



the balmain association

council report



LEICHHARDT COUNCIL MEETING - 1st and 15th February

At the first meeting the Leichhardt Municipal Council on 1 February 1977 there were 292 foolscap pages of minutes, reports and motions which would be read, considered, discussed and debated as appropriate allowing for public participation. The meeting concluded in one and a half hours with all matters being disposed of and this meant that each page of the business paper was dealt with at the rate of 18.5 seconds.

The several matters which arose out of this are:

- (a) How adequately do the Council Aldermen consider the business paper at the meeting?
- (b) If an amalgamation of Local Councils occurs in the future with a consequent increase in work load will the business paper be less adequately considered than at present?
- (c) The decreased opportunity of effective public participation at the meeting because business papers are not available to the public before the meeting despite the fact that business papers close the week prior to the meeting.

During the second February meeting Alderman Speding made a serious allegation that all correspondence had not been circulated to all Aldermen and in particular to himself.

Of matters contained in the correspondence the Australian Bureau of Statistics advised that the population of the Municipality of Leichhardt as at 30 June 1976 was 62,540 as against 71,338 in June 1971.

The Federated Municipal and Shire Council Employ-

ees' Union held their annual picnic at Luna Park on 11 March 1977 and all Council Employees with the exception of those engaged in essential services were allowed time off to attend the function. What date was YOUR annual picnic?

The Minister for the Local Government advised that the 1977 rates will be controlled so that no increase will be beyond 12%, subject to the Minister's consent. An analysis by the Leichhardt Council disclosed that with the same rate in the dollar as last year some 30% of rate payers would suffer a rise in rates of between 10% to 30% due to increased valuations. The question then arises as to what will happen in the 1978 rates. This question will have to be left to the incoming Council in September 1977.

The Balmain Hospital proposed to use the ground floor of the Leichhardt Town Hall as a medical centre to be serviced by specialist medical officers.

On 14 January 1977 the Kindergarten Union of New South Wales wrote thanking the Council for its donation of \$10,000.00 towards the re-building of the Ellen Desailly Kindergarten at Wentworth Park, Glebe. The donation was to bridge the gap between the cost of the construction and an Australian Government Grant. While the Council are to be congratulated in their attitude to the Ellen Desailly Kindergarten, their attitude towards our local "Clontarf" at Adolphus Street, Balmain remains a mystery. All that had been asked of the Council was their consent to the restoration and use of "Clontarf" as a pre-school. The fate of Clontarf remains if not undecided, certainly unpublished.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

What do members want from the Balmain Association? At present it has the largest membership in its 12 years of existence--over 500 members--and yet the Association is suffering from lack of participation by membership. Appeals for contacts made through the News Sheet in the past have met with an unnerving silence. A small reliable band of people keep the Association going from month to month. It is unfair to expect the same people to give their effort and time year after year without respite.

It is not thought that attendance at general meetings alone is the answer. At the moment we need a typist; a committee to run social functions; another to organise the garden walk; another to supervise the Village Fair; one to take control of the Watch House maintenance and one to produce the News Sheet. It can be seen that the work load is heavy.

We want workers, not talkers, and we need help quickly. Can you assist?

Ring Margaret Dobson, Bus. 230 5101 or A.H. 82 2774.

council elections

LEICHHARDT COUNCIL ELECTIONS - 17 SEPTEMBER, 1977

The Council elections will be held on 17 September 1977 and voting will be compulsory. However, eligibility to vote may be lost in certain circumstances.

The following persons are eligible to vote: A British subject aged 18 years or over and who either (a) pays rates to the Leichhardt Municipal Council or (b) is a resident who is shown on the State Electoral Roll in the Leichhardt area (there is not now, any minimum period for residency).

Naturally, persons who voted at the last state elections will be eligible to vote. Where a company is a rate payer, then the company is entitled to nominate a person to vote on its behalf but to gain the benefit of a vote the person nominated should not otherwise be entitled to vote (i.e. not a resident or rate payer).

If you are not on the State Electoral Roll in the Leichhardt area and are entitled to be enrolled then you should contact any post office to obtain an enrolment form as soon as possible.

If you are not sure of your eligibility or whether you are on the Council Electoral Rolls (which are partly prepared from the State Electoral Roll) then you should contact the Electoral Roll clerk at the Leichhardt Municipal Council Offices (Ph. 560 4100).

