

APRIL 1984

NEWS SHEET

137

PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

the balmain association

FOUNDED 1965

LEICHHARDT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The election of a new Leichhardt Council takes place on Saturday April 14th. In the past the Association has invited candidates standing for election to Council to address members of the Association and the people of Balmain in the Town Hall.

Considering the number of current members it was decided that a wider coverage could be achieved by way of the Association News Sheet.

This edition of the News Sheet goes out to 1,500 households in the Council Wards of Balmain and Rozelle.

If you are new to the area and not yet on the Electoral Roll then please make the necessary arrangements as soon as possible. If you are not yet members of the Association, then please join up - membership form on the back - it is not expensive and a very useful way by which to keep in touch with happenings in YOUR area that affect YOU! Talk to your neighbours about joining too!

At the last meeting of the Association, representatives of the Clontarf Park Action Group informed those present of recent developments on this matter and asked for renewed support from the Association for the furtherance of the aims of the Group.

The Association has been caught in a cleft stick with this matter - while always supporting the restoration of the building and formation of a public park on the surrounding land; the Association as a community association is not in a position to object in principle to Council's revised plan for a unit development for aged persons. However, the Management Committee in considering the community as a whole, is of the opinion that the Unit Density now proposed by the Housing Commission is not in the best interests of the community. More suitable land for this purpose looks like becoming available elsewhere in Balmain. Restoration of the Clontarf building for use as a pre-school is considered equally beneficial to the community. (Ryde Council did an excellent restoration job on the 'Willondra' property on the corner of Ryde and Victoria Roads.)

The following statement has since been received from the Clontarf Action Group:



CLONTARF PARK ACTION GROUP

56 22 adolphus st balmain 2041 ph 0106447

The CLONTARF PARK ACTION GROUP has approached the Balmain Association to renew its support for the campaign to save public open space in Adolphus Street Balmain. This new initiative was prompted by the recent announcement that the State Government will provide significant public housing on the old A.N.L. site at Mort Bay.

Our group was formed by local residents in February 1983 to oppose Leichhardt Council's plans to give a local park site over to the Housing Commission.

Because the site is derelict and unsightly many people failed to appreciate that it had long been set aside for parkland. (It was purchased specifically for this purpose in 1974 and successive councils had confirmed these plans).

Other people were reticent to speak out against a project that would help the aged.

As a result, although local opposition was intense, we failed to get the wider media coverage essential to influence political decisions.

The council in fact promoted the confusion and characterised us as rich trendies selfishly competing with old people for a vacant block of land. It was even prepared to compromise its own principals in order to secure the co-operation of the Housing Commission. Council's original proposal for 16 units soon became 22 units. The buildings contravene council's new Development Control Plan in height and bulk. Occupying almost 1/3 the length of Adolphus Street, the development cannot fit in with the present streetscape simply by the addition of colonial style verandahs.

Furthermore, although Council has approved plans for over 100 new townhouses in the immediate vicinity it is not concerned about traffic problems. The Housing Commission will be required to provide only 3 car spaces for 22 units.

If you had any doubts about the need to save this small Balmain park site we ask you to think again. The State Governments proposals for the A.N.L. site have answered the need for low cost housing in Balmain.

In the light of this development the C.P.A.G. has called upon Leichhardt Council to reconsider its decision and is asking Balmain residents to write to the council in support.

P.S. Council has rejected our call to save this Balmain parkland from development. This is a serious reversal of Labour council policy on parks and the environment, and it has now become an election issue. The fate of this park now rests entirely with Independent candidates who have all pledged to overturn the current Council's decision to abandon this local park.

Mindful of the Clontarf Issue, the Management Committee asked all candidates specifically to address this matter in their policy statements. The following letter was sent/delivered to all candidates. Policy statements received are reproduced unedited.

Dear Sir,

As you may be aware, the Balmain Association produces a monthly News Sheet as a service to its members. Whilst the charter of the Association is essentially non-political; as an Action Group and Community Watchdog, we are anxious to inform our members on what policies you would adopt, if elected, that would be for the betterment of the community generally, and of interest to our members.

