

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.



DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN

OUR NEXT MEETING

Alan Croker unlocks the secrets of joinery
Saturday 28 August 10.15 for 10.30 am
Herb Greedy Hall 79 Petersham Rd Marrickville

Traditional joinery has a lot to tell us about our built heritage, if only we are able to understand it. These secrets are still relevant today but all too often we discard or replace the joinery without having a clue about its value or the secrets it holds. This talk will discuss the principles behind the construction, configuration and profiles of various joinery elements; how joinery can be used to date a building, and why we should think three times about replacing it.



Front door of Denbigh c1820 Camden (photo: Alan Croker)

A long term MHS member, **Alan Croker** is an architect who has been involved with conservation and adaptive re-use for more than 30 years and is the founding director of **Design 5 Architects**. He has a passion for traditional joinery, and has co-authored a book on the subject. His projects include The Dairy Cottage in Parramatta, Rose Bay Cottage, Jones Bay Wharf, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery in Hobart, Denbigh, Exeter Farm Cottage and the Sydney Opera House.

The **History Centre** at Petersham Town Hall is closed to the public from Tuesday 3 August while History Services is being relocated to Marrickville Libraries. There will be an update in the next newsletter, but for further information please call 9335 2132.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Whilst it's too late to register to vote in the federal election, there's still time to sponsor our forthcoming journal *Heritage 13*, but do it soon and ensure you specify 'journal sponsor'. You will be acknowledged in the journal. Meanwhile thanks to those members who have already paid sponsorship.

HISTORY WEEK 4-12 SEPTEMBER:
Local activities on back page

OUR SEPTEMBER MEETING

Yaralla & yonder by coach
Saturday 25 September 9 for 9.15 am

More details at August meeting and in next newsletter, but you can book now as Sep. newsletter is out only two weeks before above date. Coach from Petersham, tour of Yaralla grounds, Concord West is comprehensive but no entry into Yaralla House (a hospital under renovation). Also includes Kokoda Walkway, Canada Bay museum, St Alban's Church, Five Dock, and more. Cost \$35 (incl. coach, morning Devonshire tea, afternoon tea, tours, museum entry). BYO lunch. Pay in advance by cheque, money order, direct deposit or cash at August meeting. Bookings: Diane 9588 4930 or email <diane.mccarthy@optusnet.com.au>.

STATE HERITAGE UNDER THREAT

The **National Trust's** two magazines out this month give extensive coverage on the proposed redevelopment of **Barangaroo**. **Ian Carroll** OAM, National Trust President, says "all too often we face a total disregard for heritage in the face of development pressures . . . It is [now] necessary for the Trust and the wider community to engage in a significant campaign to preserve another of Governor Macquarie's legacies, namely the maritime heritage of Millers Point and Barangaroo and the shipping industry which he established there." Whilst Carroll accepts redevelopment there as inevitable he says the Trust seeks "constructive dialogue with all parties concerned to achieve a design outcome which respects the harbour and foreshores, and preserves our cultural and environmental relationships with it."

Historian and advisor to the Trust, **Christina Ludlow** says "heritage conservation principles begin with an assessment of the significance of a particular place and its attributes. The alteration, management and use of that place should then be planned with regard to conserving that significance, or the most important aspects of it. But recent developments in New South Wales' planning policy have weakened the significance of 'place' . . . The recent NSW State Gov. Review of the 2005 Metropolitan Strategy *City of Cities: A Plan for Sydney's Future* estimates Sydney will have a population of six million by 2036 . . . The review talks about urban character and sustainability, but it doesn't identify heritage or heritage principles as having a role."

Urban design and development authority **Emeritus Professor Jon Lang** says that in "the piecemeal growth of Australian cities, the current preoccupation is with height and mass, rather than character and quality of life."

