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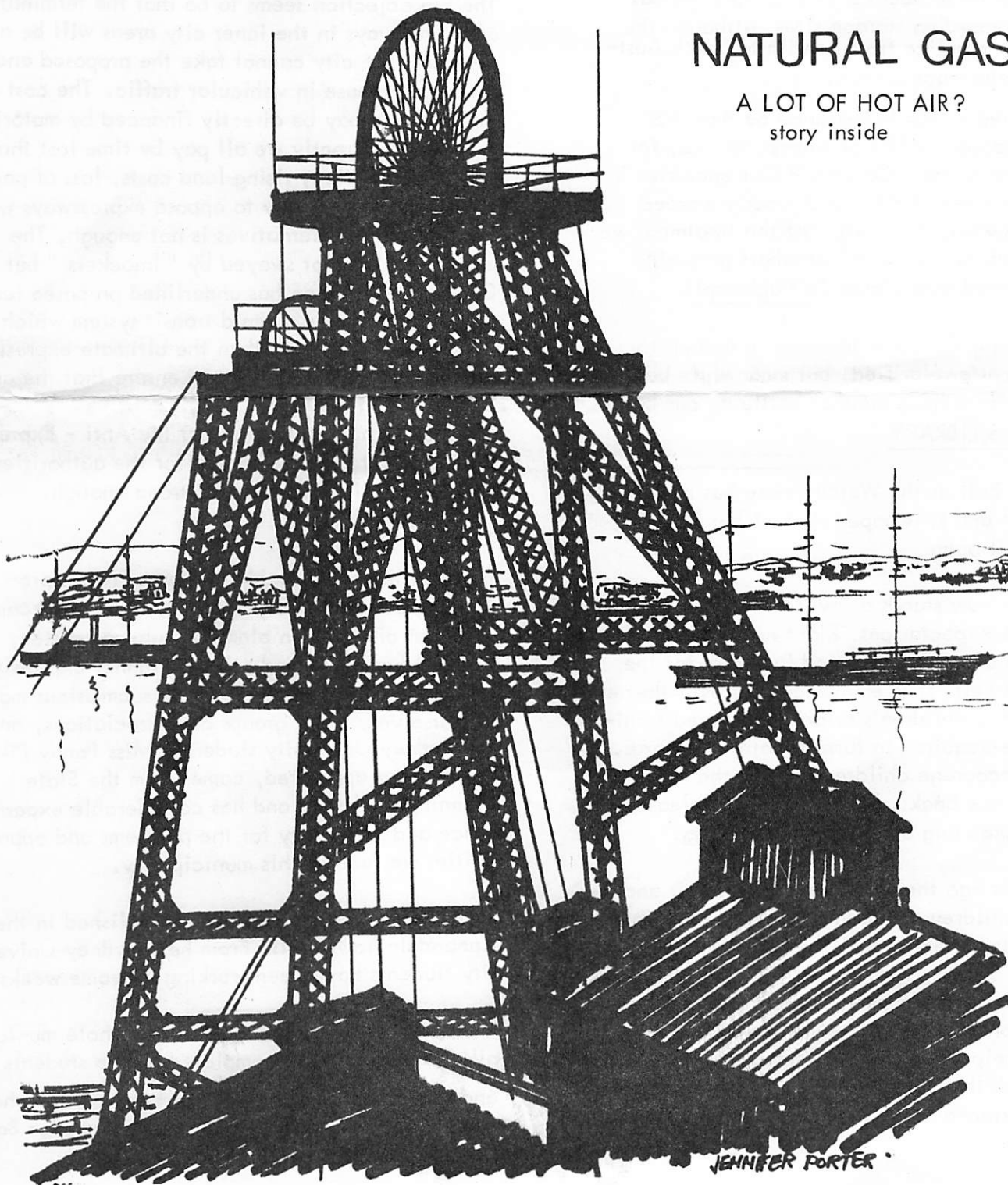
THE BALMAIN ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 57,
Balmain.
N.S.W. 2041.

Issue No. 38 JUNE, 1972.

NATURAL GAS

A LOT OF HOT AIR?
story inside



GAS

The Balmain Colliery on a site now occupied by Howard Smith Industries in Birchgrove Road was closed after an explosion in the 1940's. It is a symbol of the worst features of Balmain's industrialization. During World War 2 the shafts which extend under the harbour were used to store methane gas which was used as a substitute for petrol in cars.

It was recently announced by the Australian Gas Light Company that natural gas would be available in Sydney in about 2 years. No word has been said regarding storage sites, although the route of the pipeline from Penrith to South Australia has been made known.

Could the reason for this silence be that the storage proposal will be an unpopular one, for example the Balmain Colliery? Our enquiries in the past have resulted in ambiguously worded denials. However, this was just the treatment we received before the container wharf proposals were presented as a virtual fait accompli.

