

THE BALMAIN ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 57, Balmain, 2041.

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The Balmain Volunteer Fire Brigade outside Gladstone Park Public School in the eighteen nineties.

The Fire Bell stood in Darling Street near the Watch House, and when it rang the workers of the area rushed to the rallying point where they mounted their horse drawn waggon and hastened to the scene of the fire. When the fire was vanquished the brigade quenched its thirst at the Volunteer Hotel. This building still stands in Darling Street.

COUNCIL ELECTIONS.

The Municipal Election campaign is gathering momentum and in all wards, except Balmain, the various groups of independents are opposing the present Labor aldermen for votes. The Balmain Ward so far, however, has only the two Labor Independents standing and we believe it will remain this way, although there is no doubt that the Labor Party Branch will provide an opposition team to Aldermen Origlass and Wyner. Because most people seem to agree that Messrs. Origlass and Wyner cannot be defeated, there will be a tendency for many people in the Balmain Ward to leave it to others to vote. This is a dangerous assumption and will have at least two important effects :-

1. Origlass and Wyner could be beaten by lack of votes from their supporters.
2. The future strength of the Ward would be minimised by the apparent apathy of the residents and rate-payers in exerting their view at the recognised time.

Do not take the election in the Balmain Ward for granted--record your vote and encourage everyone else to do so. This election is the most important we have had so far and if people who refuse to recognise the feeling of the Municipality gain power, there will be no Balmain worth fighting for by the 1974 Municipal election.

Many members may be surprised at the diversity of subjects dealt with by the Association. At a Management Committee meeting, it is not unusual to cover such topics as improved ferry services, street cleaning, garbage collection, complaints about noise and soot from container ships, tree planting, removal of petrol from Stephen St., high-rise development and improved road traffic. Correspondence goes regularly to our local member, Mr. Roger Degen, Leichhardt Council, a number of civic groups and historical societies, the Maritime Services Board, the Premier, Minister of various Departments, people asking for historical information about ancestors, etc., and groups wishing to visit Balmain.

This is by no means an exhaustive list, but you can see we are trying to look after your interests.

BALMAIN PLANNING REPORT.

The State Planning Authority is preparing a detailed report on Balmain as a result of the increasing number of home unit development applications and because of the increasing traffic problem, largely created by container trucks from Mort Bay.

The Association has submitted a comprehensive study to the S.P.A. to assist them in preparing this report. We have recommended that home units be confined to specific areas of high ground in the district and not on the waterfront or in streets unable to cope with increased traffic volumes.

We suggest, too, that detailed studies be made of both the Balmain and Rozelle shopping areas so that they remain viable and thriving while solving the parking and servicing problems.

Most importantly, the Association stresses that a solution must be found to the container traffic problem and that this must not be done by creating a widened main road which would split the district in two. We suggest that Nick Origlass' scheme for using barges to transport containers to breakdown depots is worthy of considerably more study.

THE COURTYARD PARTY originally planned for August has been postponed and the new date will be included in a later News Sheet.

MEMBERSHIP.

With a new financial year starting on 1st July, all members who joined prior to 16th May, 1971, are due to renew their subscriptions and we are enclosing a form for you to return with your renewal fee. Our financial membership at present stands at 158, being 52 renewals, 29 new members and 71 junior library members, so please help to swell this number by letting us have your renewal soon.

A JOURNAL OF LOCAL HISTORY.

The Annandale Association, the Balmain Association and the Glebe Society have agreed to co-operate in the publication of an Historical Journal, to be published every Summer and Winter. The purposes of the Journal are :-

1. to encourage the research and writing of history relating to the geographical area and the people of the present Municipality of Leichhardt;
2. to encourage as wide an awareness as possible of the history of this area; and
3. to facilitate the preservation and dissemination of this historical research.

It is anticipated that the standard of writing should be variable--some scholarly writing will be available, but the standard is not important. We want any relevant research or information to be submitted. Only two points need be satisfied for material to be acceptable--relevance to the area and its people and worthiness of preservation. You will see from the following suggestions that even apparently trivial material will satisfy the second point.

