



HERITAGE WEEK

22-28 MARCH 1982

HERITAGE SATURDAY IN BALMAIN

A group of bushwalkers has arranged to visit Balmain on Saturday 27 March. They will leave Circular Quay at 1 30 pm and arrive at Darling St Wharf at 1 41 pm.

Guides from the Association will meet them at the Wharf and lead them on a "history tour" from there to the Watch House.

Devonshire Tea will be served in the Watch House between 3 00 - 3 30 pm.

At 3 30 pm the 20-minute slide/tape set, "The Balmain Waterfront" will be shown. Then there will be more time to look at the Watch House and the display.

NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 5 APRIL 1982
7 30 PM WATCH HOUSE

The afternoon is expected to be pleasant, informative and a fund-raiser. The bushwalkers have agreed that a donation of \$4:50 per head would be reasonable.

HELP IS NEEDED TO MAKE THIS AFTERNOON A SUCCESS. We need assistance with guides, Devonshire Tea, and people at the Watch House to help sell our publications or to show the visitors around.

We also need help the week beforehand to clean the Watch House and grounds.

PLEASE RING 818 2307 (evenings) IF YOU CAN HELP. This will be the Association's contribution to Heritage Week which is to be held from 22-28 March.



CLONTARF SAVED BY COUNCIL

Leichhardt Council has made a gesture of goodwill to the Housing Commission which will save Clontarf. The Council has offered the house and land to the Commission on the proviso that the Commission fully restores Clontarf for community use.

As well as bringing the building back to life, the Commission will build 16 units on the land for aged persons. The units are to be offered to senior citizens on the basis that 8 are to be reserved for aged people presently living in the Municipality or for former long-term residents who wish to come back to Balmain.

The Association welcomes this enlightened step forward and wishes to compliment both the Council and the Commission.

We have, for many years, given our full support to the National Trust's efforts to save Clontarf. A few notes from Peter Reynolds' article in Leichhardt Historical Journal No 8 1979 will introduce new members to the history of Clontarf.

Clontarf, on the corner of Wallace and Adolphus Streets, was built in 1844 by the N S W Under Sheriff, Robert Blake. He owned the land bounded by Darling Street, Jubilee Bay, Hampton Villa and Adolphus Street. On these eight acres, Blake built eleven houses of which Moorfield (6 Charles Street, 1839), Shannon Grove (10 Ewinton Street, 1848) and Kinvarra (3 Ewinton Street, c1852) have been lovingly restored.

Clontarf was the basic vernacular building of the time. It was described as containing nine apartments and as being located in an airy and delightful situation. The stone verandahed cottage was flanked by two neat gardens and pleasure grounds and its occupants rejoiced in the use of a family bathing house. The steam ferry gave direct access to the site via Blake's own private wharf. All this was enjoyed for a few shillings per week.

Blake sold his estate to Ewen Wallace Cameron, the builder of Ewinton, in 1856-61. Cameron resided in comfort in Ewinton, collected rents from the other houses and became a leading figure in the Balmain community.

After his death in 1876 the land was subdivided and Charles Street and Wallace Street (named for members of his family) were created.

Clontarf passed through various hands until 1922 when it was bought by J R Morgan who converted the site to a foundry complete with blast furnace. This act was symptomatic of the change in Balmain's fortunes. The 19th C residential/small shops/ small waterfront industries land-use mix became increasingly heavier industrial as the 20th C unfolded.

When the Power Engineering Pty Ltd bought Clontarf and its foundry in 1938, the house was virtually submerged in galvanised iron factory additions. Ward's Stoves Pty Ltd bought Clontarf in 1947 and by then the graceful front verandah had been torn down, the full-length window shutters nailed up and the stone walls painted white.

In the post-war planning revival Clontarf and the land in Wallace Street along to Ewinton Street was zoned for public open space. When Leichhardt Council bought Clontarf in 1974, it demolished the rusty iron buildings and planned to use the site as the first stage in providing a park.

