

MR. ROGER DEGEN, M.L.A. at the last General Meeting

On Thursday, February 13, Mr. Roger Degen, M.L.A., addressed the Association General Meeting on his duties as a member of the Legislative Assembly.

Although the occasion could have been an opportunity for Mr. Degen to put his political viewpoint, he respected the non-party political platform of the Balmain Association and gave us an interesting insight to the role of the "local member".

The address covered all aspects of the M.L.A.'s role from the early and turbulent days to the present situation in N.S.W. with particular emphasis on Balmain and a Member's responsibility to his electorate.

Mr. Degen proved that he is interested in and sensitive to the feelings of the people and in the short period since his election has endeavoured to influence against any further over-industrialisation of the area. He believes that because of the location of the Balmain peninsula, its future should be residential.

It was with interest that we noted his opinions regarding the A.N.L. development at Mort Bay, the tank farm at Vincent Street, the Container shed, the need for an independent inquiry into the unrelated and unplanned industrial and maritime redevelopment of the Balmain peninsula, the L.M.C. Planning Scheme and the ferries, for they closely parallel our own views.

CRICKET MATCH

Birchgrove challenged Balmain and although not an official Association function many members attended both as spectators and participants on Sunday, March 23, at Birchgrove Oval. The day was sunny and the families took the opportunity to turn the occasion into a picnic.

The Birchgrove team were as usual immaculately dressed in their whites, while the Balmain mob came equipped for skutching, painting and/or concreting. It was therefore somewhat a surprise to all that Balmain did so well, particularly when their star batsman retired not out at 39. Birchgrove owed their win to Dr. John Power's fine Captain's innings of 34 runs.

Association member Harry Mantell, chief instigator and organiser of the challenge match scored a big round O on the first ball, but from subsequent sleuthing it appears that the red-bearded umpire (an ex-Balmainite recently moved to Birchgrove) was not looking at the time. But it was all good fun! Final Score - Birchgrove declared 12 for 106. Balmain all out for 105. Each team fielded a minimum of 13 men.

COMING EVENTS

Friday May 16 - A Pirate Evening aboard the "Jolly Raider". Ferry picks up at Darling St. Wharf (7.30 p.m.) and Cove St. Wharf (7.45 p.m.). Tickets available at next General Meeting or by ringing Mrs. Madgeod 82-4652 \$2 single, \$3 double. Be sure to book early and save disappointment as the number of tickets will be limited.

July = Historical Excursion to Parramatta.

August = Medieval Night (with all the trimmings)

October = Balmain Inspection Day.

DRAMA GROUP - The announcement in the last News Sheet of the formation of the Association Drama Group brought a fine response from members and meetings are now being held fortnightly. The next meeting will be at the Watch House on Monday, April 21 at 8 p.m. and all interested people are invited to attend this, the first of our cultural groups.

"BALMAIN" - A film - Members will have noticed recently a film team at work in the area and wondered about the results. The film is now complete and the Balmain public can judge for themselves. A screening has been arranged for Wednesday, April 16 at 7.30 p.m. at the Balmain Town Hall (with supporting films). Admission will be by donation of 60c. to help defray costs. A present it is hoped that the film will be sold for T.V. screening.

MEMBERSHIP - At last we have achieved our target of 400 paid up members. In fact we now have 407 members due to a spate of new members joining at the Wine and Cheese party. But please don't be complacent, we have now raised our target for the coming year to 500. Remember that new members joining after May 15, 1969 will be financial until June 30, 1970.

If you are interested in joining the Balmain Association, write to
The Hon. Secretary,
The Balmain Association,
Box 57, Post Office, Balmain.. 2041

Membership fees - Ordinary member	- \$1.00
Pensioner or child under 15	- 20c.

A final word about that Cricket Match - (see left hand column)

Our thanks to outsider Ken Sherring for providing the equipment and umpiring on the day, which netted the Association a donation of \$3.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