BALMAIN THEATRE GROUP

"TROJAN WOMEN" by Euripides: there will be a WORKSHOP PRODUCTION of this Greek Tragedy in the Campbell Street Hall at 8.00 p.m. on Friday 29th and Saturday 30th April. Direction will be in the hands of Peter Thoeming who was last seen in the part of the Rev. Dupas in "Little Murders". As well as helping inexperienced actors, Workshops also allow experienced actors to experiment in roles which they would not normally attempt in a major production. The Workshop is for members of the Group and friends and any member of the Association would be most welcome. There is no charge for admission.

"BARON BOLLIGREW AND THE DRAGON" by Robert Bolt (author of "Man for All Seasons"). After the success of "Winnie the Pooh" last year the Group has decided to try and perform a children's play each year. This is a very witty play set in Medieval Times and has a large and varied cast including Knights, Peasants, the rascally Baron and his dull-witted offsider and, of course a Dragon.

The play is to be performed over three weekends during the May school holidays: Sat., 7th May, Sun., 8th May, Fri. 13th May, Sat. 14th May, Sun. 15th May, Fri. 20th May, Sat. 21st May, Sun. 22nd May. Friday performances are at 8.00 p.m. and Sat. and Sun. performances at 2.00 p.m. Place: Presbyterian Church, Campbell St., Balmain. Bookings: Bray's Bookshop, 268 Darling St. Tickets cost \$2.50 for adults and \$1.00 for children and pensioners.

SAVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

You will have noticed that the Association has given publicity to pub meetings of this Committee. This is a hardworking group which has been involved, among other things, in the freeway problem. They have made a submission to the Commuter Council on its terms of reference and propose to place future submissions on pensioner fares, an improved ticketing system, western harbour ferries and Mercedes buses.

They are in need of help and ask that anyone who believes in the value of what they are doing to give up some of their time to the public transport cause. Work can be done in almost any field. Attend a meeting or ring Geoff Dawson (44 1358) or Don Morison (95 5731).

"TO SEE OURSELVES AS OTHERS SEE US."

P.P. McGuinness, in a recent issue of the National Times, reviewed the Australian film DON'S PARTY -

"Booze, gropes, infidelity, vulgarity, hypocrisy, middle-class Labor politics and phoney intellectuals -- an embarrassingly accurate portrait of life in Paddington or Balmain."

WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHERS.

Barbara Hall of 92 Kent Street, Richmond, Vic., 3121, is researching for a book on Australian women photographers and would like to see actual photographs taken by as many women as possible, past and present. The photographers need not be professional in that photography was their livelihood -- just that they cared about it. Please contact Barbara if you can help.

CONSTITUTION

It is proposed to re-draw and up date the constitution of the Balmain Association and a meeting is planned for some time in April to consider this matter. Please contact Peter Colquhoun (Work - 82 0676) for information about the meeting and with suggestions and ideas you would like incorporated in the new constitution.

ART CLASSES

Life drawing classes in Balmain one evening class and one week-day class starting in the first week of April. For further information, contact Michael Snape at 82 1747.

YOUR OMBUDSMAN.

The first Ombudsman was appointed in Sweden in 1809. In the 19th century his activities were mainly concerned with the Courts and the police, but the growth of administration in the 20th century shifted his emphasis to the bureaucracy. In 1915 the work load became too heavy and a separate Ombudsman was appointed for the armed services and the police and in 1968 a third Ombudsman was appointed to receive consumer complaints.

The N.S.W. Ombudsman Act was assented to on 18th October, 1974 and an appointment was made with effect from 2nd April, 1975. Part III of the Act (which deals with Investigations) was proclaimed to commence on 12th May, 1975. The Ombudsman (Amendment) Act was assented to on 13th October, 1976, and a further amendment, with effect from 1st December, 1976, empowered the Ombudsman to investigate complaints about administrative conduct of Local Government Authorities. A Deputy Ombudsman was appointed in March, 1977.

Under Section 12 of the Act, the conduct of any public authority may be the subject of a complaint unless :-

- (a) the conduct took place prior to 18th October, 1974; or,
- (b) in the case of a local government authority, the conduct took place before 1st December, 1976.

The Ombudsman's jurisdiction is limited by Parliament and he cannot investigate the conduct of Commonwealth Departments and Authorities; judges, magistrates and officers of the Courts; a member of the Police Force when acting as a constable; private persons, businesses or companies.

