

PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

20th anniversary year
NEWS SHEET
the balmain association

JUNE 1985

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143

FOUNDED 1965

HELICOPTERS - WHERE ARE THEY GOING?

In recent weeks residents interested in the effect on our suburb of the Darling Harbour Heliport have had letters printed in both The Sydney Morning Herald on 27 April 1985 and The Sun newspapers on 28 April 1985. What interests the Balmain Association is the proposition of a movement of the Heliport to Pier 15 closer to the Balmain peninsula. We are concerned with the existing problem of noise pollution from these low flying aircraft, with the use of flight paths over the Balmain area and the safety of local residents.

Movement of helicopter operations closer to this municipality will only serve to amplify the problem. The proposed site of Pier 15 is approximately 475 metres from the nearest Balmain residence. The Association questions the advisability of placing residents in closer contact with these aircraft during the loudest phase of operations, that is the take off and landing.

Helicopters are required to comply with instructions to restrict take offs and landings via the southern pylon of the Harbour Bridge. Nevertheless, approach and take off paths sometimes vary depending upon the prevailing winds, air traffic control instructions and the nature of the intended operation. In addition activities within a control zone are subject to frequent operational changes for one reason or another.

It is clearly the Department of Aviation's responsibility to maintain and set safety standards. We feel that whenever and wherever possible the flight paths of aircraft should be distanced from residential areas. Conventional fixed wing aircraft are often able to glide to an open space crash landing point and usually fly over our suburbs at a height of 4000 ft. according to one Mascot operator. Helicopters are seldom given the same opportunity usually flying at 1000 ft. The lack of open space in this area compared with other areas is already topical. Less open space could mean that both our built-up areas and waterways are more exposed to the danger of potential crash landings in any case.

This is not to say that helicopters do not serve the community by way of the Police, Emergency Services and the Surf Rescue Squad, who have proven the worthwhile attributes of the aircraft. On the contrary there are acceptable risks which are worthwhile and appear occasionally. This is part of the growing phase of the city's redevelopment which could be put on the correct path if proper attention to detail is given by the Authorities. Larger cities overseas have sited their helipads on top of suitably safe buildings. Restrictions are such that in this country it is virtually impossible to obtain permission from the Department to land on tops of buildings. Helicopters using Darling Harbour Heliport do so as a measure of convenience which would only be enhanced by providing facilities within or close to the city perimeter on top of buildings.

Helicopters using Darling Harbour Heliport do so as a measure of convenience which would only be enhanced by providing facilities within or close to the city perimeter on top of buildings. Why move further towards the suburbs adding to noise and pollution and furthermore distance essential services from the central business district.

A member of the Association, resident in Balmain, wrote to the Department of Aviation on 6 August 1984 concerning the existing noise and safety requirements. A reply from the Department stated:

"There are strict requirements for helicopters taking-off and landing at Darling Harbour. Such operations involve a climb and descent phase and in an effort to minimise noise nuisance, operating companies have been instructed to restrict these phases of their operation to over the southern pylon of the Harbour Bridge. Helicopters taking off or landing at Darling Harbour do not fly over your residence or any other residential area."

Observing flights to the contrary the resident again wrote to the Department in February this year asking them to "take action to ensure that requirements, which are obviously intended to protect us and minimise nuisance, are not flouted".

The Department replied by letter on 9 April 1985 which showed a change in policy towards both flight paths and resultant noise nuisance by stating:

"You have indicated that helicopters taking off and landing at Darling Harbour fly over your residence. However, you don't specify the altitude at which you estimate these flights take place. Helicopters frequently fly over populous areas throughout Australia at heights ranging from 1000 feet and above. In normal circumstances, by the time a helicopter reaches Balmain after taking off from Darling Harbour, it would be operating at a typical cruising altitude of 1000 feet above terrain. At this height, the pilot of the helicopter has adequate time in which to select a safe area for an autorotative descent and landing, should an emergency make that necessary. You may recall that of the helicopter accidents which have occurred in the Sydney metropolitan area recently, all of the machines involved have landed in clear areas and have not endangered residents or bystanders." Further on the letter stated "In general, I believe that the majority of helicopters have been able to comply with our instruction to restrict take offs and landings via the southern pylon of the Harbour Bridge."

With regard to safety, I can assure you that there is no added danger of a mid-air collision, if the above instruction is not complied with. Helicopter movements, including their separation from other traffic are constantly controlled by Sydney Air Traffic Control with the assistance of radar. A safer system than this has yet to be devised."

NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY 5TH JUNE, 1985
7.30 P.M. AT THE WATCH HOUSE, 179 DARLING STREET, BALMAIN

The detrimental effect on our lifestyle from the proposed future site of the Heliport should be seriously considered and it is NOW that action be taken and opinions expressed to prevent a MINI MASCOT at Pier 15. Helicopters are highly expensive machines to own and operate, and in time will grow in size and use by commuters and business people travelling to the city. The people who operate them have the resources to go almost anywhere anytime, and it is the view of the Association that helicopters go no longer or further towards this area until such time as the results of the Environmental Impact Study of all existing flights over our area and any new proposal has been carefully studied by concerned resident groups.

Should members of the Association wish to express their opinions about present or possible future noise pollution or their concern about safety regulations connected with helicopter movements, write to or telephone any of the following organisations:

The Regional Director
Dept. of Aviation
P.O. Box 409
HAYMARKET 2000 TEL:2114570

State Pollution Control
Commission
TEL:2660661
After 5 pm & weekends
TEL:2675152

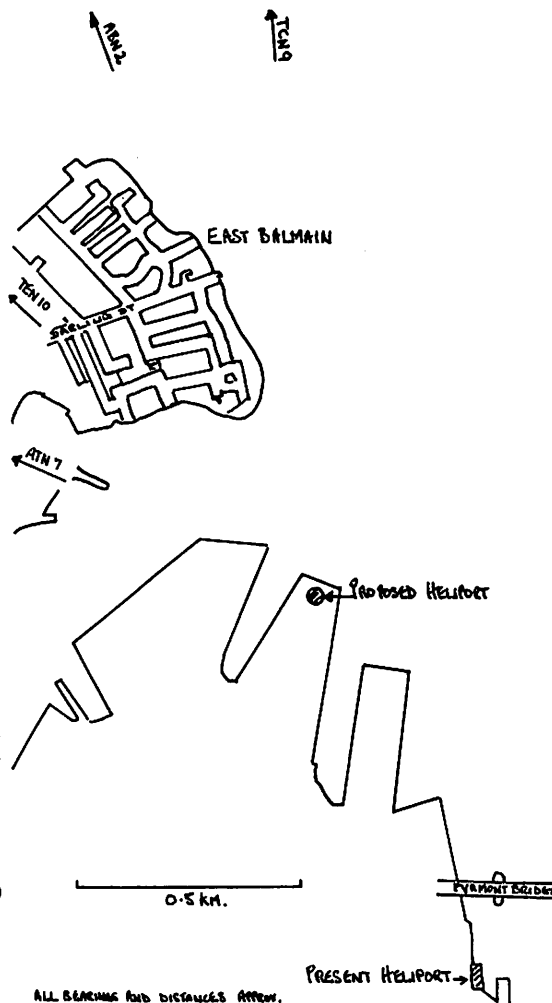
NATIONAL TRUST REAL ESTATE SERVICE

The National Trust of Australia (New South Wales) established a Real Estate Service in 1979 to assist vendors and potential purchasers of historic/architecturally interesting buildings. Its aim being to sell properties to people who will care for them.

The Real Estate Service specialises in Federation and Victorian houses, which do not necessarily have to be in good state of repair, as some of their purchasers require run - down properties to restore.

Properties placed with the National Trust Real Estate Service are sold in conjunction with a local agent, sharing the commission. The National Trust Real Estate Service undertakes to market the property with the local agent, who is required to handle the inspections.

Each property placed with the National Trust Real Estate Service has an architectural assessment made on it, and this is of great assistance in



presenting and marketing the property, illuminating the special qualities of the house. This is sent to people on a special mailing list. The property is also featured in the National Trust Magazine. Details of the property are displayed in the entrance hall to the National Trust Head Office at Observatory Hill, various National Trust shops in Sydney and at Old Government House, Parramatta.

People can list their property for sale with the Real Estate Service for the subsidised fee of \$150, and receive all the above benefits.

Prospective purchasers complete a small registration form, and for \$10 receive architectural assessments for a year, matching up their requirements with properties placed for sale with the Real Estate Service.

For more information about the Real Estate Service, please contact Mark O'Neill, Real Estate Officer, The National Trust of Australia (New South Wales), on (02) 27 5374.

THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA
(NEW SOUTH WALES).

"HISTORY - "CHARGED AGAIN".

A uniformed policeman once again appeared behind the charge desk of the Watch House on Saturday, 20 April, and prisoners were once again placed in the cells. P.C. Norman Bull charged some 12 people with crimes varying from drunk and disorderly to theft of a horse in the course of the Heritage Week celebrations. (It has to be admitted that one of the prisoners in turn charged P.C. Bull with drinking on duty!).