Suggested topics are histories of buildings; biographical articles; notes on organisations of any kind (sporting, religious, commercial, social, ~~political, educational~~) which exist or have existed in this area; interviews with or recollections of residents; notes on relics of early inhabitants; records of inscriptions; origins of street names; bibliographies or notes on the location of relevant historical data; more erudite articles on subjects such as municipal politics, architecture, sociology, etc., pertaining to this area; articles on historical subjects outside this area, but relevant to it either by having an influence on it or by being connected through a resident of this area; articles discussing historical methods involved in researching the history of this area, e.g. the nature of local history, the use of tombstone evidence and ratebooks, etc.; notes or reviews on historical writing elsewhere which has a bearing on the study of this area.

Length is not important: articles might range from one or two paragraphs to 15 pages. Contemporary material will also be welcome.

The Editorial Committee will consist of the Convenors of the History Sub-committees, or their deputies, of each Association, PLUS at least two other people to co-ordinate production and arrange sales. Others interested are welcome to join. Please direct articles and enquiries to Alan Roberts, 44 6248, or c/o 289 Annandale St., Annandale, 2038.

It is hoped to produce the first edition in November, so get cracking! The journal is as yet nameless and any suggestions to solve this problem would be most welcome.

HOUSE INSPECTION.

The Association's house inspection day on 20th June was an immense success, thanks to the generous co-operation of those home-owners who opened their houses to the public and to the beautifully sunny day which added so much to everyone's enjoyment. About 530 people turned up, some from as far away as Wollongong and Newcastle, and the profit to the Association's funds was \$500.

GARDEN COMPETITION.

The Association Garden Competition, which was first held last year, will be held again this spring. It is open to any resident or premises in the areas of Balmain, Birchgrove and Rozelle on the northern side of Victoria Road.

All entries are free and the following sections will be judged :-

- (1) Private Gardens, front or rear -
 - (a) over 600 square feet, or
 - (b) less than 600 square feet.
- (2) Courtyards - any size. These must be paved and enclosed.
- (3) Mini-gardens of 200 square feet or less and miscellaneous areas such as balcony gardens, ferneries, window boxes, laneways, easements, etc.
- (4) Industrial areas and home unit gardens, front or rear.

Dates:

Entries close on Friday, 17th September.

Judging will take place Saturday and Sunday, 25th and 26th September.

Inspection of winning gardens (tentative) Sunday, 2nd October.

The judges will not be expecting to see magnificent horticultural specimens, but gardens that are in keeping with the lives of the owners and the nature of the area. Such things as suitability of plants and materials, general layout and atmosphere and the way in which problems have been tackled will be taken into account. Do not be discouraged if your trees are not fully-grown or if your plants are not in flower.

Please enter your garden and persuade your friends and neighbours to do the same. Entry forms will be available shortly and should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Balmain Association, P.O. Box 57, Balmain, 2041. For any further information, telephone Mrs. Jocelyn Morris - 82 2565.

TREES FOR BALMAIN.

Balmain is at last beginning to look greener, thanks to the tree-planting programmes of the Council and Association and to the efforts of home gardeners.

Planting a tree may seem a small act in itself, but if everyone did this the face of the area would be changed. The Council is extremely helpful in this regard and if a ratepayer, alone or with neighbours, asks for trees to be planted in his street, the Council staff will, if it is considered practicable, arrange for it to be done.

The Association has a number of healthy young plane trees which are available free of charge for planting in parks, cul-de-sacs, lanes, etc. (with Council permission) or for private gardens at a charge of \$2.00 each. They can be obtained by telephoning Bob Beverley (82 5279). The planes will grow into handsome spreading deciduous trees and are therefore not suitable for planting in small areas. Native trees, many of which thrive in difficult conditions, can be obtained from most nurseries, including the Forestry Commission's Nursery at Pennant Hills (not open at weekends).

Helpful advice on choice of trees and other gardening problems can be obtained by telephoning the Dept. of Agriculture Home Gardening Service (2 0536, Ext. 4223) or the Forestry Commission Nursery (84 2776).

A number of native plants suitable to local conditions are growing at Peacock Point Park, East Balmain. If you have not yet seen it, you should do so soon--it will do your heart good!

BALMAIN NOTES.

The Balmain Theatre Group's next production is "Billy Liar" by Waterhouse and Hall. This is in rehearsal and will be presented at the Campbell Street Presbyterian Hall, Balmain, on Friday and Saturday, 8th/9th and 15/16th October.