2010 MHS PUBLICATIONS REPORT

Usually this report is confined to the newsletter but on this occasion I've extended it to include an update on the status of our other publications. Two years ago the Society ran a successful essay competition then embarked on publishing the essays submitted. We had hoped to have this publication out by now but this has not been possible. Historical societies such as ours exist largely because there are sufficient members who pay annual dues, but there needs to be among that membership a body of people prepared to give their time and energy towards making things happen. Obviously I'm talking about volunteers and such people seem to be harder and harder to find.

Thus when I learnt a day before last year's AGM that our then president, **Scott MacArthur**, who had intended to continue in that role, had landed a vocational position interstate, in the absence of anyone else, I became president. This unexpected event meant that much of the time that both my colleague and vice president for the past year, **Lorraine Beach**, and I would have devoted to this publication was removed and it is largely for this reason that the essay publication has not yet appeared. I won't predict when it will appear, but I can say we have dealt with all editorial issues, we've been contacting contributors to try to obtain original or 'best copies' of proposed illustrations; we still need to secure some good quality images which involves getting appropriate permissions and clearances as and if required, and we've been liaising with printers. I do thank the contributors for their cooperation and patience. We've come up with a catchy title gleaned from one of the essays. I thank Lorraine for her conscientious handling of the illustrations coupled with her fastidious approach to the layout. I also thank coordinator **Keith Sutton** for his continuing guiding hand and for his discussions with potential printers.

Another undertaking that has involved much of my time has been the journal. Two years ago the then editor of *Heritage 13*, **Mark Matheson** told the AGM that publication was close. Shortly afterwards, for personal reasons, Mark resigned as editor and withdrew two proposed articles. This was unfortunate as Mark had competently edited three journals which all included well-researched articles by him. The journal was stalled for a further year when another MHS member offered to take on the editorship, but didn't proceed.

The good news is that late last year I approached our member, **Yvonne Preston** – for many years a journalist with *The Sydney Morning Herald* (including two periods as China correspondent) and other newspapers – to take over as editor. Yvonne has now got the journal to a significantly advanced stage and her daughter, **Madeleine Preston**, a professional graphic designer, is doing the layout. Among the articles are the history of the Vicars Woollen Mill by **John Vicars**; a lively article on examples of the Green Man in our local area by **Wendy Dyson**; **Harry Stone's** Sydenham memories and his valiant decision to remain during the mass demolitions of the 1990s; **Silas Clifford-Smith's** account of a little known Stanmore female artist; and the story a local siege in 1931 written by the journal editor. I thank **Shirley Hilyard** for again taking charge of advertising; and I thank all advertisers and sponsors. Our advertisers include once more, Marrickville Rotary, who **Diane McCarthy** recently addressed at a Rotary meeting ('yesteryear's shopping in Marrickville'). Diane received a cheque and an ad in return. I commend Yvonne for assuming the editor's role. As *Heritage 13* has been a long time coming, I remind members that the journal is free as part of MHS membership.

One publication that did come out in the past year was the Society's 25-year Index to the Newsletters compiled by former president and now Life Member, **Bob Thompson**. Whilst a handful of copies were produced in hardcopy, its main format is on disc which has been emailed to interested members. This was produced as a labour of love and at virtually no cost to the Society. A great effort Bob.

Now to my relative comfort zone of the newsletter. This has continued to appear on time with a broad range of contributions, mostly from members but also from both non members; others have had indirect input by suggesting items of interest or drawing matters to the editor's attention. Among all these are **Gayle Adams**, **Lorraine Beach**, **Michele Carton**, **Rod Cox**, **Alan Croker**, **Joan Francis**, **Hillary Goldsmith**, **Shirley Hilyard**, **Laurel and Bob Horton**, **Wayne Le Clos**, **Diane McCarthy**, **Chrys Meader**, **Bob Parkinson**, **Ian Phillips**, **Susan Pinson** and **Jacqueline Yetzotis**. There were obituaries for three long term esteemed members namely **Bill Wenham**, **Peter Mabey** and **Michael Pearce**.

