

MARRICKVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY INC.



DULWICH HILL ENMORE LEWISHAM
ST PETERS SYDENHAM TEMPE

MARRICKVILLE PETERSHAM STANMORE
& PARTS OF CAMPERDOWN & NEWTOWN

OUR NEXT MEETING

*Touring the past: tourism and history
in Australia 1850-2010*

Talk by **Richard White** + Exhibition visit
Saturday 28 September 10.15 for 10.30 am

Macleay Museum, second floor, Macleay Building (has lift), Gosper Lane off Science Road, Sydney University near Parramatta Road & north of Quadrangle. Paid parking in grounds; parking in Arundel Street across Parramatta Road. Enquiries 9557 3823. Exhibition free and goes until 14/2/14.

Exhibition seeks to explain the origins and development of history tourism in Australia, a poorly understood activity with a surprisingly long history. It examines how tourists gradually came to recognise Australia's past was worth a visit and the historical understandings they brought to it. From the late 19th century tourists learned to see and enjoy the past in a myriad of ways. They found it entertaining, quaint, sentimental, macabre, charming, inspiring, salacious, educational, or thought-provoking. It could be a nostalgic escape, an enjoyable frolic or an object of shame. They shut themselves in convict cells, followed the footsteps of explorers, dressed up as pioneers, posed for photos beside historical monuments and indulged in the luxury of a heritage B&B. Discover the variety of pasts that tourists visited, the exhibits that drew them in and the souvenirs they took away.

Associate Professor Richard White is a graduate of Sydney University and since 1989 has taught in its Department of History. His books include *Inventing Australia*, *The Oxford Book of Australian Travel Writing*, *Symbols of Australia* and *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia*. Richard is a MHS member who has addressed the Society twice before.

The Macleay has Australia's oldest natural history collection; cares for the rich collections of Aboriginal, Torres Strait and Pacific Islanders' cultural material; whilst its Historic Photograph Collection records life in Australia and the Pacific region (late 1840s-1960s).

Opening hours: weekdays 10 am-4.30 pm;
1st Sat. of month: 12-4 pm (Image: tourism spoons)

Welcome to new MHS members

Phil Atkinson, Greg Ryan, both of Enmore; Sue Castrique, Osmond Chiu, Peter & Karen Dixon (rejoined), Therese Hinder, Kay Leecount, all of Marrickville; Elia Dimakis, Lindy McMahan, Ross & Isla Scott, all of Petersham; Peter Harney & Denise Lovric, Elda Ribeiro, all of Stanmore; Shane Bonner, Tempe; Ken Russell, Carlingford; Brett Johnson, Erskineville; Pamela Cahill, Guildford; Dr Robert Brodie Spark, Terrigal.

Register your concerns about planning 'reforms'
with <betterplanningnetwork.good.do/nsw/>

Winged Victory update

The Council meeting on 20 August 2013 resolved to:

1. keep the Winged Victory at the depot and resolve to store the statue indefinitely or until a suitable location within the LGA for display is found;
2. endorse the draft Expression of Interest that a representation be made of the Winged Victory so that it can be cast in bronze and placed on a plinth outside Marrickville Town Hall and that attribution be given to Gilbert Doble and Dr Alex Kolozsy; and
3. endorse a budget adjustment of \$35,000 for the restoration of the War Memorial Base Pedestal and Column Remain.

Speakers to the motion were Chrys Meader, Geoff Ostling (MHS President) and Louise Steer (President, ESP Gallery). Given legal advice obtained by Council, but not made public, it seemed as though the original Gilbert Doble statue (revamped 1988) was either going to be given to Dr Alex Kolozsy or be retained by Council, but broken up. This was considered unacceptable by both the Society and a range of people, including, Louise Steer; former Marrickville Historian Chrys Meader, a passionate campaigner on behalf of the statue since the 1980s, and former state MP for the South Coast, John Hatton, whose wife's family had been closely associated with original Winged Victory sculptor Gilbert Doble.

