

THE WATCH HOUSE TAKES ON A NEW LOOK

Association members will have noticed activity around the Watch House during the last week. W. A. Flick & Co. are cleaning down the front and west walls. This work is being done free of charge and was arranged through the National Trust to demonstrate the new process.

Mr. Roy Olsen, who is in charge of operations, explained the method as dry blasting with illuminate, a silicon metal, like black beach sand, followed by hosing down with water to remove the black sand, powdered paint and loose stone.

Stage 1 of the electrical contract has been let to Annandale Electrics (Mr. John West) and will involve the installation of an underground service and a light and power point in the Reception Room.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE BALMAIN PENINSULA

In its Objections to the Leichhardt Planning Scheme, the Association made brief reference to regeneration and the need for the recognition of the newer types of housing integrated with the existing.

To reinforce its views, the Architectural and Town Planning Sub-Committee of the Association has prepared and distributed a 7-page, illustrated report regarding Residential Development. Copies have been sent to the State Planning Authority, the appropriate Members of Parliament, L.M.C. Aldermen, newspapers and interested responsible organizations. Because of the specialist nature of the report, it was decided not to make copies generally available to Association members.

Briefly the report summarises the need for the responsible authorities to encourage residential regeneration of the Balmain Peninsula and makes the following contentions :-

- There is a serious housing problem in Balmain.
- Balmain has almost unlimited potential as a residential suburb. In recognition of this, spontaneous residential regeneration has been occurring for more than five years.
- The Leichhardt Planning Scheme Ordinance restricts cohesive housing development. The responsible authority must encourage development by amending the Ordinance as required and by initiating constructive proposals such as group housing. (Town Houses, Terrace Houses, Villa Homes and Courtyard Houses.)
- A practical and economic solution is Planned Gradual Renewal .. a combination of totally new development and renovated and revitalised areas which will undoubtedly be the pattern of future growth in Balmain. It must be understood that Gradual Renewal does not mean haphazard infill, but must maintain scale, enhance what is valuable amongst the existing, remedy shortcomings and encourage continued improvement.

AIR POLLUTION

One of the greatest problems in Balmain for many years has been the vast quantity of smoke, grime and offensive smells pumped out by various industrial concerns. Recently the Department of Health asked for public cooperation in spotting sources of air pollution. Any member who wishes to report such sources should contact Mr. Kevin Dixon, the Area Engineer for the Department of Health, Tel. 27-8541, Ext. 28. If Mr. Dixon is not available, the information can be passed to the Air Pollution Branch of the Department of Health at 2-0516, Ext. 2510.

Complaints about smoke and dirt from ships in the harbour should be passed to the Duty Officer, Maritime Services Board, Tel. 2-0545.

TREE PLANTING

At the last General Meeting, one of our members suggested that the Association should prepare a report on suitable sites for the planting of trees on the Balmain Peninsula. Any member who has some suggestions to make is asked to write to the Association at P.O. Box 57, Balmain, 2041. All ideas will be passed to the Architectural Sub-Committee who will prepare an overall plan for submission to the Leichhardt Council. Please let us have your ideas for these improvements in your street or area as soon as possible.

CONGRATULATIONS

We were very pleased to read that an Association member, Dr. J.P. White, B.A., M.A., Ph.D., has been awarded one of the U.S. Harkness Fellowships for 1969. Dr. White, who is Asst. Curator of Anthropology at the Australian Museum, intends to develop New Guinea research material at the University of California and discuss original theories with workers in the United States.

YOUR COVER - Another of the excellent pictorial studies of Balmain taken by Mr. Bob Beverley, Snr.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING Balmain Town Hall Thurs. 13th FEB 8pm sharp

WATCH HOUSE WORKING BEES

The first regular working bee for this year will be held at 9.30 am. Sat. 14th February and then each Saturday thereafter. On 14th Feb. paint scraping will take place as well as cleaning up after the sand blasting. Those members who can bring and use blowlamps will be very welcome.

MEMBERSHIP

We are very happy to report that our membership has reached a record total of 367. This includes 91 new members who have joined since the beginning of the financial year. We still have 56 members who have not renewed and if everyone would make an effort to round up these missing subscriptions, we should easily reach a membership of 400.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Anyone interested in the Association and/or intending New Members may obtain details from the Secretary, by filling in and mailing the form below.

The Hon. Secretary,
The Balmain Association,
Box 57, P.O. BALMAIN. 2041

- * I wish to join The Balmain Association, for which I enclose Membership Fee of \$1.00 (ordinary member)
20¢ (pensioner or child under 15)

- * I would like to receive details about the Association.
(Cross out whatever not applicable.)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Tel. No. _____



NEWS SHEET

EIGHTEENTH ISSUE
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THE BALMAIN ASSOCIATION

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BALMAIN FERRIES

In the last session of State Parliament, the local Member for Balmain, Mr. Roger Degen, received an assurance from the Minister for Transport (Mr. Morris) that he would discuss with him ways and means of improving the Balmain ferry service.

The Minister also undertook to discuss the matter with the Chairman of the Sydney Harbour Transport Board "with a view of bringing about some further improvements in the service."

In a recent letter to the Association, Mr. Degen said he was seeking submissions from all interested local organizations, business firms, trade unions and residents, so that he could present the strongest possible case for providing Balmain with a satisfactory ferry service.

Mr. Degen pointed out that in answers to his questions in Parliament on the ferry service, the point had been raised by the Minister that the service could not be improved as it was operating at a loss. Mr. Degen was not prepared to accept this answer for despite losses, some of which were far in excess of any incurred in the Balmain run, much better ferry services, and even a new ferry, were being provided to other suburbs.