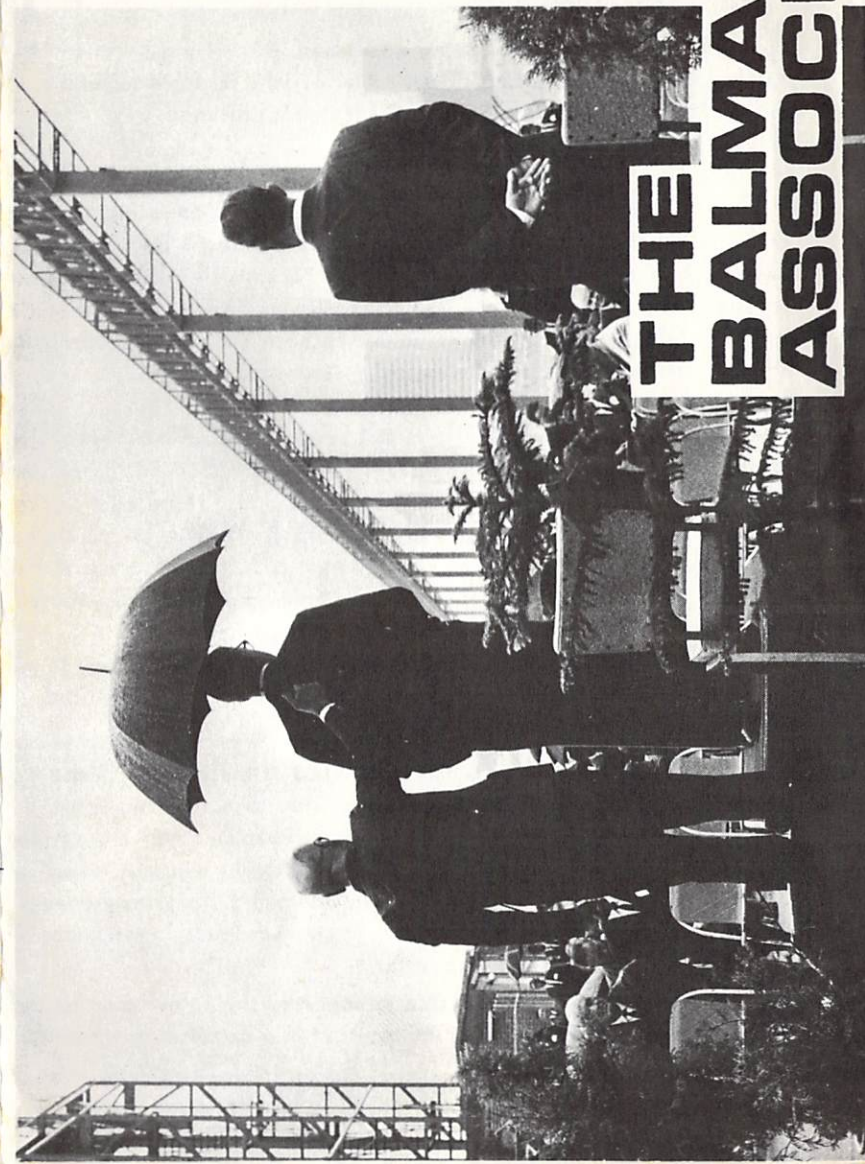
THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 1969

Balmain Town Hall

NEWS
SHEET

No 19 APRIL

THE
BALMAIN
ASSOCIATION



BLACK DAY AT WHITE BAY

The weather joined the Balmain protesters to dampen some of the gaiety surrounding the official opening of the White Bay container terminal on March 21.

As the time neared for the M.S.B.'s proudest moment, with all the distinguished visitors in their seats, heavy black clouds began to roll in from the south, bringing creased of apprehension to the brows of the guests of honour on the dias the M.S.B. President (Mr. W. H. Brotherson), the Minister for Public Works (the Hon. Davis Hughes) and Sir Ian Potter, Chairman of Associated Steamships.

Meanwhile, up on Grafton Street, Alderman Nick Origlass was addressing a protest meeting of about 50 residents, who resolved to send a motorcade down to Robert Street, to break out protest signs in front of the visitors entering the main gate.

It was a quiet and peaceful demonstration and a disappointment to one of the policemen detailed to watch the demonstrators. He, a resident, had expected more fireworks but, apparently, no-one had the heart to do more than wave a banner; the terminal was there now, so that all that could really be done was to let the authorities know Balmain had not forgotten earlier fights . . . and any future ones.

And as the proceedings on the terminal began to move to a climax, a large fluorescent sign "Balmain R.I.P." and a wreath slowly were lowered down from Grafton Street, to the delight of the Herald photographer. Up stood the Hon. Davis Hughes to ceremonially declare the whole business open - and down came the rain. Away dashed many of the distinguished guests for the comforting shelter of the great marquee erected for the party to follow, while others braved it out under upturned chairs - hoping like hell Davis Hughes would hurry it up. He did. Then it was over to the big tent for free food and grog on the M.S.B. And the local residents straggled off homewards.

COVER PHOTO - A behind-the-scene view of the opening of the White Bay Container Terminal, not published by the Press. Sir Ian Potter addresses the official guests while Mr. W.H.Brotherson, President of the M.S.B. (hands firmly clasped behind his back) looks benignly on and the Hon. Davis Hughes (3rd potted palm from the right) sits grimly hoping the rain will stop. (Photo by courtesy of Mr. Les Brady, professional photographer and Association member.)