I have again had good committee support but I'd like to single out **Lorraine Beach** for doing most of the legwork for the April newsletter while I was away and for an abundance of other newsletter-related matters; **Diane McCarthy** for the unseen work of organising envelopes, address labels, and renewal slips; **Ian Phillips** for his usual facilitation of newsletter deliveries and technical advice; also the **World of Print** in Broadway, still charging the same rate after eight years; **Pamela Stewart** for posting the newsletters to members and **Shirley Hilyard** who I can always count on to thoroughly proofread and bring a certain quality control to the newsletter.

And how does the newsletter get out to local members? Ian each month accompanies one of our pool of drivers to drop off runner bundles: thanks again to **Tony Breinl**, **Diane McCarthy**, **Graeme Napier**, **Keith Sutton** and **Ken Turner**. And again may I thank the runners who happily deliver your newsletters – they are **Lu Bell**, **Richard Blair**, **Maree Blanchard**, **John Blattman**, **Tricia Blombery** & **Stuart Grigg**, **Nigel Butterley**, **June Cameron** & **Ken Turner**, **Iain Carolin**, **Peter Cousens**, **Fred Ellis**, **Rosemary Fallon**, **Audrey Furney**, **Barbara Gibbons**, **Jean Hartman**, **Colin Hesse**, **Shirley Hilyard**, **Hillary Morrissey**, **Allan Outlaw**, **Ian Phillips**, **Peter Robertson**, **Pamela Stewart**, **Ken Swinbourne**, **Vivien Wherry** and **June West**; with occasional backup from **Di Beckett**, **Chris King**, **Graeme Napier**, **Corinne O'Loughlin**, **Ann Petersen**, **Keith Sutton** and **Coralie Wickers**. I should add that newsletters are also delivered by runners to all four local libraries, Newtown Neighbourhood Centre, all Marrickville Councillors, key Marrickville Council staff, our local MPs, John Wright's Newtown antique shop and a couple of cafes, while complimentary copies are posted to some other historical societies (some in reciprocal arrangements), RAHS, the National Trust, local newspapers, legal deposit libraries and, as required, to relevant people.

Richard Blair

OUR LAST MEETING

Petersham north walk with Geoff Ostling

On Saturday 24 July members walked the streets of Petersham north, led by past president and long time member, **Geoff Ostling**. We heard about Governor Macquarie's first visit to the area, which was pronounced not suitable for growing vegetables for the seriously undersupplied colony. The area at that time was made up of a number of farms, and didn't really develop until the train line came through in the 1850s. Prior to that anyone who worked in the city had to have two stables – one at home in Petersham and one in the city. The Art Deco town hall built in the 1930s was a very grand building. For many years dances were held most nights of the week, as this was a great way to raise money.

Morning tea was taken at the Metropolitan Community Church, a beautiful 1940 brick building featuring the unusual renovated octagonal chapel. Originally a Christian Scientist Church, it housed the Mastertouch Piano Roll Company for about 20 years from the mid 1970s. We were too late for the beautiful Congregational church, with its 104 foot high spire, in Croydon Street, that member **Lu Bell** told us about. The church was demolished in the 1960s for a hospital but has since been converted into an apartment block.

We stopped for several fascinating potted house histories, but **Peter McLaren's** house in Station Street was the highlight. Peter kindly invited us inside to view his amazing restoration of this tiny cottage: a long term work in progress, with such attention to detail.

Fort Street High School brought back memories for some members such as the awful smell of malt from Miller's Brewery next door. An enormous number of prominent people passed through its doors. We walked around Petersham Park, firstly to the Rotunda – built in 1902 to commemorate King Edward VII's coronation – where the band used to play every Sunday and then to see the plaque placed as a tribute to Sir Donald Bradman's first Sydney century played on the Petersham Oval.