We are setting all our machinery in motion to have this matter clarified, but meanwhile be on guard - we may have another battle on our hands.

CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

The second cell at the Watch House has now been cleaned out and it is hoped that within 3 or 4 weeks it will open

Membership now stands at over 200 children which is far above expectations. Right now more money is being spent on more books and furniture for the new library cell. It is envisaged that over the next 6 months or so children's brightly coloured furniture will be acquired to furnish both courtyards. This will encourage children to visit the library, not just borrow books, but also spend a pleasant hour or so browsing around or just playing.

A few weeks ago the library keys were lost and we appeal to children or parents who may have found them to return them to the library.

Some of the library committee helpers have left to travel, pregnancies etc. Many thanks for their constant help. We appeal to anyone interested in helping with the library work to please contact Gerard Oosterman, 82-2093.

EXPRESSWAYS & BALMAIN

The need for support from members for the Anti-Expressway campaign is an important one. Just because you do not live in Glebe, Annandale or the parts of Rozelle affected does not mean that the expressway will not interfere with your serenity.

Pros and cons regarding expressways generally would fill a small sized book. In the State interest perhaps expressways linking major towns and cities are important.

The big objection seems to be that the termination of expressways in the inner city areas will be a disaster. The city cannot take the proposed and obvious increase in vehicular traffic. The cost of expressways may be directly financed by motorists taxes but indirectly we all pay by time lost through traffic congestion, rising land costs, loss of park land etc. etc. Merely to oppose expressways without suggesting alternatives is not enough. The authorities are not swayed by "knockers" but the Council's campaign has underlined proposed feasible alternatives - a rapid transit system which will be much cheaper than the ultimate expressway cost. It is up to each of us to ensure that the authorities fully investigate the alternatives. Write, protest, be active and support the Anti-Expressway Committee in every way for the authorities do take notice if it is loud and strong enough.

TOWN PLANNING

Work on the new Leichhardt Town Plan is progressing according to programme. On the recommendation of the town planning sub-committee, Council has appointed a Town Planner expressly for the purpose of co-ordinating submissions made by ourselves, other groups and associations, and the Sydney University students. Miss Penny Pike, the planner appointed, comes from the State Planning Authority and has considerable experience and sensitivity for the problems and opportunities we face in this municipality.

The planning centre has been established in the Annandale Town Hall. From here Sydney University students have been working for some weeks.

The existing land-use maps for the whole municipality have now been completed by the students and these will be used by us as base maps in the preparation of outline planning proposals for Balmain and Rozelle.

The outlined proposals will be co-ordinated with others from all sections of the municipality. They will be publicly exhibited when complete, in order that comment and criticism may be received from as many people as possible, prior to the preparation of the final plan,

Additional copies of the State Planning Authority's Balmain study have been received and may be purchased.

It should be noted by people who have read or intend to read the Balmain Study, that we as an Association do not necessarily agree with the detailed recommendations of the study. We will most certainly be submitting different proposals to the Council for many of the environmental areas.

Anyone interested in helping or wishing to purchase a Balmain Study should contact David Chuterman 82-3776.

PLANTING IN THE BALMAIN AREA

THE CASUARINAS. Casuarinas form an important part of the flora of the east coast. The name is derived from the cassowary as the drooping foliage resembles the feathers of this bird. Because of their needle like branches and small cones they superficially resemble conifers. They have been commonly called 'oaks' and this usage dates back to the early settlers who found the wide deep rays of the wood reminded them of the English oak. The wood has a tough quality and has been used for roof shingles and bullock yokes.

In a garden situation they require little attention. Pruning is generally unnecessary and in most cases undesirable. The graceful natural form of the plant is perhaps its most pleasing characteristic.

Swamp Oak Casuarina glauca. This tree is commonly found in swampy areas along tidal rivers and lagoons. In good conditions it can grow to 60 feet. Being extremely hardy it could well be considered for street tree planting and in areas where the going is tough. These are the trees planted along the sea wall at Peacock Point.

She Oak Casuarina distyla. A bushy shrub that will rarely exceed 10 feet. It has slender branchlets and small cones. As it survives quite well on exposed headlands along the coast it should prove equally suitable on exposed situations in Balmain. It could also be a consideration for a small garden.

Black She Oak Casuarina littoralis. A medium sized tree that can reach 30 feet. It can clearly be recognized by its dark green foliage and in spring it produces characteristic red tipped needles.

Drooping She Oak Casuarina stricta. Generally a small to medium sized tree up to 30 feet high. It grows well on stoney well drained soils.