In this regard you are invited to submit a brief outline of your policies for inclusion in our next News Sheet. This brief outline which should include your views on the proposed land use of the "Clontarf" site, should be limited to 200 words and should reach us by Friday 30th March 1984.

On behalf of the Association, I look forward to receiving your early reply.

Yours faithfully,

T. Begbie
Hon. Secretary

NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 2ND MAY 1984 AT 7.30 PM AT THE
WATCH HOUSE, 179 DARLING STREET, BALMAIN.

To: Hon. Secretary, The Balmain Association.

Thank you for your invitation to submit a short statement. If elected, I would aim to restore genuine public participation as pioneered in late 1971 when I was elected mayor; to end the anti-democratic "corporatism" now operating; to re-introduce on the Council Business Papers Finance Committee reports, letters and petitions, full reports on issues and applications with the necessary antecedent land use applications and decisions; elected persons to constitute the Council rather than paid servants of Council; to curb the all-pervading delegation of Council powers; to emphasise that State governments are the rivals and main enemies of democratic local government; to mount a public campaign against the government's town plan, capitulated to by the present Council after years of optimistic talkfests and costly unproductive advisers - a plan now ruining Balmain with over-development - antipathetic to the nature of the area, including its street system.

I have campaigned against the dying Council's robbing residents of their much valued LOCAL Open Space at Adolphus & Wallace Streets, after long negotiations without the residents' knowledge. One of my special interests will be to negate this usage and to again establish LOCAL Open Space as inalienable.

The Morts Bay land into Sydney Harbour National Park, if re-affirmed by citizens' democratic debate!

Yours faithfully,

N. ORIGLASS

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the opportunity afforded me to give a brief outline of my views as a candidate in Balmain Ward. I offer the following points:

1. No person should be supported for the position of alderman if he or she fails to adopt as a basic tenet of representation the guiding view which Nick Origlass and I have raised and operated under for many years, namely, PEOPLE COME FIRST.

If bureaucracy, government, big business or any other interest is permitted to supersede that simple requirement, then the people suffer and genuine local self-government will never be attained.

2. Germane to the first point is the essential need for a genuine OPEN COUNCIL: one in which the views of the community are sought, listened to and acted upon. The first real attempt at Open Council in New South Wales, was made during the first two years of Leichhardt's 1971-74 Council, when I sat as a Balmain alderman with Nick Origlass as Mayor.

Open Council must be strictly understood as a non-secretive Council. Decision-making (which under the present State laws, resides with the elected aldermen) must be carried out in public. Where matters are referred to committees, such committees should also be open to the public to hear what is going on and to participate in what is going on.

3. From the time in August 1974, when Nick Origlass and I were successful in convincing Council that the offer to purchase what was then known as Ward's Stoves property in Wallace Street (for \$75,000), I have remained firmly of the view that Clontarf should be retained and restored, and that the remainder of the land should be levelled and grassed and remain unfenced for local open space purposes. I still hold that view, despite what succeeding Councils since that date, have decided.

It is my view, too, that Balmain still requires more open space, and that opportunities for acquisition of land for open space purposes should not be hedged around with specious arguments allowing for higher density residential development in a district which is already over-developed in that regard.

Thus, the Dickson Primer land should have been retained as open space. And the whole of the Morts Dock land should have been made parkland. In both cases, Federal and State governments should have been pressed to make the land available to the Council for open space purposes. What is more, the Council should have opened a campaign to gain support from the community for the obvious open space demand.

4. It is my firm belief that a Council should alert the people to any threats to the environment, to the living area amenity and the Council should be prepared to open campaigns around issues affecting the municipal community or important sectors of it.

5. A major task awaits the incoming Council: to endeavour to restore the town planning concepts of 1971-74. To what extent those concepts have been emasculated, rubbished, destroyed, over the past ten years, requires early examination. To what extent Government can be persuaded, per medium of a campaign based on the principles of open council, people come first, etc., which I have briefly indicated here, to make town planning far more satisfactory in Leichhardt, will require early action.