This scheme doomed Clontarf to demolition. The National Trust, the Faculty of Architecture (UNSW) and local industries such as Unilever got together to put a proposal to the Council to restore the building to a lock-up stage.

The Council in June 1976 refused to be a party to this attempt to save Clontarf's life. One alderman demonstrated the regard for the house by asking "hey Mr Mayor, can anyone tell me the name of the architect who built Clontarf? I suggest he be jailed for despoiling the area!" In July 1976, Clontarf caught fire. (News Sheet 68).

Well in these more enlightened days it is heartening to see the present Council taking a positive step to save Clontarf, to make it usable by the community and by catering for that most neglected area in social welfare, aged housing.

THE BALMAIN ASSOCIATION IS FOR PEOPLE IN BALMAIN BIRCHGROVE ROZELLE

SECOND CROSSING WILL DESTROY TRUST'S URBAN CONSERVATION AREAS

Concerned about the impact of the second crossing on areas designated by the National Trust as worthy of their listing as Urban Conservation Areas, we wrote to the Director, Mr Morris as follows:

Dear Mr Morris,

IMPACT OF SECOND HARBOUR CROSSING ON BALMAIN/ BIRCHGROVE/ROZELLE CONSERVATION AREAS

The Sydney Morning Herald of 10 February 1982 reports that property resumption for the above scheme in the Balmain area would cost some \$89 million. The estimate has been prepared on nothing more than a broad outline of the landscape intended to be consumed by the Balmain end of the second crossing. It cannot therefore be regarded as accurate and in the final accounting would be found to err heavily on the conservative side. Many more millions of dollars will be required for an equitable resumption of these very valuable properties.

The Association is of course vitally concerned with fair and just compensation for future resumptions but we wish to make the point that there are a host of values far outside the confines of the valuer's prosaic calculation.

Over and above real estate valuation are the value of the loss of amenity and devastation of the environment on sites beyond the edge of the roadworks; within the threshold of intolerable traffic noise; under the winter shadow of tall structures; to say nothing of the interruption of some of the premier water views in the world.

Contemplation of the second harbour crossing places the future of many historic buildings, significant streetscapes and fine green spaces in jeopardy. Harbour foreshore preservation areas in our area will also be seriously affected.

Although the exact routes of the second crossing schemes are not known, the Association is able to make a preliminary statement of their impact upon the areas designated in the Trust's Leichhardt Urban Conservation Report, 1979:

- PROPOSAL No 1: The Transfield bridge landing at Balmain East
- PROPOSAL No 2: The Department of Main Roads bridge landing at Long Nose Point, Ballast Point, Colgate's factory
- PROPOSAL No 3: The DMR tunnel with approach works in Birchgrove and Rozelle
- PROPOSAL No 4: The Pioneer Concrete Industries tunnel with approach works in Rozelle

A. Proposals 1 and 2 affect the Evans Street/Darling Street/White Bay Classified Conservation Area numbered 3.3 in the above Report. The Peacock Point Classified Conservation Area, 3.4, is also affected.

B. Proposals 2 and 3 affect the Birchgrove Park Conservation Area, 3.5

C. Proposals 1, 2, 3 and 4 affect the Lilyfield/Easton Park Recorded Conservation Area, 4.4; and also the Rozelle Recorded Conservation Area, 4.5.

D. Harbour Foreshore Preservation Areas in Balmain East, Mort Bay, Snails Bay and Birchgrove are also affected.

In the absence of more detailed road plans, it is difficult to be specific about the number and quality of houses, streetscapes and parks affected within the above conservation areas. The Association's stance, however, is to aggressively resist all crossing schemes in any part of our district. We have made our position quite clear in our correspondence with the Minister for Roads that any attempt to reduce the present amenity will be met with the most positive opposition and widespread publicity.

We now seek your help in preserving National Trust designated areas and Balmain's heritage.

