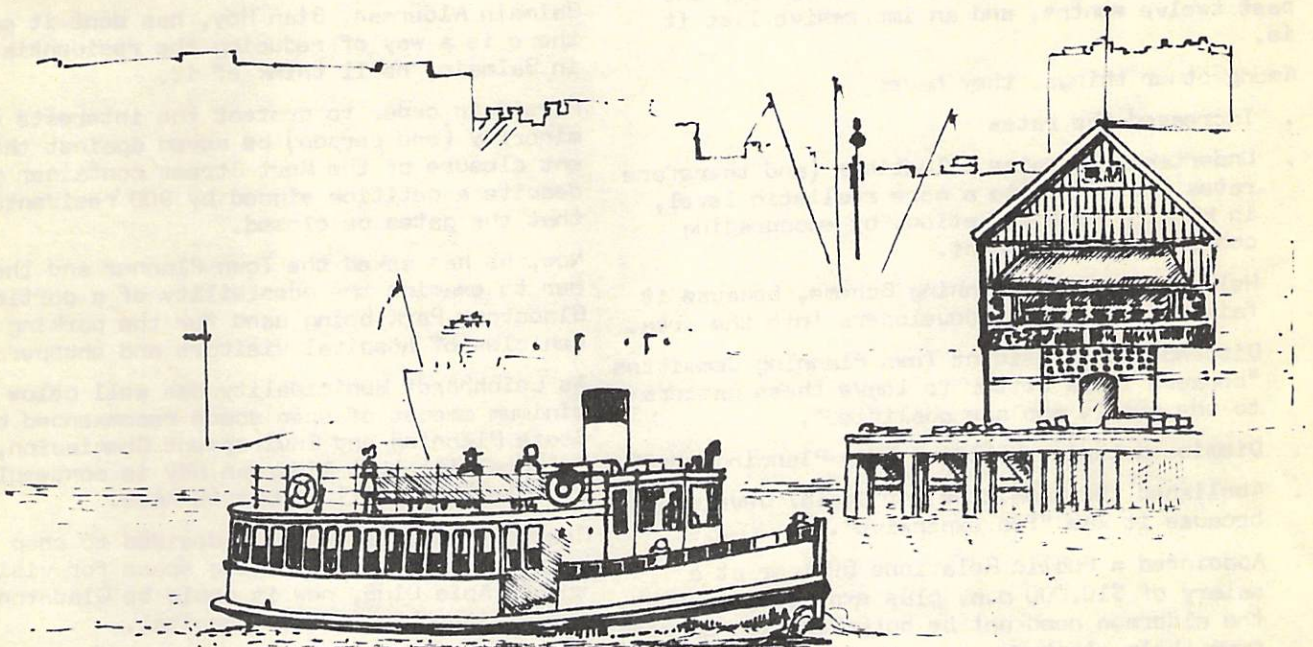


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Issue 60
SEPTEMBER 1975

the balmain association



THE BALMAIN FERRY SERVICE

Association members Ralph Catts and David Porter have met several times over the past weeks with the management of the two private ferry companies now operating to Balmain. These companies, Stannard Bros. and N.D. Hegarty and Son see an opportunity in Balmain and hopes are high that the talks will result in improvements to the service.

Broadly the proposals are for a substantial increase in the peak-hour service to Mort Bay and the commencement of a new service connecting Balmain with North Sydney. The service to North Sydney will be co-ordinated with the McMahons Point bus to North Sydney and Crows Nest. It is proposed that the peak-hour service to Darling Street will also be improved. The improved service to Mort Bay and the new service to North Sydney are two of the priority recommendations made in the recently released ferry report produced by the Association. It is most encouraging to have received such positive support in such a short time. The new timetables should be finalised within the next two weeks after which it will be up to the Public Transport Commission to give the green light to the introduction of the changes.

A few copies of the ferry report remain and are available to Association members at \$2.00 each. The report highlights deficiencies in the present service and recommends actions to overcome these deficiencies. The report is based on two surveys carried out by the Association to establish the needs of potential and actual ferry travellers. The report will be on sale at the next General Meeting (Oct. 1 at 8.00 pm at the Watch House), or plus 50¢ for postage from the Secretary, P.O. Box 57, Balmain.

council report

THE FIRST YEAR

Well, here it is, one year exactly since the new Council was elected. Time for us to take a look at what has been accomplished over the past twelve months, and an impressive list it is.