At the same time, on the first floor, two Osborne computer operators were busily entering details of Balmain history and residents as part of a project to place all the Association's records on computer discs, and to add to these regularly. (One would hasten to add that this project is still very much in its infancy as the Committee is still working on the formats of how best to enter the mass of information the Balmain Association has in its possession.)

Those recently freed from cells or innocent of charges refreshed themselves with tea and scones provided by Jessie McMahon, a former occupant of the Watch House (when it was used as a police residence), or sipped wine and ate cheese in the garden as the sun shone down. A special thanks to Jessie and Laurine Gaskell who always respond so well to our call for assistance.

We were luckier with our weather than the Heritage Week celebrants the next day, and were delighted that about 60 people came to the Watch House for the occasion. Hopefully next year even more people will take part.

In this connection, we are anxious to have a 19th century policeman's uniform for permanent use. Does anyone:

- * have a picture of a policeman in uniform dated anywhere between 1854 and 1900?
- * have a garment which might be converted to a policeman's uniform?
- * know of a seamstress who might, provided with the materials, copy the uniform for us?
- * have access to a store dummy which could be permanently dressed in the uniform at the Watch House when we do not have a special occasion for someone to wear it?

If the answer to any of the above is "YES", please get in touch with Debby Nicholls on 810-7391 (after working hours).

IF

IF "Balmain" was a swinging seat
MORT BAY would be a public park.

IF Bob Carr (Minister for Planning and Environment) lived in Balmain, by his own admission he would fight for Mort Bay to be a public park.

IF (the late) Paul Landa (MLA) was still the Minister for Planning and Environment, by his own initiative and press statement of 28/10/79, Mort Bay would be a public park.

IF the future of the publicly owned land was not influenced by politicians or vested interests, Mort Bay would be a public park.

(REMEMBER - we the public already own it.)

IF all those thousands of Mort's Dock workers before us, who shed blood sweat and tears struggling to support their families, were given a voice today; they would declare solidarity and demand that Mort Bay be returned to the people in recognition of their labours in helping build the Australia we know today.

The people of Balmain have for years paid the price of suffering waterfront industry, right up to the advent of containerisation.

Through all of this they have supported if not started the struggles of the working class unions, and helped lay the foundations of the A.L.P.

Yet after all that sacrifice and in many cases years of blind devotion, ironically the main obstacle standing in the way of Mort Bay being returned to the people is the A.L.P.

In Leichhardt Ward we have the lowest open space ratio of any Ward in the Municipality. However, we believe the Mort Bay site to be of such regional significance for all the people of Sydney that we offer you and your Ward Aldermen our full support.

We urge you all to "maintain the rage" and compel that fearless campaigner to return to the people a part of the heritage he so often declares he is part of.

ALD. DOUG SPEDDING
ALD. CAROL McVEIGH

INDEPENDENT LEIGHHARDT

FOOD

for

THOUGHT

On Sunday, 19th May 1985, after attending the 100th year turn-out for "Balmain Hospital" came the realisation that, like everything that happens in Balmain - nothing actually happens in Balmain!

To start with - Balmain's Football Club is in Rozelle and they train and play at Leichhardt; the Balmain R.S.L. Netball teams play at Concord; the Balmain Little Athletes run in Rozelle; and the Balmain Police Boys play football in Rozelle.

So, here was a fun run and small fair in Rozelle for a event that should have taken place in Balmain!