Yours sincerely *Peter Reynolds* PRESIDENT

THE MOVING EXHIBITION

BEEN LOOKING FOR THE PLANS AND MODELS OF THE SECOND CROSSING SCHEMES LATELY. WELL THEY ARE NOT IN DMR LAND ANY LONGER. THEY WERE LAST SEEN DOING THE ROUNDS OF HARBOUR-SIDE SUBURBS IN THE COUNCIL ADMIN OFFICES IN WETHERILL STREET, LEICHHARDT. THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN SEEN IN BALMAIN TOWN HALL BUT IT IS CLOSED FOR REPAIRS. GO AND SEE HOW YOUR HOME WILL BE DESTROYED AND WRITE TO MR WHELAN ABOUT IT; HIS ADDRESS IN 1 OXFORD STREET, DARLINGHURST, 2010.

Parramatta Park

The National Trust and the Friends of Parramatta Park are to be congratulated for the courage shown in their recent successful Land and Environment Court action to save Parramatta Park from degradation.

WRITING TO MR WHELAN AGAIN!

The Minister for Roads has replied to ours of 3 February (see News Sheet 117) in the, by now, usual way:

Dear Dr Reynolds

9 February 1982

I refer to your further letter of 3rd February 1982 regarding the Association's objection to the proposed second crossing of Sydney Harbour.

I do think it best for the "Second Harbour Bridge Crossing Enquiry Team" to handle all enquiries and views about the proposal, and, accordingly I am forwarding your further letter to the Enquiry Team for its (sic) consideration.

Yours sincerely Paul Whelan Minister for Roads and Consumer Affairs

What is the good of that! We want the Minister to answer our letter, to comment on the points raised and to come out into the open about the subject. Consequently, we wrote again:

Dear Mr Whelan

8 March 1982

Thank you for your prompt reply of 9 February. Once again I note that you have declined to take a stand and reply to the points raised in my letter of 2 February.

My Association sees no light at the end of the tunnel at all when you refer our just requests to the Enquiry Team - a group with interest vested in the things to which we wholeheartedly oppose.

Your Enquiry Team is no doubt well-versed in motor-cars per minute and width of traffic lanes but what we need is the attention of a group with some knowledge of human life and the consequences of such a mammoth incursion upon life as this proposed second crossing.

As you are unable, apparently, to make a statement on this will you set up a committee of responsible people to enquire into the social impact of the second harbour crossing on the people on both sides of the harbour. Engineers are capable of looking after construction matters but the needs of the people are well outside the terms of reference of your present Enquiry Team.

Yours sincerely

Peter Reynolds

PRESIDENT

MORT BAY, COCKATOO ISLAND AND BALMAIN

The latest strategy in the battle between the State and Federal Governments on the future of the Mort Bay site is one of barter - or you scratch my back and I will give you the old Balmain Power Station.

Premier Wran and Defence Minister Killen met on 11 February to thrash out the impasse. Mr Killen wants a Defence Dept depot on Mort Bay and Mr Wran wants the site for public open space and housing.

Mr Killen also wants the site as a base for servicing Cockatoo Island. Mr Wran thought that we would not mind his offering up the defunct Power Station next to Iron Cove bridge.

Well, we do mind because the site would make an excellent extension of the park on the western side of the bridge. It is also foreshore land and should be preserved on those grounds alone.

Let us make our point quite clear - Mort Bay site for as much open space as possible and the Balmain Power Station site for a foreshore park. There isn't really any impasse at all.

WHY ALL THE SECRECY ???

READ ALL ABOUT IT! HOW TO MAKE 1 000 MORE CARS
FIT INTO THE CITY IN 40 MINUTES###JUST SPEND
\$30 000 PER CAR AND BUILD ANOTHER HIGHLY DANGER-
OUS LANE ON THE BRIDGE*****

The Association has written to Mr J Morris, the Director of the National Trust, expressing our support for the Trust's efforts to prevent this proposed destruction of our cultural heritage:

Dear Mr Morris,

8 March 1982

The Association wishes to make known our condemnation of proposals by the Wran Government to add a motor-car lane to the Harbour Bridge road deck.