Among other things, they have:

- Increased the rates
- Undertaken to raise valuations (and therefore rates and rents) to a more realistic level, in keeping with inflation, by encouraging commercial development.
- Held up the 1974 Planning Scheme, because it failed to encourage developers into the area.
- Disbanded the resident Town Planning Committee "because it is better to leave these matters to the people who are qualified".
- Dismissed their qualified Town Planning staff.
- Abolished the Committee for Social Development, because it was "Too expensive".
- Appointed a Public Relations Officer at a salary of \$10,000 p.a. plus expenses, so that the aldermen need not be bothered with queries from their electors.
- Discontinued the right of the public to speak at Council meetings.
- Refused to be influenced by "pressure groups" by ignoring petitions with signatures totalling tens of thousands.
- Shown their concern for residents who may be bored by lengthy council meetings by conducting discussions in secret beforehand.
- Gone out to meet the people - at invitation-only functions.
- Shown their unwillingness to discriminate by rejecting a request for a women's needs committee.
- Achieved the distinction of being the first council to ban the Communist Party, its agents, and like bodies from using any of Council's halls for functions.
- Saved ratepayers money by halting the tree-planting program.
- Saved ratepayers maintenance costs on Simmons Street Wharf by undertaking to spend \$20,000 demolishing it.
- Considered the needs of car owners by giving up public parkland for car parking purposes.

With this sort of track record we wonder what is left for them to do over the next two years?

LEICHHARDT COUNCIL MEETING - 2 SEPTEMBER, 1975

Parks

Balmain Alderman, Stan Hoy, has done it again! If there is a way of reducing the residential amenity in Balmain, he'll think of it.

First, in order to protect the interests of the minority (one person) he moved against the permanent closure of the Mort Street container gates, despite a petition signed by 900 residents asking that the gates be closed.

Now, he has asked the Town Planner and the Engineer to examine the possibility of a portion of Gladstone Park being used for the parking of vehicles of hospital visitors and shoppers.

As Leichhardt Municipality has well below the minimum amount of open space recommended by the State Planning and Environment Commission, it is appalling that Alderman Hoy is contemplating reducing the small amount we have.

Recently Council secretly decided to chop up Leichhardt Park for parking space for visitors to the Apia Club, now it could be Gladstone Park for visitors to Balmain Hospital.

Watch out Peacock Point and Elkington Park, you could be next!

LEICHHARDT COUNCIL MEETING - 16 SEPTEMBER, 1975

Ferry Wharfs

In the report by the Town Clerk it was noted that following discussions with representatives of the Maritime Museum and an on-site inspection by council it was recommended that council demolish and remove the wharf situated south-west of Simmons Point and a smaller wharf be constructed for small craft.

The Sydney Cove Maritime Museum has been granted permission to use the existing wharf in the interim.

Why is this wharf being demolished when the money could be spent on re-opening Yeend Street wharf, which would become an immediate paying proposition? Council priorities appear to be back to front.

Backyard Factory Nuisance

A petition from the residents of Clubb and Byrnes Streets Rozelle was presented opposing a Development Application which was granted for the use of a local residential property as a backyard cabinet making factory. Ms Morrison spoke on behalf of the petitioners and was given a quiet hearing by the Councillors.

Apparently residents have been opposing for six years, a "home-business" at 17-19 Clubb Street Rozelle on the grounds of noise, heavy traffic, television interference etc. Council granted a Development Application on 27th August after advertising in the Sydney Morning Herald (Classified Columns) and a local newspaper (probably "The Glebe" but no one was sure). No objections were received so council interpreted this as an endorsement of the proposal.

What Council has done, of course, is to comply only with the minimum legal requirements set out in the County of Cumberland planning scheme. However, it seems very likely that the relevant local newspaper was not delivered to the area, and who ever looks in the legal notices column of the Herald? Common courtesy would have at least demanded a letter to all those likely to be affected.

Ms Morrison was told that the D.A. could not be revoked and that all council could do was to fine the business owner whenever it could be proved that he was contravening D.A. requirements. Council is not sympathetic to the residents, so their only recourse is to try and get an intolerant Health Inspector to find the owner out. Meanwhile the mother of one of the petitioners suffers in hospital as a result of the excessive noise.

This inconsiderate attitude of Councillors is typical of their year in office. Alderman Dan Casey has said on a previous occasion "As you know I never have been in favour of public participation in any Council matters". We sympathize with all the affected residents and ask them to remember how they were treated when voting at the next Council elections.

Tree Planting

Many residents have been waiting for some council action on tree planting. It was revealed that due to tardiness and a death in someone's family that the \$23,000 Federal Govt. grant specifically for tree planting had been withdrawn due to lack of response by the council - aldermen's comments included: "we only had to spend \$10 and we would have been entitled to the remainder"

"we could not spend it if we didn't have it" "its no use planting the trees as they will have to be looked after long after they are planted and that costs money".