Following his invitation, the Association has since made a submission to Mr. Degen. Some of the points raised were:

- * Since the Nicholson Brothers service went out of operation at the end of 1966, Balmain had not been served by an adequate service and the various stop-gap arrangements which followed had not encouraged residents to use it.

- * An air of uncertainty surrounded the future of the present service, which was indicated by the continued counting of passengers; constant changes in timetables and vessels; the frequent non-arrival of scheduled ferries; and the lack of indication on the wharves that a service even existed.

- * There were important gaps in the timetable at peak hours, so that many residents were forced to travel to the city by bus.

- * Ideally, Balmain should be served by an independent service running at 20-minute intervals in peak hours and at 30-minute intervals at other times. This service should take in the wharves at Elliott Street, Longnose Point, Yeend Street, Thames Street and Darling Street.

- * One area not now served by ferries was Elliott Street, and in fact the only direct transport into the city from this area was by bus along Darling Street to the Quay via Glebe - an interminably long trip which was uneconomical and time consuming, particularly for the large pensioner population in the area.

- * An efficient timetable in which buses along Darling Street met ferries at Darling Street wharf would encourage more residents to use the ferry service, particularly if a combined bus/ferry ticket were issued. More than 15,000 people lived within easy walking distance of Darling Street, who could patronise a ferry service run on efficient lines.

- * Large populations surrounded all the Balmain ferry wharves, but people were discouraged from using the present service because it did not meet their needs.

* Finally, the Sydney Harbour ferry services in almost every instance ran at a considerable loss, yet no one had suggested that they should be reduced or curtailed. In fact, the Minister for Transport had been enthusiastic in providing new wharves and a new vessel for these services. While nobody could forecast that a regular service from Balmain's five main wharves would operate at a profit, the same criteria should apply to Balmain as it did to other area, i.e., where the public demanded a transport service, it should be provided even at a less than profitable operation.

THE NATIONAL TRUST RECOGNISES BALMAIN

The National Trust has so far recorded eight of Balmain's buildings in its register of Historic Buildings.

The following buildings have been classified by the Trust as "Buildings which are of considerable interest, the preservation of which should be encouraged".

No. 12 Darling Street (The Boatman's Cottage) 1841

No. 7 Vincent Street (The Grange) cir. 1846

No. 10 Ewinton Street (Shannon Grove) 1848

St. Andrews Congregational Church, cnr. Darling Street and Curtis Road cir. 1853

St. Mary's Church of England, Darling Street cir. 1859

Presbyterian Church, Campbell Street 1868

The E. S. & A. Bank, Darling Street 1883

Classified as a "building of interest, to be recorded" is St. John's Church of England, Birchgrove Road 1882.

The Trust has noted that there are many more historic buildings in Balmain to be classified, but is at present waiting on the results of a survey of such buildings being undertaken by the Balmain Association.

Whilst classification of buildings by The National Trust does not have legal standing, it is regarded by Government and semi- or local Government bodies as an authoritative statement of the significance of the buildings listed.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The first meeting of the new Leichhardt Council will be held at the Leichhardt Town Hall on February 5. Meetings then will be held every Wednesday fortnight. We would like to encourage all our members to have a look at their Local Government in action!

DRAMA GROUP

Several Association members are keen to form a Drama Group and have arranged a meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Terry Chapman, No. 29, The Avenue, on Thursday, February 20, at 8.00 p.m.

All similarly minded people are invited to attend, particularly if they are interested in play readings, with the possibility of a production in the "not too distant future", under the guidance of an experienced producer.

THE ELECTION ISSUE

At the last General Meeting of the Association, held on December 5, all election candidates were invited to address the Meeting to enable voters to evaluate their policies and capabilities.

Unfortunately, not all candidates replied and several others sent apologies. Seven candidates attended and six addressed the Meeting. The speaking order was bolloted for and a brief summary of each candidate follows.

N. ORIGLASS generally criticised the workings of the past Council and the official Labor platform. He queried the term "Independent" and doubted whether individual aldermen could achieve positive results.

MRS. ELIZABETH TOW emphasised her belief in Community Re-development and criticised the Planning Scheme for not providing an adequate answer.

D. ALLEN criticised the present L. M. C. for its lack of communication with ratepayers and residents and promised that a closer Public Relations contact would be set up. He generally agreed with the Association's objections to the Planning Scheme.

M. CHURTON answered Alderman Origlass's criticism of "independent" as meaning free of party policy without fear of punishment. He claimed to be the first to support dedication of a Municipal library and stated that this would only cost residents 2 cents per week per head. He also criticised the Planning Scheme as being unimaginative and no answer to the Balmain problem.

I. WYNER indicated that the policy of his group was clearly stated regarding the need for a Municipal library and the Planning Scheme. He answered Mr. Allen's promise regarding public relations between Council and residents by stating that the Council "majority" had always blocked him and Ald. Origlass, and challenged Mr. Allen to try.

T. MIDDLETON confined his comments to the two main issues suggested by the Association invitation .. namely, the Planning Scheme and the library. He felt the current plan should be altered to give more residential areas, with access to the waterfront and open space.

The library issue, he felt, required little argument as the need was obvious. The concept must be accepted as expensive, but was not a luxury.

MISS E. LEE, although present, felt that the other candidates representing the Balmain-Leichhardt Labor Party would adequately state their policy and did not speak.

The results of the election are now well known, with the Labor "majority" in control, and the Balmain-Rozelle Wards are represented by Aldermen Origlass, Wyner, Graham, Cashman, Casey and Heffernan.

The policies of all parties became almost identical towards the end of the campaign with regard to Library and Planning, and the Association trusts that the issues so emphatically stated will be implemented by the new Council without delay. The official Labor statement regarding public relations was most welcome and this Association looks forward to a closer relationship with the present Council.