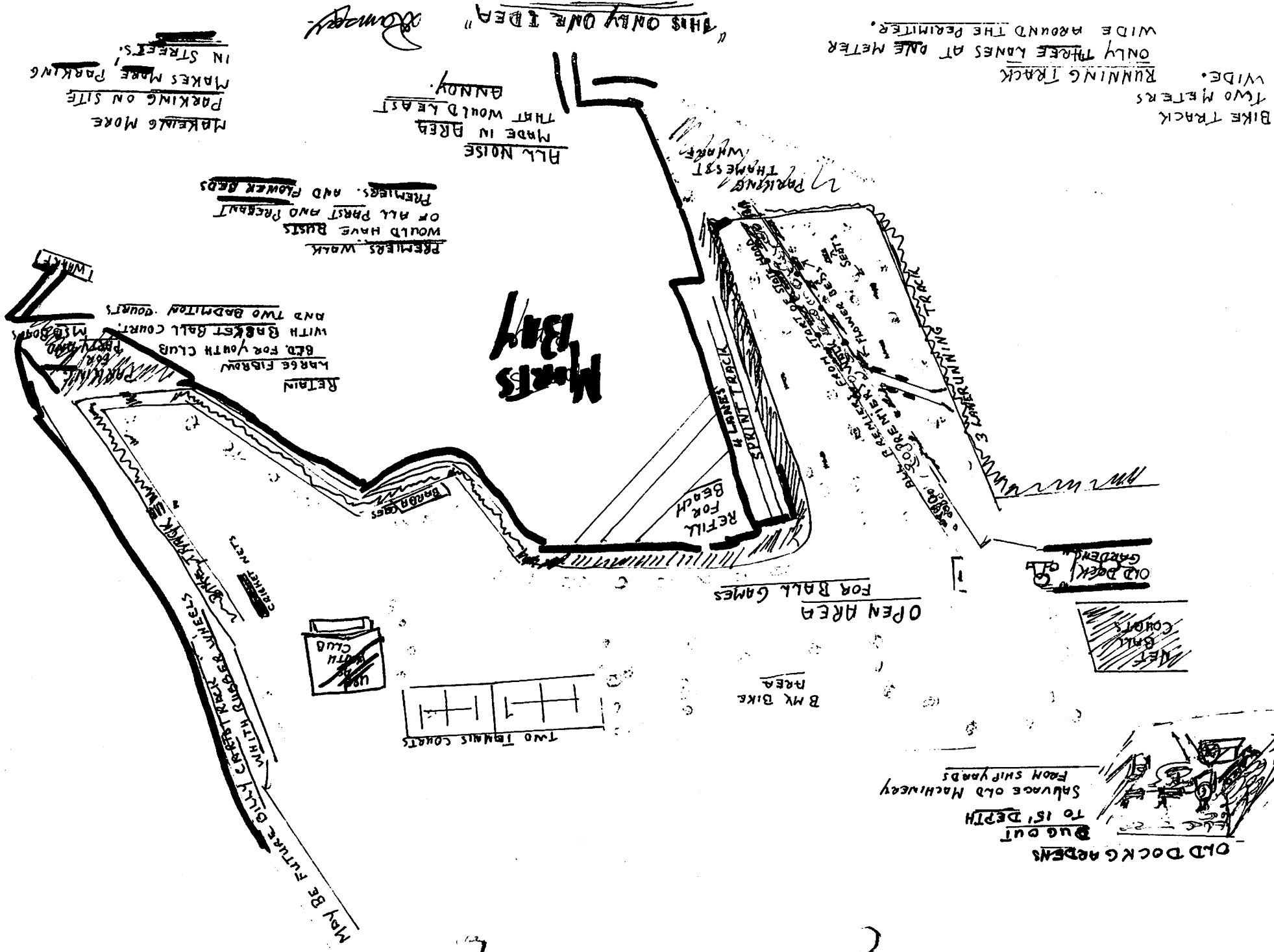
Are the streets and the traffic so bad that the fun run could not be held here in Balmain, OR is it the lack of public open parks? What available areas are so small that they would not have been able to put up the Hot Air Balloon.

Balmain is getting as over-developed as our City across the water. Sydney has to have the rail yards pulled down to put up something to celebrate its "getting older". Perhaps due to lack of space our old "Balmain boy", like us, may have to celebrate the City's Centennial in another place like "Melbourne".

Shouldn't we have "Morts Dock" as a park in which Balmain could celebrate - every day! I mean a proper public park to which everyone would have access and could enjoy. Not an oval with fences to keep people out but an area where our Balmain Clubs and Teams could practise and play sports, children could throw balls and run about, people could jog, walk a while or just sit and enjoy our Harbour on what is left of Sydney's dwindling foreshores!

A PARK FOR BALMAIN WHERE BALMAIN
ACTIVITIES COULD TAKE PLACE!

DAVID RAMSEY



MORT BAY

HAVE YOU HAD YOUR SAY?

Members of the Balmain Association Management Committee attended the Leichhardt Council meeting on 23 April, 1985. They hoped to find out why the Association's previous correspondence has not been answered. The last letter had contained specific questions concerning the proposals for the development of Mort Bay. This letter had also been read out at the Public Meeting at Balmain Town Hall. The Council chose to ignore not only our correspondence but also the residents' representations on traffic and open space. The Mort Bay speakers were gagged, except for David Ramsey, whose positive proposals for the use of a park are shown on the map enclosed.