Council was advised that Doble had been raised in Hillcrest Street Tempe and attended school locally, whilst his studio was at the rear of the house in Way Street, at the time he designed and sculpted the Winged Victory statue. Doble was a highly regarded sculptor who created several statues of significance. He died in 1974 aged 94.

Precedents demonstrate the statue could be installed indoors at the new library complex. The way is now clear for Council to find a suitable sculptor to make a representation of the original Doble statue and for restoration to proceed as per point 3 above. Council aims to have it all finished by November 2014.

Marrickville A past worth preserving, published by MHS, is a book of local history essays and is available for \$35 plus postage (free delivery within LGA on request). Postal charges or direct deposit info from treasurer (02) 9588 4930 or by email <diane.mccarthy@optusnet.com.au>. Cheques and money orders to Marrickville Heritage Society.

2013 MHS Publications Report

In the wake of Geoff's skyped report and Deborah's demo on how to use the blog, this will be a more conventional report, but an important one all the same for the publications of our society are the most tangible evidence of what we do. Tangible, of course, implies touch and this is certainly required in relation to the blog. I commend **Deborah Lang** for making the blog such an attractive and stimulating site, which, I understand, is well regarded by experts.

It is my pleasure to mention completion of a long dormant MHS project. Some of you will recall the oral history project conducted by the Society between 1999 and 2002. One outcome of this project was our meeting in February 2002 at Petersham Town Hall when we played excerpts from taped recordings with some participants present. Then last year, at the suggestion of Ian Phillips, **Laurel** and **Bob Horton** agreed to undertake the huge task of transferring the taped material and transcripts on to CDs in attractive packages which will always be accessible. I commend Laurel and Bob for their sterling efforts. A copy of each CD will be lodged in Marrickville Library and members are reminded that Marrickville Council helped fund the project. Sadly, several interviewees have since died. We plan to conduct a formal launch in the near future.

Our book *Marrickville: a past worth preserving* has been selling steadily but we would still like to sell more copies. Geoff mentioned our joint venture with Council to have a copy placed in each high school library. So far over half of the ten local high schools have had books presented, in each case with an author or editor giving a short talk at school assemblies. We'd also like to make similar presentations to primary schools.

As for the Society's next journal, *Heritage 14*, I reported at last year's AGM that some articles were in the pipeline. Well, a couple of these have been put on the backburner, but two articles have now reached me, one by **Sue Castrique** on the former Addison Road Army Depot, which coincides with the centenary of the opening of the army depot in July 2013; the other, by **Silas Clifford-Smith**, is on local artist, David Reid, who worked as a plumber as it was harder for artists a century ago to get established. A third article, due shortly, is about Newington College, currently in its sesquicentennial year. Other articles are in progress. As in the past, we will be calling for journal sponsors and seeking advertising as a means of offsetting the costs of the journal. In case you're wondering, I am the editor and **Lorraine Beach** is doing the design and layout, so there will be no additional cost to the society for these important tasks, as has often been the case.

And so to the newsletter. In my many discussions with people about the newsletter, it fascinates me to hear the range of names by which it is known. Maybe this is partly because the word 'newsletter' does not formally appear in the publication, except, usually, somewhere in the text. So it gets called the magazine, the chronicle, the bulletin, the paper, the leaflet, the journal, the periodical, and the newsheet . . . and, occasionally, the newsletter.

As always, there are a number of individuals who assist in producing the newsletter, whether it be in writing articles or reports, bringing a variety of matters to the editor's attention, requesting to promote relevant local events, or in the practicalities of getting the newsletter to members. I have again been assisted by an able committee, headed by our President, **Geoff Ostling**, who all contribute in various ways and this

past year has been no exception. **Pamela Stewart** continues to handle the postal deliveries; **Diane McCarthy** continues to provide the labelled envelopes and to do untold other things behind the scenes; **Shirley Hilyard** is still as sharp as ever in her 19th year as proofreader; **Ian Phillips** continues to bounce back every month to deliver the batches of newsletters to the doors of runners; and **Lorraine Beach** not only provides endless support, but also stood in admirably and seamlessly as editor for the May newsletter when I went overseas.