It is hoped that a majority of those who comprise the incoming Council after April 14th, will hold views similar to those set out briefly here.

Yours faithfully,

I. WYNER

I am writing on behalf of Damian Cobley-Finch and myself in response to your invitation to outline our policies for the Balmain Association membership.

You will notice (from the enclosed leaflet) that Damian and I both have strong social welfare backgrounds, and I am a town planner as well. We would work solidly to develop the welfare programme planned by the Council. This is not to say that the Council should put money into welfare, but rather that it should plan welfare & community services, especially services for young people, the elderly and single parents. Child care is a very high priority. We are both experienced in the 'grantmanship' business and have excellent contacts in state and Commonwealth Government funding agencies. The case needs to be put strongly for the municipality to receive Government funding for new services and we are well equipped to undertake this task.

Damian is now responsible, as chairman of the Leichhardt Community Youth Association for managing a \$600,000 budget for unemployment relief programmes. He is a skilled counsellor and an excellent advocate for the youth needs of the area and is directly involved in youth services.

I am a strong supporter of community housing in local government, and, in fact am the founder of the Local Government Housing Initiatives Programme and the Community Tenancy scheme. These are both programmes requiring the active co-operation of local Government, but not its funds, for housing programmes for pensioners and low income people. Your Association will of course be aware of, and concerned about the problems now being faced by low income tenants in Balmain, especially the elderly.

Damian and I are both in favour of the Clontarf site being used for elderly persons housing. The Council's alternative open space acquisitions in the immediate vicinity adequately replace the Clontarf site and it is our view that work should commence immediately on improving the Union Street site with the hard courts, hard play space and landscaping promised to the residents, and accessible to residents living adjacent to Clontarf.

We are aware, however that a few people have been directly disadvantaged in their home purchases through receiving incorrect information from the Council concerning the zoning and proposed use of the site. We consider that residents were not sufficiently well-advised of the Council's intentions and that in future, any re-zoning of any land in the municipality should be undertaken in full consultation with residents and other affected parties. We deeply regret the impact of the neglect of this consultative process on the people affected.

You may be aware that I have been involved for many years in the town planning issues in this municipality. My submitted objection to the 1979 Town Plan was adopted by the Balmain branch of the ALP and provided a basis for negotiation with the Department of Environment & Planning. My report, in addition, of course, to opposition high rise redevelopment, described a number of policy areas to be addressed by Council, including open space, historic preservation, transport and employment/commercial and industrial use. It is my view that Council should be taking a more wholistic view of the area's development, and should be using its extensive planning and managerial resources to improve the amenity of the area, its historic integrity and its services to residents.

Residents of this area quite rightly demand a high level of service from the Council. They want streets to be clean, refuse removed frequently and with the minimum of interference. We consider that every effort should be made to keep rates down, bearing in mind the need to maintain a good level of service.

I think that local government's potential is extremely underestimated. The progressive policies I have plotted in housing, transport, energy and employment have demonstrated to me that Councils can play a much larger role in the community than their traditional role - roads, rates and rubbish. Moreover, this broader role can be undertaken without putting additional costs onto the ratepayer. Damian and I intend to get the Council to apply, for instance, for funds from the Community Employment Programme for the historic preservation of important buildings and streetscapes. We would very much appreciate the support of the Balmain Association in this, and would like to discuss it with you further.

A final point is our commitment to open council. We will seek to reverse the Council's current policy on non-resident participation in council committees. We accept that there are some staffing matters which are not properly discussed in open forum, but this is the small minority of council business. We are strongly in favour of resident participation in council committees and will work to change Council policy on this matter.

Damian and I would welcome the opportunity to discuss any of the issues raised here, or any other issues the Balmain Association would like to discuss. Thank you for inviting us to describe our approach to you.