PROTEST MEETING - The meeting arranged by the Association on the eve of the Container Terminal opening resulted in a decision by members to join in with the Balmain-Leichhardt Labour Party and the Balmain Battlers in an organized, non-political demonstration in Grafton Street and at the Terminal entrance gates. (refer above)

WATCH-HOUSE RESTORATION

First Meeting - Following connection of electric power to the Watch-House the Restoration Committee had the honour of holding the first evening meeting there on March 14. The Committee met in the Charge Room and drank a toast to the Jubilee portrait of Queen Victoria above the mantel-piece. A small libation of Chateau Watch-House Red was poured on to the hearth-stone, which seemed appropriate as Queen Victoria might well be regarded as our household patron. The Watch-House was built during her reign when N.S.W. was still a colony. When the State became self-governing the Watch-House remained invested in the name of the Queen and her heirs, which caused extensive legal searches into the title prior to the Association becoming interested in leasing it.

Installation of Front Door- The two front doors have now been hung by Mr.D. Lumb, an Association member, who has been present at practically every working bee since these began last May. The doors were made by prisoners at the State Penitentiary and timber for the door frames was donated by H. Cush & Co. of Mullens Street.

Library - a Watch-House Trustee, Mr. W. Ottley, has given on permanent loan a large bookcase for use in the Library cell.

Working Bees and Helpers - Working bees are held every 2nd Saturday. The next is on Saturday, April 12, at 9a.m. It has fallen to the lot of 4 or 5 members to do most of the work. At the next general meeting a roster for the working bees will be circulated and members are asked to nominate themselves or their friends to appear on listed days. Even a short time spent at the Watch-House would be appreciated. At the moment, help is needed in scraping, sanding, cleaning off paintwork, painting and many other similar jobs.

HISTORICAL SUB-COMMITTEE

Already our 1969 tours of Balmain are well under way. In the past month we have hosted more than 100 people around the area with representatives from the 1788-1820 Society, Hurstville Historical Society and the W.E.A. Ramblers & Naturalists. They all contributed generously to our funds and the latter organization was so delighted with its Saturday afternoon that they had a further \$7 in the post by the following Monday, with a letter of thanks.

Our own historians also embarked on a tour of Balmain in search of the unusual. They all decided that St. Augustine's stone church should be researched at some length, but time quickly outstripped them and another date was decided on, to continue. Then came the scaling of the tower with a 40-knot gale whining about the spire which few will forget. Then at the Odd-fellows Hall, the 4-hour journey culminated in the unearthing of handwritten records dating back to 1848. Quite Successful.

NEXT MEETING will be held 13th May, 1969.

Members are advised that arrangements are being made for a tour of historic Hunter's Hill, to be held on Sunday, 20th April. Details will be available at the General Meeting.

WINE AND CHEESE NIGHT

Judging from the crush at the Wine and Cheese Tasting Night held in Tom Flower's large and beautiful garden on Saturday, March 8, the function can be voted a huge success.

It was interesting to see overseas and interstate visitors whom members had brought along to taste our very special Balmain red and white vintages, together with the remarkable display and variety of local and imported cheeses. The last of the devotees of Bacchus left the party at around 2.30 a.m.

A profit of \$74.00 was made to swell the Association funds for Watch-House restoration.

PARK AT PEACOCK POINT - BALMAIN EAST:

The M.S.B. have, in their roundabout way, answered our curiosity regarding the fate of Peacock Pt. In the official booklet issued to mark the opening of the White Bay Container Terminal, the M.S.B. stated ". . . the Board is in the course of establishing on its own area at Peacock Pt. a spacious public park in substitution for the unoccupied section of Commonwealth land which was regarded as being available for general use by the public and which now forms part of the terminal." It is to be hoped that in this instance the M.S.B. is genuine and is not likely to "about fact" as has been done to Balmain residents on several previous occasions.

FERRIES

The response to the recent Association Questionnaire regarding the current ferry service was outstanding and provided enough facts, when sifted, for the Management Committee to supply Mr. Roger Degen, M.L.A., with additional points for his recent meeting with the Minister for Transport, Mr. Morris.

Apparently, Mr. Morris was well acquainted with the Balmain ferry situation and although no definite results came from the meeting, Mr. Degen felt somewhat reassured that the situation could improve in Balmain's favour.

It seems certain that in the next few weeks another meeting will be held between Mr. Morris and Mr. Degen and including representatives of the Sydney Harbour Transport Board and Dept. of Govt. Transport and Sydney Harbour Ferries Pty. Ltd.

ART COMPETITION - The Association intends holding a CHILDREN'S ART COMPETITION and is approaching local schools for support. Preliminary details will be given at the next General Meeting.

DONATION FROM PADDINGTON SOCIETY - We were very grateful to receive a letter from the Paddington Society enclosing a donation of \$20 towards the Watch-House restoration fund. This came at a most welcome time as we are moving ahead rapidly with renovations and are naturally grateful for assistance in meeting the cost of this work.