Likewise, I have an unchanged team of drivers in **Anna** and **Tony Breinl**, **Diane McCarthy**, **Graeme Napier**, **Pamela Stewart**, **Keith Sutton** and **Ken Turner** who each month escort Ian with the newsletters for the runners. Our only runner to retire was **Maree Blanchard** who ran for about ten years in central Marrickville; Maree was replaced by **Marg Ludlow**. Thank you Maree and Marg. May I thank the other runners 2012-13 runners: **Lu Bell**, **Richard Blair**, **John Blattman**, **Tricia Blombery & Stuart Grigg**, **Nigel Butterley**, **June Cameron & Ken Turner**, **Iain Carolin**, **Lucille Dunstan**, **Rosemary Fallon**, **Ann Fenton**, **Audrey Furney**, **Jean Hartman**, **Colin Hesse**, **Shirley Hilyard**, **Ruth Olip**, **Allan Outlaw**, **Ian Phillips**, **Jan Pickering**, **Peter Robertson**, **Pamela Stewart**, **Vivien Wherry** and **Richard White**. Backup deliveries were made by: **Lorraine Beach**, **Roger Cameron**, **Michele Carton**, **Megan Hicks**, **Pat Jessop**, **Chris King**, **Deborah Lang**, **Eva Lederhilger**, **Diane McCarthy** and **Corinne O'Loughlin**; also thanks to **Clinton Johnston** at Marrickville Library for ensuring newsletters were delivered to key council staff.

Finally, I thank all those others who have provided feedback or made suggestions in person, by email, snail mail or over the phone. This is a tremendous Society.

Richard Blair

The Holey Dollar: a bicentenary

Two hundred years ago Governor Lachlan Macquarie solved a pressing problem in the colony of New South Wales. Due to a shortage of local currency the Governor bought 40,000 Spanish dollars minted in Mexico and Peru. He got two coins from one when he had convicted forger William Henshall punch out the centre of the coin and stamp 'New South Wales 1813' on one side of the big coin and 'Five Shillings' on the other. The centre, worth 15 pence, was a tiny coin called 'the dump'. Both were declared legal currency on 30 September 1813 and remained in circulation until 1829.

The problem was solved and that beautiful silver coin became known as the Holey Dollar. It now attracts a huge price at auction. One sold in 2011 for \$485,000. Even the little dump was listed and valued at \$250,000.



For its bicentenary the Royal Australian Mint in collaboration with the Real Casa de la Moneda (Spanish Mint) have created this silver proof three coin set.

Shirley Hilyard

Do you know of the Victoria Road Precinct?

Paul Salsano, Director of Onside Property (in the *Cooks River Valley Times*, 22/8/13, p. 9) writes:

“Behold the ‘Victoria Road [Marrickville] Precinct’; little do locals know that the area is ‘highlighted’ to be the gateway to a new and improved retail, office and residential living quarter, with over 500 dwellings/apartments and retail/office spaces planned. Creating new jobs and for state government to meet its strategic population growth estimates, I believe this is a great proposed area, with the likelihood of this restructure taking place very high. Brookfield Multiplex put the Victoria Rd Precinct on show at a May council meeting with developers and landholders seeing a great opportunity for growth and area change, as this area is overly industrialised and commercialised at the moment. It is only a matter of time as areas similar to this like the ‘Strathfield North corridor’ and ‘Alexandria developments’ have already taken place, so this area should see an imminent alteration for growth, prosperity, jobs and a cosmopolitan lifestyle.”