We feel that in 1982, the 50th anniversary of this engineering structure of world significance, efforts should be made to conserve rather than desecrate. The original concept is complete in itself and any addition or subtraction can only destroy that concept.

Through the efforts of Ted Mack MP, we learn that drawings for the extra lane are not freely available for public scrutiny. Any seriously considered change to this emblem of Australia should be placed before the public for free discussion.

The plans contain some alarming features which must be brought to light:

- 1 New walkway on east side to hang out 3 metres (10 feet)
- 2 New walkway only extends from pylon to pylon
- 3 To descend from the walkway the pedestrian turns in towards the bridge then climbs down 70 steps (equal to a four-storey building) inside the pylon to emerge on the bottom chord of the City-side approach trusses then to the Fitzroy Stairs.
- 4 This is repeated to descend upon the other side
- 5 The new steelwork for the walkway is crude and bears no resemblance to the elegance of the original structure
- 6 The access stairs in Burton Street Milsons Point will be disused
- 7 At present each archway of the east pylons takes one car lane and the old walkway
- 8 The new idea is to run two traffic lanes through the archways
- 9 Each lane will be a little more than 3 metres (10'4" in fact)
- 10 The DMR standard width is 12' 0"
- 11 Because of the tunnel effect of passing through the archways the lanes will be psychologically narrower
- 12 The lanes will be accident prone
- 13 The scheme will cost \$30 million and take five years to complete
- 14 Bradfield Park at Milsons Point will be the construction depot for five years
- 15 Bradfield Park is a Mecca for overseas tourists wanting to view the City.

Despite the waste of these vast funds we see cutbacks in government spending in social welfare, education and many other vulnerable areas.

Here \$30 million is to be spent for nothing more than to allow 1 000 more cars to reach the City on the morning 40 minute peak period. At \$30 000 per car, the proposal makes nonsense of the Wran Government's transport policy.

The Association will support the Trust in any move it makes to prevent this wilful despoliation of our national emblem. Our stand is quite clear - public funds must be spent on public transport and not upon the peak-hour motorist.

We look forward to hearing from you in this matter.

Yours sincerely *Peter Reynolds*, PRESIDENT

In this 50th year of the Bridge, Alderman Mack, North Sydney's Mayor, is trying to inject some sense into State Parliament's approach to desecrating the great coathanger with another lane.

It is an uphill battle. When he asked a simple question of Paul Whelan, Minister for Roads and Consumer Affairs, the Herald of 11 February recorded his answer as: *Mr Mack might have chosen to do something other than stirring the possum with the fistful of lies he has been peddling*".

It's lonely on the Bridge, Mr Whelan.

BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB

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Bulbs are easy to grow, with few pests, give bright spring colour and are especially good when mixed in with other plants.

SOIL PREPARATION: Add some compost or very old animal manure and a sprinkling of complete mixed general fertilizer. When putting in the bulbs, corms or tubers, it is a good idea to rest them on a little sand at the base of each one to aid drainage. Heavy soil will need addition of sand as they must drain freely.

SELECTION OF BULBS: Avoid very large ones because they may be old - while the small ones may take several seasons to flower, so select medium size ones. Most like a sunny position - the South African varieties such as ixias, sparaxias, babianas, freesias, lachenalias etc, do best in our climatic conditions. The following are usually readily available:

ANEMONE: (red, blue and white) - like a little lime. Plant one inch deep with the point downwards.

BABIANA: (red, blue and purple) - hardy, will stand some shade. Plant 2 inches deep.

BELLADONNA LILY: (mainly pink) - leave top above ground.

BULBINELLA: (yellow) - just cover crown with soil. Stands heat well.

DIERAMA: (fairy fishing rods) - plant 3 inches deep in drifts. Can be left for years.

FREESIAS: (many colours, good perfume) - very hardy and multiply profusely.

HIPPEASTRUM: (red or striped mostly) - Large bulb, good in pots outdoors. Leave neck of bulb well above ground.

IXIA: (many colours including teal blue) - long thin stems. Do not use as edgings.