Forest Oak Casuarina torulosa. This medium sized tree has a dark deeply furrowed trunk. It tends to favour fairly fertile soils, often on hillsides. The needles turn a russet red colour during the spring months.

LEICHHARDT TREE PLANTING GROUP

This group has been formed to co-ordinate the efforts of the local associations in encouraging tree planting and preservation within the municipality. A number of meetings have been held and a submission has been presented to the Council tree preservation and planting committee. It is hoped that this submission will be ratified by the Council as their future policy.

The recommendation was to buy the trees as seedlings and to have them advanced into larger containers for 'growing on'. It would take perhaps two years to establish such a 'bank'. A list of trees was prepared and these were grouped according to whether they grew to 20 feet or more, were deciduous or evergreen or were a spreading or compact tree.

The aim of establishing a tree bank is further to encourage the public planting of trees in the Municipality. Individuals can ask for trees for planting in their street, but it is hoped that in preference, petitions will be raised by the residents of whole streets or areas so that that area can be mass planted to form a unified area. A good example of this is the recent petition put before Council for tree planting in Evans Street, Rozelle by eighty of the residents.

RE-CYCLING OF WASTE

The Association is considering setting up depots for the collection of glass, aluminium and steel cans.

If you have any experience or thoughts in this regard please raise them at the next General Meeting or ring Mrs. Jocelyn Morris, 82-2565.

WATCH THESE DATES

Thursday 8 June, 1972 at 8.00pm. Association General Meeting, Balmain Lower Town Hall. Refreshments served.

Sat - Sun 17-18 June, 1972. Ski Weekend at Smiggins Hole (Fully booked).

Saturday 24th June, 1972 at 11.30am. Family Picnic at Lane Cove National Park.

Bring your own food and fuel if you wish to barbeque. The picnic spot will be on the south side of the river.

Saturday 22 July, 1972 at 8.30pm. Social Function. Details are not yet settled, but information and tickets will be available from Mrs. Victoria Joannou 82-5172.

Thursday 10 August, 1972 at 8pm. Association Annual General Meeting and Election of office bearers. Balmain Lower Town Hall. Please come to this most important meeting. Refreshments served

Sunday 29 October, 1972. Inspection of houses in Balmain. (Further details later).

Fri - Sat 24 & 25 November, 1972. Crafts sale at the Watch House (see under Crafts sale).

ANNUAL ELECTIONS

The Annual General Meeting and Elections of office bearers will be held on Thursday 10th August at the Balmain Town Hall at 8pm. All positions will be contested, so please take advantage of this opportunity to take an active part in the running of your association.

There is an old saying, ' you get out of something that which you are prepared to put into it ' - this certainly applies in the Balmain Association. So please nominate yourself and your friends for any of the following positions:

President

Vice President

Secretary

Treasurer

Management Committee Members (7 positions). Nomination forms are available from the Secretary and must be received on or before July 27th.

Arrangements have been made to show an excellent film on historic preservation called " A future for the past " at the meeting.

CRAFTS SALE

At a recent meeting of the Management Committee it was decided to hold a Crafts Sale in the Watch House on Friday evening, 24 November and all day Saturday 25 November. This sale has become an annual event, and is extremely successful. Members are invited to sell craft work, paintings etc. and the Association takes a commission of 10 per cent on sales.

It is a wonderful opportunity for buyers and sellers and a great place to buy Christmas gifts. Start stocking your stall now.

FUND RAISING

The wine and cheese night recently held at the Watch House was extremely successful, and yielded a profit of \$150. The raffle to raise funds for the children's library raised \$10.50 and its nebulous prize was won by none other than John Joannou.

The next function is the family picnic at Lane Cove National Park at 11.30am on 24th June. Bring your own food and drink. Barbeques are provided but bring your own fuel. There will be no charge except for admission to the park. The picnic spot has not yet been chosen but will be approached by the entrance on the south side of the river. Last year this was an uproarious affair so bring your own sack, egg, spoon and as many kids as you can muster. Plans for the next evening party to be held on Saturday 22nd July have not yet been settled. You will be given further details at a later date. Any enquiries to Mrs. Victoria Joannou.

Organization of details for the House Inspection on Sunday 29 October are under way. Anyone who would like to help with social functions would be extremely welcome to the Fund Raising Group. This group is very important as it provides the Association with its ' bread and butter ' as well as its wine and cheese. Helpers please contact Mrs. Victoria Joannou, 82-5172.

WATCH HOUSE LANDSCAPE PLAN

A draft plan for landscaping the Watch House grounds, including a proposal for the triangular adjoining land was presented to the management by Neil Oates, a member and landscape architect. The proposal, which includes paving the area at the side and rear of the building, planting trees in this courtyard area on the Colgate Avenue side of the triangular land, will now be drawn up in greater detail.