TOWN PLANNING ??

The recent publicity campaign of the Mayor and Town Planner, which has appeared in The Link and The Glebe are clearly leading up to radical changes in the planning scheme and the flat code of the previous Council.

Mr. Kenna (The Council's Town Planner) is reported again as talking of medium and high rise development on "the ridges".

The two main arguments which they are trying to sell the people of Leichhardt to support their reintroduction of intensive flat development are ill-informed and distorted.

Briefly, the Mayor claims that flat development will reduce rates. The Town Planner says that 75,000 people is the right population for Leichhardt and that we must plan to get to it.

Firstly, the Mayor: What we pay in rates is directly related to how much it costs to provide services and run the municipality. If land values go down we pay more in the dollar on that reduced value, BUT the amount we pay remains constant, unless running costs have gone up (which of course they have). Therefore, to claim that increased values decrease rates is utter rubbish.

Further, any population increase which might result if a lot of flats were built, will not have a significant effect on rate income. Flat dwellers and unit owners do not pay rates at the same scale per family as people who own houses - their rates being assessed on the value of the land upon which their block of flats stands. This value will rise if flats are built upon it, sure - but nowhere near in proportion to the increase in population that might result. To make a significant difference to the rateable value of the land, permissible redevelopment densities must be placed at densities which will result in buildings that severely damage the environment of the area in which they are built. In other words, the minor increase in rateable value which might accrue on a flat site zoned for high density is not worth the effects that that building will bring about on its surroundings.

Secondly, the Town Planner: Appears to ignore a number of important factors when he becomes "worried about" the fall in population which Leichhardt has experienced since the war. He suggests that we must plan to increase the population to the figure of 75,000 people.

He overlooks the fact that similar population declines have occurred in all of the more densely populated inner suburbs of Sydney over the last 25 years and that between 1966 and 1971, for example, Leichhardt's population decline was only slightly more than the whole of Sydney, South Sydney, Marrickville and Woollahra and substantially less than the population decline in Newtown. This characteristic of falling inner area populations is typical of most western cities. The reasons for it are quite clear, are well documented and are, in fact, things to be pleased about rather than "worried about".

Quite simply there are fewer people living in each dwelling. In the year 1950 an average of four people lived in each house; now it is less than three. The fall in "occupancy ratio" i.e. number of people per dwelling, commenced after the war when the conditions of war-time overcrowding began to be relieved; more recently community affluence and therefore their space standards have increased. Surely, both these are things to be pleased about. Efforts to "correct" the decline can only result in environmental disasters like Randwick or, to some people, Kirribilli, over substantial areas of the municipality.

If the Council is really concerned about a kind of population decline which really matters then they should be strongly opposing the NSW Government's proposed expressway system which will destroy some 10% of the houses in Leichhardt and which would result in a significant erosion of the rate base and substantially decrease the population.

VALE HORSES AND CARTS!

It has been apparent for some time that the majority of aldermen on Leichhardt Council are completely unconcerned about the opinions of the residents, but never has it been so blatantly obvious as with the horses and carts issue.

A referendum was conducted by Aldermen Spedding and Origlass in order to gauge the feelings of the residents on this matter. The result - 8,635 people wanted the horses to remain and 12 people preferred to have them replaced by trucks! This is the largest petition ever received by Leichhardt Council.

At the meeting on September 2, Alderman Spedding urged Council to carry out a proper economic evaluation of the proposed replacement since the decision had been made by comparing 1973 truck costs with 1975 horse and cart costs. In an effort to be rid of the matter as soon as possible, Alderman Dan Casey (Rozelle) moved that the petition be received and noted before hearing the address from the public gallery by a representative of the petitioners.

Experience has shown that with the current council "received and noted" means filed and forgotten. This in fact has turned out to be the case. At the September 16 meeting when a report on the truck tenders was received, Alderman Spedding's worst fears were realised since the tendered price was 40% above the Council's budget figure. Again Ald. Spedding attempted to have the matter deferred at least until the next meeting so that a proper comparison could be made. He presented to Council a four-page document of his own costing showing that a truck would cost \$56 per week and a horse and

cart only \$44 per week! With the Council currently way out in its 1975 budget and short of capital, this surely was evidence enough to allow a detailed evaluation by Council's auditors. But no, Ald. Speddings motion was defeated 10 - 2 (Ald. Origlass being the other supporter) and now Council will outlay an unnecessary \$25,000 for yet more trucks to clutter up our roads.