Finally the magnificent 1885 Italianate Petersham railway station, which was designed as a country station rather than the more 'run of the mill' urban stations. Inspiration for Henry Lawson's famous poem 'Faces in the street' is said to have occurred here. Many thanks to **Geoff Ostling**, whose detailed knowledge of his local Petersham area kept us entertained, informed and amazed; to **Peter McLaren**, **Lu Bell** and to **Ian Phillips** with his inimitable 'bikrophone'.

Rosemary Wood

Notes In the quip of the year **Gayle Adams** coined this most apt description for Ian's microphonic set-up on bicycle, also used at Parramatta and the recent Marrickville Road walk. Our visit to **Peter McLaren's** house was a splendid substitute for the planned viewing of **Keith Sutton's** iconic murals; Keith having, shortly before, had an unfortunate fall on Petersham Station footbridge steps rendering him temporarily unavailable. Ironically Peter had an article on the early 1990s restoration of this footbridge in *Heritage 8*. Peter was delighted to find among our group, member **Bob Irving**, who had not only lectured Peter in architecture at UNSW, but had been his main inspiration in becoming a heritage architect. – **Editor**.

Chinese Australian Historical Society talk

On 22 May I attended a lecture for the Chinese Australian Historical Society at the Sydney Mechanics School of Arts, 280 Pitt Street Sydney. **Dr Barry McGowan** (ANU) spoke about Chinese pastoral workers, market gardeners, entrepreneurs and families in the Riverina. Several illustrations of important finds of artefacts and heritage sites (such as cemeteries) underscored Barry's insights on colonial and post-colonial labour patterns, society and economy, which, he suggested, might require revision of accepted knowledge to date. Results of the research are to be incorporated in an exhibition at the Museum of the Riverina in Wagga Wagga (November 2010 to March 2011), then Albury (March to June 2011).

There followed a short illustrated talk on Sydney Chinese Market Gardens by **Anna Lee**, CAHS Treasurer (and also a MHS member). A garden at Rockdale produces Continental Parsley only. Another surviving enterprise is at Phillip Bay (La Perouse) to the south of Botany Cemetery, and it supplies all kinds of Asian vegetables. Anna revealed most work is still manual, except perhaps for automatic watering instead of backbreaking usage of cans. Anna's family owned a garden at Blakehurst abutting Princes Highway. That has long since disappeared as have several other allotments around Dulwich Hill, Marrickville and Sydenham. The Rockdale and Phillip Bay gardens are on the State Heritage Register.*

Further information can be gained from the Society's President Daphne Lowe Kelley, GPO Box 670, Sydney 2001 or by email <lowekelley@bigpond.com>. The website is <www.chineseheritage.org.au>.

Robert Parkinson

* There are strong concerns over a proposal that a significant portion of the La Perouse (Botany) market garden be resumed for expansion of the adjacent cemetery. The State Heritage Register states "It is believed that this vegetable garden was Australia's first primary industry site and the site was more or less the same

A DA has been lodged to demolish the former Christian Spiritual Church at **28 Petersham Road Marrickville** (see February 2010 newsletter). Apart from its history and the faint visibility of the church name, it would be hard to justify preservation of the building on those grounds alone, given the advanced state of decay in the building fabric. However to avert the history being lost perhaps a plaque could be considered by Council to mark this curious aspect of our local history.



Wildlife spotted in Croydon Street Petersham on Geoff's walk is believed to be benign (photo: Richard Blair)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday 28 August

Alan Croker unlocks the secrets of joinery

Details on front page

Saturday 25 September

Yaralla and yonder by coach

Details on front page

Saturday 23 October

Rob Darroch on Charles Rosenthal

Saturday 27 November

Silas Clifford-Smith on Percy Lindsay

Marrickville Council Heritage Promotions Committee's History Week activities

The 2010 theme is *Faces in the Street*. Apropos the famous Henry Lawson poem and his connection with Petersham, **Geoff Ostling** will conduct identical walks on **Sunday 5 September** and **Wednesday 8 September 10 am-12 noon** starting and ending at Petersham Town Hall. Here you can view Henry's brother, Peter Lawson's painting of *The Warren* and partake of light refreshments. Free event, but bookings essential: Geoff 9568 3029 or 0425 359 264. If no contact leave a message and a return phone number; please advise if you have to cancel.