The May meeting referred to above was actually in May 2012 when the then councillors voted to allow developer Brookfield Multiplex to proceed with a planning proposal for a new development in Marrickville called the Victoria Road Precinct. It was a tied vote with the then mayor (Morris Hanna) using his casting vote to pass the motion. Of course, this proposal (and others, such as the scheme to redevelop St Peters) have been mooted for years before reaching this more formalised stage.

Mr Salsano’s (or perhaps Brookfield’s) assertion that ‘this area is overly industrialised and commercialised at the moment’ is bizarre, given that de-industrialisation in Marrickville has been happening for decades. Have they not noticed the significant amount of residential development since the early 1990s? Does Marrickville LGA really need further development on this grand scale? No wonder developers are cock-a-hoop, especially with the state government’s imminent developer-friendly planning ‘reforms’.

The precinct embraces: Sydenham Rd from Fitzroy St to Edinburgh Rd, then up Leicester St, around Enmore Park via Victoria Rd, Black St and Llewellyn St, back onto Enmore Rd, then into Cowper St, down Philpott St, Fahey Lane, down Perry St, Addison Rd to Illawarra Rd, then along York St, back onto Illawarra Rd opposite Charles St, down King St, into Shepherd St, around Marrickville Primary School at Thompson St, incorporating all the industrial properties down Farr St to return back onto Sydenham Rd.

Massive, huh!

Richard Blair

Recent email from Kate Dunbar: ‘My neighbourhood centre shopping bus today picked up a new lady (Wyn) who lives in Ferndale Street, Newtown. Of course, I asked her if she remembered when No. 10 was a shop and she said ‘yes’, and she had lived in Ferndale Street since the 1930s. How exciting! I had to tell you.’

It’s exciting because Kate’s mother ran this same shop back in the 1930s when Kate was a young kid.

OUR LAST MEETING

Petersham Town Hall on 24 August 2013
The spirit of SMEC: talk by Ron Ringer

Historian **Ron Ringer** certainly has the knack of weaving in what was happening during each phase of the Snowy Mountains Scheme’s evolution from its 1949 inception through to privatisation in 1993 as the Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (SMEC). Its post-World War Two beginnings created a major engineering feat to divert the rivers inland to the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Scheme. But this was not the only reason it attracted world-wide attention and influenced, for example, construction of the Hoover Dam in USA. Why were the turbines for this pump and storage interconnecting system located underground? And why is there still a parcel of land at Murrays Beach, Jervis Bay linked to proposed 1969 Naval relocation of its submarine fleet?

The first phase ‘low cost roads’ were so well built they remain today, and this engineering expertise forged links into Australia’s Foreign Aid Projects, initially in South East Asia under the Colombo Plan, and supported by both the World and Asian Development Banks. SMEC was the first foreign company allowed into China with the 1970s Lubuge Dam Project and more recently, assisted with disaster relief after the Aceh tsunami. Yet another expertise legacy was the tunnelling for the Eastern Suburbs railway, sadly terminated at Bondi Junction despite its intended route taking in the University of NSW. A further lost opportunity was the missing Welcome Reef Dam connector between the Shoalhaven River storage to pump back to Warragamba Dam: the subsequent drought resulted in commissioning the ‘stop-gap’ desalination plant.

The organisation became more than its engineering excellence to interface with foreign aid, international politics, multi-national workforce, and the founding of Cooma. Ron also showed how ‘engineering’ is in our everyday lives. He certainly held our attention throughout a wonderfully illustrated presentation.

Sue Jackson-Stepowski

Spring Trivia Question

Where in the LGA are these unrelated features?
Contact details back page.



Calendar of MHS Events

Saturday 28 September

'Touring the Past' talk by Richard White at Macleay Museum and exhibition visit
Details on front page

Saturday 26 October

Christine Yeats: *Crossing the Blue Mountains?: Not just Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson*

Saturday 23 November

Ross Berry: *The works of John Verge*

History Week at Marrickville Library

Tuesday 10 September 11 am – 12.30 pm

Bert Ives & the history of Film Australia

In its 100th year, National Film & Sound Archive Manager, **Graham Shirley** discusses the career of the unit's first long term cinematographer and his team.