The question is of course, will 8,635 Leichhardt residents forget Council's total disregard of their wishes? We doubt it - it only needs this many to vote against sitting aldermen at the next election and we could have a new independent council elected by residents for the residents, and not for an antiquated reactionary party machine run by a few.

CONTAINERS

The Mort Bay container crisis moved ahead again last month.

A monumental, almost single-handed effort by Sandy Halley got the residents report on the effects of the ANL operations at Mort Bay finished and the reports have now been despatched to some fifty government departments and others involved in the crisis.

Unfortunately the respite of the past few months on the affected streets is over and the traffic to and from the terminal has returned to the disastrous levels of the peak of late 1974.

After a six month delay Mr. Jones, Minister for Transport, has finally completed his costings of the alternatives to trucks. Barging has been estimated to cost an additional \$230 per container. This is artificially high but even as it stands must be put in the perspective of about \$1300 per container from Sydney to Japan. Incidentally ANL have announced that as from November 1 their rates will increase about \$250 per container, could this be in anticipation of the introduction of barging?

A meeting to discuss the action which should now be taken is planned for October 3. The meeting will be between residents, union representatives, Mr. Jones, the Minister for Urban and Regional Development and the Minister for the Environment. It is hoped that the meeting will be in Balmain.

At this meeting we will not be debating Mr. Jones' costings but rather achieving confirmation that the problem must be solved and that complete relief must be given to residents; within six months, not six years. It is up to the government to solve the problem now, residents have helped as much as they can. Mr. Jones has delayed six months and the traffic rolls through Balmain unchanged and unchallenged. This must stop.

'balmain village fair'

As reported in the last issue, our Annual Village Fair is being held on Friday evening November 28, and all day Saturday November 29. So far the response has been fantastic and it looks like being even bigger and better than last year! However, we are still anxious to hear from anyone wishing to sell their wares or do their own thing. We only want a small commission (10%) and would like all stall holders to either be, or become, members of the Association. Stalls can be reserved by contacting Diana McDonald (82 4882), Narelle Hooper (827 2968) or Janine Oates (82 0576). We would also like to hear from anyone who could lend a hand in either prior organization or an hour or two on the day.

The Committee will be meeting again on November 11 at 8 pm at the Watch House. Anyone with an idea or just a helping hand would be most welcome.

miscellaneous

SURVEY OF ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

To those members who received a questionnaire (which was sent out by Ian MacGregor several weeks ago), if you have not done so already, would you please fill it in immediately and put it in the post.

The preliminary results of the survey are amazing, particularly our comments on the problems of the area, what makes up an "Association member", and our attitude towards the present council. This is going to be a very valuable study of the Association and will help decide the path we take in the next few years. To fill in the form takes only a few minutes and your reply is anonymous. Please treat this as urgent as Mr. MacGregor needs more replies to avoid bias of the results.

We will report shortly on the findings of the survey.

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN AFTERNOON

The Principals of the Gilbert and Sullivan Company will be presenting excerpts from "Mikado", "Gondoliers" and "Sorcerer" on Sunday afternoon, October 26, at 2 pm at the Presbyterian Hall, Campbell Street, Balmain. Admission \$2.00: Pensioners & children \$1.00. Proceeds to pay for the Beckstein Piano. For further enquiries ring Andrew Soos: 82 1170.

BALMAIN THEATRE GROUP

The theatre group is currently rehearsing its next production "Come Back Little Sheba" by William Inge. This play is being directed by Dan O'Sullivan and performances start at the Campbell Street Presbyterian Hall on Friday October 10 at 8 pm with supper to follow at the Watch House. The dates of performances are as follows:

Fri. Sat. October 10 and 11, Fri. Sat. October 17 and 18, Wed. October 22 and Sat. October 25.

Bookings can be made by phone: 82 4765 and 82 5601 (a.h.).

Tickets at Bray's Book Shop, Darling St. Balmain.

"THE GLEBE: PORTRAITS AND PLACES"

The National Trust and publishers Ure Smith have, in association, produced a new book which should interest many Association members. The book, "The Glebe: Portraits and Places" by Freda MacDonnell, is a 136-page illustrated hard-back which "provides a fascinating portrait of the area. Against a background of the changing patterns of society, the people and places that today give The Glebe its distinctive character are drawn in fine and loving detail."

The Trust has generously offered the Association copies of this book at a discount price to enable us to offer it to members for \$8.50 (the recommended retail price being \$9.50).