There is a need for additional protection of the citizen against arbitrary decisions in the administration of the modern democratic State. In these days very many decisions are made by minor officials which affect the lives of every citizen. If some of these decisions were arbitrary and unjustified, there was no easy way for the ordinary citizen to gain redress.

The right to appeal to one's Member of Parliament does not meet the problem. The Member's usual method of dealing with a complaint is to send it to the Department or Minister concerned and, naturally, they are likely to put the best light on their own case. If the Member is dissatisfied with the reply, all he can do is ask a question in Parliament.

The Ombudsman is an impartial authority willing to act in cases which would not be worth the cost of elaborate court procedures. The great virtue of the scheme is that its weapons are publicity and persuasion rather than cumbersome controls.

Complaints should be made in writing to the Ombudsman and there is no charge for any action taken. Where the Ombudsman finds that the conduct complained of is wrong, he may recommend that the conduct be reconsidered by the public authority and action taken to rectify, mitigate or change the conduct or its consequences. If the Ombudsman is not satisfied that sufficient steps have been taken following a recommendation made by him, he may make a report to the Premier for presentation to Parliament.

The Defamation Act is amended to provide that there is a defence of absolute privilege for a publication to or by the Ombudsman.

The Office of the Ombudsman is located on the 4th Floor, Remington Centre, 175-183 Liverpool Street, Sydney, 2000. Telephone 61 6677.

MASQUERADE PARTY.

Disappointingly, because of lack of support from members, the Masquerade Ball, scheduled to be held in the Balmain Town Hall on March 5, had to be cancelled. It shrank to a party at the Watch House and about 80 people turned up, masked and disguised, and had a wonderful time. The organisers, Diana McDonald, Janine Oates, Caroline Fricke and Beveley Harris, were bitterly disappointed by the lack of response, but decorated the Watch House gaily and supplied nibbles and a lavish supper. Great ingenuity was shown by the guests -- there were pussy-cats, Dave and Mabel on their way to welcome the Queen, a Spartan warrior and maiden, houris, Arabs, Russians, a green Womble, death's heads, monkeys, witches and an Edna Everege type.

The original concept of a ball had been planned as an annual event, giving members, old and new, a chance to get to know each other. However, it is obvious that this type of entertainment is not to members' liking, so future plans have been abandoned.

AS I WAS SAYING . . .

Further to the harangue about membership involvement, Ralph Catts has a scheme afoot to form a Balmain Association cricket team to play competition. This is the sort of enthusiasm that warm the cockles of the heart.

He also has visions of encouraging the young fry to become interested in cricket and so form a junior team.

And what's more, he is actually doing something about his visions. If you want further information, ring Ralph, 2 0982, Ext. 9254, or at home, 82 4350.

watch these dates !!!

April 5, Tuesday, 5.30 p.m.
Save Public Transport. Every Tuesday, Great Southern Hotel lounge, 723 George St., Sydney.

April 5, Tuesday, 8.00 p.m.
Leichhardt Council Meeting, Town Hall, Leichhardt.

April 13, Wednesday, 8.00 p.m.
Balmain Association General Meeting. Watch House, Darling St., Balmain.

April 19, Tuesday, 8.00 p.m.
Leichhardt Council Meeting, Town Hall, Norton St., Leichhardt.

May 3, Tuesday, 8.00 p.m.
Leichhardt Council Meeting, Town Hall, Leichhardt.

May 11, Wednesday, 8.00 p.m.
Balmain Association Management Meeting, Watch House, Darling St., Balmain.

May 17, Tuesday, 8.00 p.m.
Leichhardt Council Meeting, Town Hall, Leichhardt.

HISTORY GROUP.

The History Group, convened by Peter Reynolds, meets on the first Monday of each month (next meeting 4th April) at the Watch House at 8.15 p.m.

After the successful launching of Peter's book **HALF A THOUSAND ACRES - BALMAIN. A HISTORY OF THE LAND GRANT**, the group is gathering its forces together to start on their next venture. Anyone interested in historical research, publishing, writing, editing and layout is invited to attend the informal meetings.

HALF A THOUSAND ACRES

The Association has repaid a loan of \$3,000 to the Commonwealth Trading Bank. The loan was drawn to help finance the production of "Half a Thousand Acres". Many thanks to the Commonwealth Bank for providing the loan and to Peter Reynolds, David Porter and David McCann for acting as guarantors.