Thursday 12 September 11 am – 12.30 pm

Picture Marrickville

See recent additions to Marrickville's visual collections.

Bookings 9335 2173 or marrickvillelibrary.eventbrite.com.au

Fine Stream, Fine Meadow Cooks River project

On 8 August the Dictionary of Sydney launched its 'Fine Stream, Fine Meadow' Cooks River project at Tempe House. In this collaboration between the Dictionary of Sydney, Botany Bay City, Marrickville and Canterbury City councils, the Cooks River Alliance, local studies librarians and historians; and with funding from the City of Sydney and the federal government 'Your Community Heritage Program', 14 commissioned essays tell the story of the Cooks River valley from a pristine natural watercourse and lush hunting ground for the Eora people to today's high density inner city suburbs and polluted river.

Five of the essays were by the late Lesley Muir; three jointly by Lesley Muir and Brian Madden; whilst Joanne Sippel, Vanessa Witton, Paul Irish, Ron Ringer and MacLaren North wrote one apiece. Essays can be viewed by googling the title above.

Lost voices

We recently lost two highly esteemed folk singer/composers in **Gary Shearston** and **John Dengate**. They were both aged 74 and did much else besides, but obituaries abound. **Gary** was perhaps known better universally. After a long absence from commercial folk singing after taking up the cloth, Gary made a comeback which included performances at The Harp Hotel, Tempe. A large throng, including family members, attended a tribute concert in his memory at Petersham Bowling Club on 18 August.

John, described as a 'poet, artist, teacher, songwriter, singer and street busker', had a few links with this area. He taught at Marrickville West Primary School for 15 years and was a Life Member of the Bush Music Club of Australia, long based at Addison Road Community Centre. John sang songs and told yarns of convicts, rebellion and the bush to MHS members at Petersham Park rotunda in November 1990 and November 1994.

Fatima Island to be conserved

Fatima Island, between Kendrick Park, Tempe and Tempe House, is the last remaining island in Cooks River. Our December 2012 newsletter featured an article by Nadia Wheatley outlining the state of degradation on the island, and some of its historic links. Nadia, from the Cooks River Valley Association wrote: 'Currently under threat from flooding, erosion and the visits of thoughtless people, this precious bird sanctuary and heritage site is in urgent need of support at both community and official levels.'

At Marrickville Council's meeting of 20 August, despite a range of concerns raised by council staff and cited in the Business Paper, councillors passed a unanimous motion to: 'urgently investigate the erosion of Fatima Island; undertake any urgent, necessary remedial works identified, in order to protect the island against further erosion; liaise and consult with relevant agencies and community groups to ensure that any urgent works are identified and undertaken appropriately.' For information on three other items in the motion, see Business Paper online.

Council plans to include the island in the Cooks River Parks Plan of Management. In recent months stories have appeared in the local press and emails have been sent to the Society about pilgrimages and processions to, and pageants and other ceremonies on, the island between the late 1940s and the early 1950s. These were instigated from churches on both sides of the river.

Richard Blair

JJ Ceramics, Marrickville

MHS was recently contacted by collectors of Australian pottery, Jon Jarvis and Janelle Hannah of Ulverstone, Tasmania. Their copy of MHS's *3 Marrickville Potteries* ('a terrific resource') indicates JJ Ceramics was in Marrickville but where? A search of Sydney Telephone Directories revealed entries in 1951 and 1953: 'J. J. Ceramics, Pottery Manufacturers, 13 Schwebel Street Marrickville, LL 1692.' What the initials mean remains a mystery. Book's editor Robert Hutchinson says they operated from 1949 to 1959. Below photo is from Jon and Janelle's collection.

Diane McCarthy



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