity to attend and I look forward to next year's conference in Sydney.

Robert Hutchinson

DIANA IDENTIFIED!

Desperately Seeking Diana was the title of my article on Marrickville's most famous pottery which appeared in *Heritage* 8 (1994). The article listed a number of alternatives for the choice of the name *Diana* for the pottery but it seems that all were incorrect. Recently the Society received a letter from Barry Watts, nephew of the late Eric Lowe, founder of the Diana Pottery in the early 1940s. Diana is Eric Lowe's niece and Barry Watts' sister, and lives in Victoria. I hope to interview Diana for a future edition of the newsletter. Just for the record, Barry Watts' mother, Alba Lowe before her marriage, gave her name to Alba Ware which also existed in Marrickville in the 1940s.

Geoff Ostling

Note Geoff's 1994 article was reworked, with a new and extensive range of pottery photographs, mostly taken by Robert Hutchinson, in *Diana Pottery* for the MHS publication *3 Marrickville Potteries* (2005).

October newsletter correction: In the caption for the illustration of machinery at The Mint, it is correctly a coining press, not a melting press.

CALENDAR OF MHS EVENTS

Saturday 24 November (Election Day)

Abbotsford Walk with Ted Green

Details on front page

Saturday 1 December

Annual Xmas Pot Luck Dinner

Details on front page

BACK TO MARRICKVILLE ROAD

Once again Marrickville Council will stage *Back to Marrickville Road* in Alex Trevallion Plaza from **11 am to 3 pm on Saturday 17 November** with the official opening at 11.30. New images will be shown alongside existing ones in this photographic historic exhibition of Marrickville Road. There will be entertainment as well as the usual fairy floss.

THE BISCUIT FACTORY CAMPERDOWN

Exhibition at Museum of Sydney (cnr Bridge & Phillip Streets) 9.30 am-5.30 pm daily until 2 December

The biscuit factory in Camperdown baked its first biscuits in 1891 and, as Westons Biscuits, continued to bake until February 2004 when the last Wagon Wheel rolled off the assembly line. Photographers Peter Campbell and Murray Fredericks documented the interior spaces and sculptural machines, the hands-on processing and, most importantly, the factory community at the end of an era.

USED POSTAGE STAMPS SOUGHT

Not only does MHS member, nonagenarian **Margaret Sinclair**, make heritage marmalade each year for the Marrickville Festival, she also collects **used** stamps to assist the overseas Missions. Stamps can be given to Margaret at meetings, to a committee member to pass on or posted care of the society.

CELL BLOCK THEATRE

Deborah Beck, MHS member, drawing lecturer and archivist at the National Art School (NAS, around which she conducted MHS tours in May 2006) and author of *Hope in Hell - a History of Darlinghurst Gaol and the National Art School* is researching the history of the Cell Block Theatre as part of her Masters degree in history at Sydney University. She is looking for people who performed or exhibited in the Cell Block Theatre, Darlinghurst (in the grounds of East Sydney Technical College, now the NAS) 1955-2005. She would also like to see any programs, posters, reviews or photographs of events in the Cell Block. Contact Deborah either by email on crokebeck@ozemail.com.au or at the NAS on 9339 8658 if you can help.

NEED CAST IRON FENCE RODS?

Following the renovation to their Victorian terrace, MHS members (and hosts of our 2006 Pot Luck Xmas dinner) **Anna and Tony Breinl** have a box of 30-40 cast iron rods with attached liliun heads surplus to their needs. They are a mixture of rods 61, 94 and 111 cm in length, excellent for repairs to existing fences, etc, and are free to a good home. There is also a small box of assorted related ironwork. If anyone can use them or knows someone who can, ring 0420 312 155 or 9560 4583. Tony will even deliver if need be!

REIBY HALL REOPENED

In 1905 Reiby Hall at 37 Station Street Newtown was built as a gospel hall on the last three lots of land subdivided from Mary Reibey's estate. The house where Mary Reibey spent her final years (she died in 1855), the mansion *Reiby House*, stood next door to Reiby Hall until it was demolished in 1967 to make way for public housing. The building continued as a gospel hall (affiliated with Emmaus College) until the 1980s when it became a private home, then in 1995 a yoga centre, which it remained until 2006.



Reiby Hall when a gospel hall (probably 1960s)

The hall has recently been acquired and renovated by Newtown's Sub-Branch of the RSL and was officially reopened on 16 October by sub-branch secretary, Rev Tom Hamilton JP. The ceremony was attended by former RSL president Rusty Priest and by the current RSL State President (NSW Branch) Donald Rowe OAM who unveiled the plaque at the front of the hall. The hall will be used for meetings, counselling and as a casual place for returned servicemen to have a cup of tea and a chat. It will also be available as a community centre. The sub-branch has generously made space available to MHS to store filing cabinets, stock and other items. This is most appreciated as until now, such items have been stored in committee members' houses. We acknowledge the assistance given by Rev Tom Hamilton and the sub-branch president Jerry Croucher JP.

Coinciding with the **75th anniversary of the New Theatre** (23 October) is the publication of *The New Years 1932- : The Plays, People and Events of 75 Years of Sydney's New Theatre*, available from the theatre for \$22. With 75 years of **continuous** production, this non-professional theatre receives no ongoing funding and manages entirely on ticket and refreshment sales plus occasional donations. Lyn Collingwood gave insights into some of The New's political and social history when she addressed the Society in August. The theatre bought a former TV picture-tube factory in 1973 which has since remained its home at 542 King Street Newtown. Congratulations!

PRESIDENT Scott 9559 5736

HERITAGE WATCH Scott 9559 5736

ESSAY COMPETITION Keith 9564 6948

NEWSLETTER EDITOR Richard 9557 3823