Yours sincerely,

SANDY HALLEY

Thank you for your letter of 16th March. Later in our campaign we shall be distributing a detailed Policy Statement which includes, as a high priority, the retention of all existing open space within the municipality and the introduction of a zoning or reservation to encourage the provision of housing for low income earners.

In relation to "Clontarf" we understand the open space zoning has existed for many years. Council moves to rezone the land for housing are a slap in the face to the community in general and a very real blow to adjacent owners, rich and poor alike. If elected we will raise our voices against the sale of the land to the Housing Commission, we will press for the retention of the open space zoning, we will with the involvement of the community see sufficient funds raised to restore "Clontarf" for community uses and we will guarantee that not one inch of open space will be sold, given away or developed for sectional interest anywhere in the municipality.

A rising tide of public opinion and even legal action has failed to convince our outgoing civic fathers that low income housing and open space are two separate issues. We believe any attempt to stick a band-aid on one at the expense of the other will be seen by the electorate as political suicide.

Thank you for your invitation.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN SANGWELL

PAT KENNEDY

The following policy statement has been received from Margaret Lyons B.Sc. Dip. Ac. who has lived in the Municipality since 1972 apart from some time spent in Melbourne ...

Having always lived in inner city areas, I am well acquainted with problems of traffic congestion, air and noise pollution, insufficient open space and understand the need to control all development to protect the rights of residents. My particular interests include improving our environment and extending services to the disadvantaged. I will investigate and implement new programmes for cleaning streets more thoroughly, and controlling dogs more effectively. I

will continue the tree planting programme for those residents who request trees in their street. Road and footpath repair programmes need to be streamlined so that problems are fixed more quickly.

Child care, services for the lone parent, the unemployed and our Senior Citizens are essential tasks for a responsible Council. I am particularly keen to extend these services by ensuring that adequate State and Federal funding is provided to meet our community's needs.

The Leichhardt Town Plan sets an excellent standard for development in our municipality. I am enthusiastic to see it implemented and will seek means of extending Council's power to preserve historic buildings and precincts. Liaising with the National Trust and lobbying to have buildings and precincts listed by the Heritage Council is important especially for Rozelle and I am most concerned that Council increase its efforts in this task.

I am a firm supporter of low income housing within the municipality, to stop the drift of disadvantaged and elderly away from the suburbs they have always lived in. The "Clontarf" site is ideal for a small Senior Citizens complex integrated into an established residential area - not thrust away out of sight or insensitively placed far from transport, shops, services and friendly neighbours. With the large park at White Bay just around the corner established 2 years ago, the area has greater need for a Community Centre which the Housing Commission proposal will provide. The Pensioner groups of Balmain welcome the proposal as do many others who have not been as noisy as the few objectors, who basically - although their motives are disguised - only want a park next door to them to improve their land values and their own life style.

The following policy statement has been received by Robert Heffernan J.P.

I have been a Rozelle resident for over 40 years and was elected alderman 3 times for a total of 9 years. My experience has been considerable in the fields of Community Services, Parks and Playing Areas, Environment protection and Maritime issues. I am currently a member of many local clubs and am President of the Rozelle Branch of the Australian Labor Party.

When on Council, I will work as part of the Labor Team to make sure the character of the municipality is maintained and that development is controlled to protect the rights of residents.

I will seek ways of improving street cleaning and garbage disposal. We also need to control pollution from factories without driving industry and employment opportunities out of the area.

As an alderman, I extended services for old people including establishing the Harrie S. Hannaford Senior Citizens Centre and the Council bus. I will continue this commitment. I support the full rebate for pensioners. I support low income housing for our Senior Citizens. It is important this housing is in Balmain where so many have lived all their lives. The Clontarf site, where the Housing Commission is building units and doing up the old building as a Community Centre, is ideal as it is in the community that the old folk know. It is close to transport, services, and to the big new park at White Bay. It is too small for a park and is bounded by streets. Other areas in the municipality must be given more open space as a priority, as they have far less than Balmain. Existing parks need to be upgraded. As a supporter of junior sport in the municipality, I have always worked to meet the needs of our local groups and will continue to do so. I also support the acquisition of passive open space particularly in areas where there is not enough.