In the four months since the book launching, half the production costs have been recouped. Please help us get into the 'black' by purchasing a copy (\$8.95 to members) and by telling your friends.

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

GROUND COVERS.

It is impossible to keep ground bare, as the weeds will bring themselves, so the choice is to plant something worthwhile. Of recent years, the use of plants for special purposes has been developed, some of the uses being keeping the ground cool by covering with plants and so lessening the need of constant watering, preventing erosion, smothering weeds, improving appearance and decreasing maintenance.

As to ground cover plants, to the purist in these matters, very small ground-hugging plants that spread, are what is usually meant, but personally, I consider any permanent planting that covers the ground to be ground cover. This ranges from the really "tinies" such as many types of scented thymes, majus, ajugas (3 types), larger ones such as neirembergia, campanula, verbena, on to the larger growing perennials, up to the smaller shrubs such as Hypericum (yellow flowers), Lavender, Veronica, Marguerite, Daisies and many others, all suitable for sunny spots. For shade, use Fuchsias, Impatiens and Plectranthus. Low spreading cotoneasters are often available. Lots of creepers can be used, such as Jasmine, Abelia, Thunbergia Alata, Ivy Geraniums and even modern Bougainvilleas are recommended. There are many new types of Ivies much brighter than the old ones for shady spots.

Among the Natives, the Australian violet likes semishade and if it likes the place, will grow like crazy. (If it doesn't like it, will merely sulk!) Another Aussie for shade is Pratia (white or pale blue). One for hot spots is dwarf Myoporum (Boobialla) and there is the attractive creeper Kennedia (red flowers). Also there are available several low-growing spreading Grevillias that would finally cover quite big areas. For a Japanese look, consider the low growing Junipers in tones of gold, green or blue-green which result in a furry shaggy ground cover, good in cool spots. Even the old Chlorophytum with variegated leaves looks well under trees where little would succeed.

In full sun and rather poor soil, many types of "pig-faces" (Mesems) will flourish. Also for similar conditions, consider the Dimorptheca (white and pink) with blue centres, and Gazanias.

Use occasionally plants with grey or blue-green foliage to avoid monotony. Two good ones for coverage are the Convolvulus Mauritanica and Cerastium, both of which look particularly good hanging over low walls and grow well in sun.

These are just some ideas for filling those hungry-looking spaces in your garden. There are even two attractive cousins of the Wandering Jew creeper, that can be used; one is Zebrina (green and white stripes) a rampant grower, and one of purple that is interesting in appearance and has small pink flowers if grown in full sun.

J. Murray.

Balmain Garden Club.

MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Most Association members must feel that membership should involve more than paying a subscription and in return getting a regular copy of the News Sheet.

Communication is inadequate and enthusiasm is dissipated. So Association members, old and new, are invited to fill in this questionnaire to bring our records up to date.

Right now we need a pool of News Sheet distributors; typists; architects; journalists -- in fact, we need a whole range of skills. We need those who want to "switch off" and spend a couple of hours doing manual work or leg work with no responsibility, right through to those who want to initiate a project and see it through, taking 100% of the responsibility.

Tick off your areas of interest and the ways in which you can assist, on the lists below and return this form in the enclosed envelope.

ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| a. Town planning | i. Ferreting information from bureaucracy, private enterprise, Local, State and Federal Governments, etc. |
| b. Environment preservation | j. Attending Council meetings and furnishing reports. |
| c. Ferry Services | k. Petitioning |
| d. Container traffic | l. Help with leaflet distribution. |
| e. Community services | m. Garden walks |
| f. Tree planting | n. Help with Village Fair. |
| g. Historical Research | o. Help with organising social events. |
| h. Maintenance of Watch House | |

WHO CAN HELP?

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Those who can join Management for the duration of a specific project. | 9. People with media contacts |
| 2. People to assist with News Sheet production and publicity. | 10. Writers - for articles, reports, editing, etc. |
| 3. And with News Sheet distribution | 11. People with sketching and/or graphic talents. |
| 4. People with an hour to spare | 12. Typists |
| 5. A phone and an hour to spare | 13. People with photo-copying facilities |
| 6. A car and an hour to spare | 14. Plan-copying facilities |
| 7. A van or truck and an hour to spare | 15. Photographic equipment for rush jobs |
| 8. Street or local area watchdog. | 16. Any others. |

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

OCCUPATION: _____

TELEPHONE: Business: _____ Home: _____