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Everyone is welcome to **Dr Peter Kirkpatrick's** talk organised through the Australian Society of Authors on **Wednesday 8 September 6-8 pm** at Petersham Town Hall on Henry Lawson's verse and the urban environment with references to contemporary responses to the inner city.



On 10 July MHS Member and jazz legend **Kate Dunbar** sang and spoke at RAHS on her musical life and Sydney's Jazz Scene since the 1940s (photo: Richard Blair)

Gayle Adams, member of MHS and the Cooks River Valley Association, is interested in the history of swimming in Cooks River. If you have information contact Gayle 9569 5996 or <cookseye.cooksriver@gmail.com>.

Peter Fitzsimons' Fitz Files (SMH 24/7/10): "Today, **Petersham Rugby Union Football Club**, Australia's longest-serving suburban and oldest grassroots rugby club, faces inner-west rivals Balmain and is calling for all past players and supporters to head down to "Stade Camperdown"—aka Camperdown Oval—for its Annual Back to Petersham Day." Nicknamed the *Shammies*, the club was formed in 1883. Results on the day were mixed, but first grade was thrashed (49-15).

The Inner West Courier (29/7/10): "Marrickville Council is taking expressions of interest to take over the site of the **Coptic Church** in Sydenham. Interested parties would have to be willing to undertake renovations on the building to make it fit for use. The council hopes the space can be transformed into an artist studio or gallery, performance space or community facility. If no tenders are passed the future of the Coptic Church could be in jeopardy, as a number of councillors said it should be demolished. For further details call Marrickville Council on 9335 2222."

The **Rotary Club of Marrickville** (Inc) Charter No. 7592 this month celebrates its 60th anniversary. The Club was chartered on 12 August 1950. They have been proud and long term advertisers in the MHS journal *Heritage*. Rotary International was formed in 1905 in Chicago and the first two Australian Rotary Clubs began in Melbourne on 21 April 1921 and in Sydney on 7 May 1921.

The debate regarding which supermarket replaced the **Dulwich Hill Methodist Church** (Winter Trivia, July newsletter) yielded further views. **Moya Heinrich**, who worked in Day's Delicatessen and Gould's hardware store for many years believes it was **McIlrath's**, then **Flemings**. Lifelong local resident **Lois Korendijk** is certain the supermarket was **Jewel's**. Certainly by 1983 Jewel Food Store Pty Ltd was at 400 New Canterbury Road (according to *Your Community Phone Book* (Leichhardt & Marrickville Districts, 1983). Such is the neverending quest for what was where when!

Wendy Dyson writes: "I understand our new prime minister, Julia Gillard's family lived in the Unley suburb of Adelaide after migrating from Wales. Perhaps she attended St Augustine's Church, Unley at some stage. I thought this quote from *Australian Gothic* by Brian Andrews (Miegunyah Press, Melbourne 2001, p. 55) may be of interest (with the rest of quote relating to Barry Humphries perhaps!):

'The assiduous study of Howard and Crossley (co-authors of *English Church Woodwork* 1917) enabled [Adelaide architect, Dean Walter] Berry to create a particularly convincing evocation of a Flowing Decorated pulpit for St Augustine's Church, Unley, in 1935, complete with carved Green Man bosses. At about the same time, Green Men also appeared as bosses on Tom Payne's baptismal font in St Monica's Church, Moonee Ponds, Victoria—in this instance the origins as a mediaeval transformation from pagan symbol to images of renewal and resurrection being particularly apt'."

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Wendy's article *The Green Man grins in Marrickville* which looks at examples of the Green Man in the Marrickville LGA, will feature in the forthcoming MHS journal *Heritage* 13.

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