Anyone interested in the group should ring Diana Rogers (82 3819) or Judy Coxon (82 4577).

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The Birchgrove Creative Leisure Centre at 29a Ballast Point Road, Birchgrove, is rapidly getting under way, with the generous help of local people.

Current activities are a playgroup for mothers and pre-school children on Wednesday mornings and a spinning and waving group on Tuesday evenings from 7.30 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

It is hoped shortly to arrange a guitar group for children of 10 years and over and to commence after-school activities for children in October.

The Centre will be launched with a Spring Festival in October. The Centre is at present in search of musical instruments, tools and equipment for craft work and books on craft. Will anyone interested in the work of the Centre please telephone Mrs. Robyn Jones (82 2727).

THE RIVER BOAT SHUFFLE proved a big success. The carnival atmosphere continued throughout the evening as 200 members and friends cruised the Harbour to the strains of live jazz.

The raffle was won by Peter and Judy Hindmarsh and the Association raised \$100 on the evening.

BOOK - "HOUSES OF BALMAIN".

With the beginning of the Association's new financial year, we are trying to finalise the accounts for book sales. It would appear that a number of unsold copies of the book HOUSES OF BALMAIN are being stored by members in their homes. Would these members kindly return the books to Bill Haesler, 5 Lookes Avenue, Balmain East, and so make our bookkeeping easy?

COMING EVENTS - WATCH THESE DATES

Thursday, 12th August, 1971. - Annual General Meeting,
Lower Town Hall, Balmain, 8.00 p.m.
Election of Office Bearers and Management
Committee. Short address by Dr. Robert
Nielsen on "The Sydney Area Transportation
Study". Refreshments served.

Saturday, 4th September, 1971 - Watch House open for
inspection from 10 a.m. to noon and 2 p.m.
to 4 p.m.

Friday, 17th September - Closing date for entries to
the Association Garden Competition.

Saturday/Sunday, 25th-26th September - Final judging
of Association Garden Competition.

Saturday, 2nd October - Watch House open for inspec-
tion from 10 a.m. to noon and 2 p.m. to
4 p.m.

Sunday, 3rd October - Inspection of winning gardens
(tentative).

Thursday, 14th October - Association General Meeting,
Lower Town Hall, Balmain, 8.00 p.m.
Refreshments served.

Saturday, 30th October - Colonial Night at the Watch
House. Dress and atmosphere will be in the
spirit of the wild old colonial days.

Friday/Saturday, 26th-27th November - Handcrafts sale
at the Watch House.

LIBRARY.

The Association's Children's Library is open at the
Watch House on Saturday mornings from 9.30 a.m. to 12
noon. Approximately 110 young borrowers are now using
it and the Watch House is a hive of activity on Saturdays.
The Association is increasing book stocks as the demand
grows and any donations from members or friends are most
welcome.

CRAFTS SALE.

Member of the Association who have a flair for making things that others want to buy, take note that the Association's annual crafts sale will take place at the Balmain Watch House, 179 Darling Street, Balmain, on 26th and 27th November.

The sale has become an annual sellers' and buyers' delight, as well as a social event. Artists and craftsmen who would like to take part should start preparing their wares now. The Watch House is ideal for displaying paintings, jewellery, pottery, batiks, screen prints, woven rugs, ties, paper flowers in fact anything that comes under the title of arts and crafts.

The only charge involved is 10% commission for the Balmain Association on all sales.

For further information, 'phone Jeanette Stevenson (82 4255) after 12 noon.

Non-artists note: Start saving your cents; the Crafts Sale is an excellent place to start your Christmas shopping.

ELECTIONS.

The next meeting on Thursday, 12th August, will be our Annual General Meeting, when elections will be held for Office Bearers and Management Committee. There will be a large number of changes this year and we have a good number of candidates standing, so please make an effort to attend this meeting and vote for your choice. We are folding in with this News Sheet a sheet giving brief details of all members standing at the election.

While votes are being counted, arrangements have been made to have Dr. Robert Nielsen speak on "The Sydney Area Transportation Study".

WATCH HOUSE OPENING.

The Watch House is open for inspection on the first Saturday of every month from 10.00 a.m. to noon and from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.