LACHENALIA: (red or yellow) - makes good ribbon edging. Plant 2 inches deep and 4 inches apart.

JONQUILS: (white or yellow) - very hardy. Better than daffodils for our climate - no pests. Plant 3 inches deep.

LEUCOJUM: (snowflake) - white with green spots. Can take shade - very hardy. Leave to form large clumps.

RANUNCULAS: (many bright colours) - plant 2 inches deep with claws downwards. Are usually only for one season in this climate - April best for planting.

BRODIAE: (firecracker) - yellow and orange. Good in pots outdoors.

CAMASSIA: (blue) - plant 3 inches deep. Can stand wet conditions.

ORNITHOGALUM: (Arabs eye) - white, some with a black eye. Are often dyed colours by florists, by standing in jars of dye.

LYCORIS: (spider lily) - pink, red and white - plant near surface, are slower to establish. Leave undisturbed for some years.

SPARAXIS: (bright mixed colours) - plant 2 inches deep.

TRITONIAS: (mainly orange and red) - resembles a large freesia. Plant 3 inches deep.

DAFFODILS, TULIPS, HYACINTHS AND CROCUS: Usually only give results for one year in our climate, but if they are given one month in the crisper of your refrigerator, it may help to have cold conditions before planting.

ZEPHYRANTHES: (mainly white, rarely pink) - need full sun, foliage is evergreen - good border plants.

BULBS IN CONTAINERS FOR INDOORS: Container must be at least 3 inches deep. Bulb fibre can be bought or use clean garden soil. Put pieces of charcoal at bottom and also broken crocks.

Set medium sized bulbs (usually daffodils, hyacinths or lachenalias) in upright position, allowing a space about the width of a bulb between each. Also leave a space around the rim of container for watering.

Fill up container with dampened bulb fibre. Smooth pebbles can be on top. Container can either be plunged into ground outside in sheltered position or placed in airy cupboard. When shoots show above ground, place on window sill.

These bulbs cannot be used a further year but must be discarded as exhausted. — Jessica Murray

OBITUARY

Mrs Emilie Balmain of Bega died on 8 February, aged 85 years. Mrs Balmain was a good friend of the Association supplying us with much information about the Balmain family in Australia.

"Topsy" Balmain, as she was known, went to Bega in 1918 as a young schoolteacher, the first to be appointed to the secondary school. She married William Percival Hope Balmain in 1923.

"Billy Balmain of Bega" with his brother Arthur Hope Balmain founded Balmain Bros, known locally as "The Motor House", in 1909. Their idea was to link the coast with Cooma and Bombala. Not a great distance to be sure but because Brown Mountain sits up high in the Range, it was a most courageous task to accomplish.

Many freezing hours were spent at the wheel of their early motor-cars. Frequent stoppages had to be made while they leapt out with crow bar to clear a fallen tree of what was nothing more than a bush track. Icy, slippery roads and horse-drawn buggies coming in the opposite direction on narrow tracks meant ever-alertness on the part of the drivers.

Beginning with light cars such as the 14 hp Renaults and 12 hp Brasiers, Balmain Bros had a 35 hp Fiat specially modified for their trips across the mountains. The two brothers expanded these early successes into regular passenger services to many districts and founded the tourist coach business in the South Coast region.

Arthur Balmain was killed in a car smash in 1947 and William died at Bega in 1967. Balmain Bros still flourishes in Bega.

In the latter years of her life and despite her failing eyesight, "Topsy" Balmain was an exhibitor at the Royal Art Society and the Bega Art Society. Her finely crafted and extremely delicate flower paintings were always in great demand.

Mrs Balmain is survived by her son John, also an artist, and her daughters Anne and Judith.

Visit the Watch House

The Watch House, 179 Darling Street, is open to the public each Sunday afternoon between 2 00 pm and 4 00 pm. Admission is free.