I believe my vast experience and good track record will help the Council. I will support residents having their say on Council matters and will always be ready to listen to their point of view and assist where ever I can.

NOTE

The views expressed in these statements are not necessarily the views of the Balmain Association nor of its members.

PETITE DANCE THEATRE CO.

The Association has recently received an offer of assistance from the Petite Dance Theatre Co. to perform at one of our fund-raising functions. This Theatre Co. has had a great deal of experience in performing for "Family Fair Days" and Carnivals and last year they danced for the "Banjo Patterson House Fair Day". Their offer is greatly appreciated and the Balmain Association looks forward to the opportunity when their offer of assistance can be taken up at a future fund-raising function.

14TH APRIL

This will be Council Election day, and when everyone is out in the streets to vote they will have somewhere to call in for Devonshire tea, or wine and cheese (according to 'taste'). This is the date of our next OPEN DAY when we will be displaying pictures and photographs borrowed from the Leichhardt Council. Some will need to be identified, and you are asked to tell us what you know about them. We look forward to seeing you - between 11.30 am and 4.30 pm.

We never have enough time to record the interesting things that people remember about early Balmain, or about themselves. On the 14th April we will have some people ready to listen and some tapes for recording. Please bring your friends and your reminiscences.

The "Maintain Balmain Group" is invited to attend our meetings so that we may assist each other.

LEICHARDT BI-CENTENNIAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Balmain Association attends these meetings approximately every six weeks. One of the positive proposals at the meetings (which discusses many diverse interests) is the making of Walks maps and tours of the Leichhardt Municipality, taking into consideration what are suitable, or unsuitable for Disabled people.

WANTED

Volunteers to help on Saturday 14th April. Please ring 818 2307 (Frances Heathfield) any evening or weekend.

WANTED AGAIN

Volunteers for the Watch House roster.

THE WATCH HOUSE

Please tell your friends that from the first weekend in May, the Watch House will be open from 1 pm to 3 pm on SATURDAYS.

For three and a half years the Sunday openings have been reasonably successful in attracting visitors and acquainting them with the Balmain Association. Many have returned, bought our literature, and helped us in different ways.

During the last month, Robert Brown from St. Bartholomew's Preservation Committee - Prospect, brought 50 people to tour Balmain and visit the Watch House; and tours from other groups are being arranged for the next months.

We are changing the day to Saturday because people who travel by ferry may take advantage of the service, visit the Watch House, and walk to or from the Markets. We hope to attract people who would not normally come to Balmain on Sundays.

REMEMBER the change of times with the change of day.

HISTORIC JOADJA VILLAGE

To whom it may concern: I am trying to retrace the families who once lived at Joadja Creek with the hope of writing a book on the history of the Valley, both the working and family side of the township, and I need your help to make it factual. If possible can you please furnish any of the following information regarding your family and their time spent at Joadja Creek. PLEASE no matter how little you may have to offer please contact me, as it may be something we do not have, and it could be important.

Thanking you in anticipation,

Leonie Knapman (Dunwell)

Surname Husband
 Wife Children
 Year of Arrival
 Year of Leaving
 Occupation in Valley
 Do you have any further information which you are willing to share?
 Photo's?
 Written information (Certificates, etc) ?
 Newspapers, letters ?
 Can I contact you further for assistance?

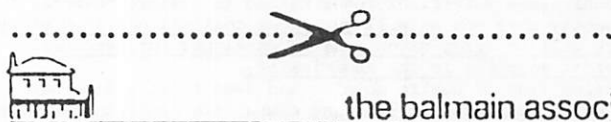
Please reply to: LEONIE KNAPMAN
 59 Regent St.
 MITTAGONG N.S.W. 2575
 Tel: 048 711 804

JOIN the balmain association

meaning DALMAIN 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



the balmain association

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

NAME:

ADDRESS:

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

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