Copies will be on sale at the Balmain Village Fair. However, if you would like an earlier copy, please write to the Hon. Secretary.

watch these dates !!!

September 28, Sunday, 11.00 am - 4.00 pm.
Annandale Garden Walk, starting at 335 Annandale Street, where tickets can be obtained. \$1 per family, 50¢ single, 20¢ pensioners. Afternoon tea available 2 - 4 p.m.; plants for sale. Everyone welcome.

October 1, Wednesday, 8.00 pm
Association General Meeting at the Watch House.

October 7, Tuesday, 8.00 pm, and
October 21, Tuesday, 8.00 pm.
Leichhardt Council meetings.
If you can spare the time, please attend

October 7, Tuesday
Balmain Garden Club's bus trip to Wirrimbirra cancelled due to insufficient bookings.

October 11, Saturday, 2.00 pm.
 Balmain Garden Club's meeting at 11 Phillip Street, Balmain - subject "Hydroponics" - all welcome (PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE).

October 12, Sunday, 10.00 am to 5.30 pm
 "Houses of the Glebe" - The Glebe Society's Open Day (see separate insert for details).

October 10 - 25
 Balmain Theatre Group's production of "Come Back Little Sheba" (see note this issue).

October 26, Sunday, 2.00 pm
 Gilbert and Sullivan afternoon (see note this issue).

November 6 - 8, Thursday to Saturday
 Art exhibition at Balmain Primary School (See note last News Sheet)

November 8, Saturday, 9.30 am - 12.00 noon.
 Children's "Paint-in" at Gladstone Park (see note this issue).

November 11, Tuesday, 8.00 pm.
 Association fund-raising meeting to organize the Balmain Village Fair. Would all those who indicated in the questionnaire a desire to help, please come along.

November 28-29, Friday - Saturday.
 Balmain Village Fair (see note this issue).

new members

We wish to welcome the following new members to the Association:

R.Parker & M/s R. McDonell
 21/5 Gallimore Ave. Balmain East
 Miss Sara Mitchell
 11A Bradford Street, Balmain.
 Don Henderson
 23 Wharf Road, Birchgrove.
 Mrs. N. Fay & Family
 30 Darling Street, Balmain East.
 Mr. & Mrs. Gary Stavrou
 429 Darling Street, Balmain

membership form

I wish to open/renew my membership with the Balmain Association and enclose \$.....* subscription.

Name.....

Address.....

.....Telephone.....

Send to:

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

*Subscription rates: Single membership \$2.00
 Family \$4.00
 Pensioner / Junior \$0.20

Mr. & Mrs. D. Allott
 34 Darling Street, Balmain East
 Ian MacGregor
 92 Somerville Rd. Hornsby Heights.
 Mr. E. Morris
 101 Birchgrove Rd. Balmain.
 Mr. G.C. Crow
 30 Elliott Street, Balmain.
 Mr. & Mrs. M.A. Ross
 177 Rowntree St. Birchgrove
 Brian Sutton
 1 Trouton Street, Balmain
 Peter Crawford & Susan Tweedy
 27/16 Hosking Street, Balmain East.
 The Harrison Family
 47 Ballast Pt. Rd., Birchgrove
 Glynis Hardgraves,
 31 Reuss Street, Leichhardt.
 Mr. & Mrs. H. Vidal
 97 Mort Street, Balmain.
 Mr. & Mrs. F.J. Pulman
 305 Darling Street, Balmain.
 Mr. J.H. Mitchell
 9 Fenton Ave. Newcastle.
 Kenneth B. Thompson
 471 Darling Street, Balmain.
 Mrs. Helen Barrow
 37 Cecily Street, Lilyfield.
 Mr. & Mrs. P. White,
 44 Curtis Road, Balmain.
 Pauline Ostojil,
 5 Trouton Street, Balmain.
 Mr. P.H.N. Kendall,
 3/26 Grove Street, Birchgrove.
 Pierre Marecaux,
 471 Darling Street, Balmain.
 Phillip Mustard
 9/189 Darling Street, Balmain.
 Mr. & Mrs. D.L. Osborne,
 46 Darling Street, Balmain
 Dr. Anne Banning,
 41 Booth Street, Balmain.
 Mr. & Mrs. S.G. Hewitt,
 7 Henry Street, Balmain.
 Ann Noble,
 27 Vincent Street, Balmain.

next general meeting

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 8.00 p.m.

WATCH HOUSE, 179 DARLING ST., BALMAIN

ALL MEMBERS PLEASE ATTEND

FRIENDS ALSO WELCOME

TEA and COFFEE PROVIDED