COMBINED MEETING

1 MARCH 1982

- 1 Gladys Chanter, Frances Heathfield, Gary Lewin, Rod Linklater, Lorraine McDermott, Trish Ryan and Bruce Allen and Helen Styles from BRAG met at the Watch House at 7 30 pm.
- 1 Apologies, Ethel May, Margaret Dobson, Andrea Nield and Richard Norman.
- 2 Letter received from National Trust re Heritage Week Fair at Parramatta Park on Sunday 28 March.
- 3 From Leichhardt Council thanking us for our support for a and affirming their total opposition to the second crossing.
- 4 From Council re transfer of Clontarf to Housing Commission for restoration and reception of 16 aged persons units.
- 5 From Light Rail Association re meeting 3 March.
- 6 From Penny Ferguson JP re the Critcher System of transporting coal overland to Port Kembla.
- 7 Mrs K Sandblom re Banks family history.
- 8 From J Donovan, N Balwyn, Vic, re Quirk family history.
- 9 From Eileen Sams re Margaret Knight's being overseas.
- 10 From Owen Munn re "Atlantic Flash" sign on side wall of the Working Men's Institute - what does it mean?
- 11 From the Rose Family re annual gathering of the family.
- 12 From Min for Roads in reply to ours of 3 February
- 13 From Newcastle & Hunter District Historical Society re visit by coach on Saturday 6 November.
- 14 Letter to Herald re compensation for second crossing
- 15 To National Trust re impact of second crossing on its Urban Conservation Areas in Balmain area.
- 16 To Australian Heritage Commission re Hal Wise's news of discovery of another historic silo on Cockatoo Island.
- 17 To Mrs K Sandblom in answer.
- 18 To Mr J Donovan in answer.
- 19 To Mrs S Balmain Griffin, Texas, USA, enclosing books.
- 20 Stormwater drain at rear of cells now connected.
- 21 Work ready to start on new gate to Watch House fence.
- 22 Bruce Allen and Helen Styles reported on second crossing campaign. Bruce is BRAG chairperson.

Meeting closed at 10 00pm.

WATCH THESE DATES



1982 MEETINGS DIARY *****

To simplify arrangements for Management Meetings, General Meetings and History Meetings one meeting combining all these functions will be held on the first Monday of each month - public holidays excluded.

Monday	5 April	Monday	5 July
Monday	3 May	Monday	2 August
Monday	7 June	Monday	6 September
		Tuesday	5 October
		Monday	1 November
		Monday	6 December

Remember, first Monday in each month at the Watch House at 7 30 pm - ALL WELCOME.

The BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB meets every third Saturday in the month at the Watch House 179 Darling Street at 1 00 pm.

REPORT ON VILLAGE FAIR

Congratulations and thanks to all who helped with the Village Fair on 12 December. It was a great success, creating interest in Balmain and the Association, creating the opportunity for people to get together and creating many signatures for the ant-second crossing campaign.

Also created was a nice surplus of \$335.68 towards our very needy kitty.

It will be on again this year so get your ideas and offers of help together! Thanks to all again.

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome Patricia Durlacher, Paul and Elaine LeBlanc, J L Gray, Caroline Ralston and Gary Lewin.

JOIN the balmain association

meaning BALMAIN BIRCHGROVE ROZELLE

OUR AIMS ARE TO:

- * improve the living working and recreational amenity of our area
- * maintain all features having natural architectural and/or historical value
- * compile and record the history of the area/keep a permanent collection of items of historical interest
- * seek the co-operation of everyone concerned in the realization of the above

For further information please contact:

PETER REYNOLDS

827 3560

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the balmain association

AMENDED SUBSCRIPTION RATES

MEMBERSHIP FORM (OPEN/RENEW) PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE: (HOME) (WORK)

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (including News Sheet delivery in Balmain Birchgrove Rozelle)

Single	\$ 4.00
Family or Household	\$ 6.00
Pensioner or Student	\$ 1.00
Organization	\$12.00

Add \$3.00 to above rates to have News Sheet posted. Cheques made payable to "The Balmain Association" P.L.B. 8-2-82