Speaking at Council meetings proves to be an exercise in futility. The majority of Councillors represent only one Government party and are deaf to all but their caucus decision. Quite unperturbed by the large number of people who waited until nearly 11 p.m. to have their well-known cause pleaded, the Council made a decision which will lead to HIGHER TRAFFIC density; INCREASED noise, air and visual POLLUTION, and a further squeeze on commercial and residential parking. All of this will create a greater need for open space in Balmain.

Mort Bay is one of the last foreshore areas of Balmain which could serve the community in all age groups, and provide access to the beauty of the Harbour. We must retain this area and prevent all irresponsible social planning.

We are sensitive to the needs of homeless people who hope for Housing Commission dwellings to be built in Balmain - but not in Mort Bay. If there were no evidence of deals with private speculators, we might believe that the proposed buildings there resulted from a sincere policy, but in this municipality any bus traveller can see the neglected estate in Glebe which has failed for many years to serve the expected purpose of housing the homeless.

As there is a real need to construct Housing Commission homes, the site of the Balmain Power Station is an obvious choice. It is waterfront land. It is close to transport. It is close to shopping and schools. Construction workers have easy access, and traffic would not need to be disrupted. The site would be appropriate for a large number of buildings which would be far more

attractive than the redundant Power House. A wharf at the bottom of the site could provide access by ferry to Birkenhead Point, to everybody's advantage.

At present the plans of the Council have gone to the Minister for Environment and Planning. Are you concerned?? If so, spend a few minutes and two stamps to write to the Mayor of Leichhardt and the Minister of Environment & Planning. The future depends on the efforts of all of us!

MORT'S DOCK

Origins and Changes BALMAIN PLACES-1

Peter Reynolds



MORT'S DOCK IN 1905



Architectural History Research Unit
Graduate School of the Built Environment
Faculty of Architecture
University of New South Wales

PUBLICATIONS

The Architectural History Research Unit of the University of New South Wales intends to publish a series of inexpensive leaflets - "Balmain Places".

The first leaflet now available is Mort's Dock, Origins and Changes. The publication of this leaflet couldn't have come at a better time since the words "Mort's Dock" are on everyone's lips in Balmain at the present time.

The Mort's Dock leaflet is currently available at The Watch House, 179 Darling Street, Balmain (open on Saturdays between 1pm to 3 pm; and at Bray's Book Shop in Darling Street.

A PLETHORA OF PYROTECHNICS



CLONTARF PARK ACTION GROUP

CLONTARF PARK ACTION GROUP will be continuing their tradition of two years by having what they call their

"BONFIRE, BARBECUE AND FIREWORK DISPLAY"

The event will be held on the 8th June and starts at sundown.....

Food and a glass of wine will be supplied.

BIRCHGROVE SCHOOL is holding on the 8th June

"A FIREWORKS DISPLAY"

from 5.30 p.m. to 7.30 p.m. in the grounds of the school. There will be entertainment before the Display which will take place at 6.30 p.m. and sausages, cakes, buns etc., will be available for sale.

Contact Carolyn Allen (tel: 818 3185) for tickets, which may also be purchased at the school on the actual night. Cost is \$5 per family, or \$2 for an adult and \$1 for a child. No children will be admitted without an adult.



**MORT BAY
ACTION GROUP**

MORT BAY ACTION GROUP will be holding:

"A CRACKER NIGHT"

on the 8th June to start at dusk and includes a sausage-sizzle. It should be fun - with a couple of surprises in store for people!

Everyone is invited. The last event however is liable to last a bit longer, so why not visit all of them? Kick along to Mort Bay for the finale; for a possible late night.

This is your suburb, your community. Meet the people who live in the area, and get to know them.



BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB.



LAVENDULA (LAVENDER)

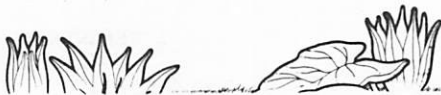
A Lavender bush is an ideal small shrub for cottage gardens, and has been grown as such for many centuries. It is thought to have been brought to Britain by the Romans, who took plants all over the then-known world. An old Herbal Book of about 1500 A.D. mentioned boiling up the blooms and leaves, and after washing and drying clothing, recommended soaking the clothing in the solution and then re-drying for a lasting perfume.

Lavender is the main basis for all pot-pourris. After stripping off leaves and blooms, place them in a dish in an airy window that does not get direct sun and stir occasionally. Should dry in about two weeks. Even the twigs can be tied in bundles and will burn slowly like incense. Oil of Lavender can be used as a rub for aches and pains.

There are many varieties of lavender. Perhaps the hardiest and neatest bush is the so-called French Lavender (Dentata). The English Lavender makes a big sprawling bush, highly perfumed, and produces the famous Mitcham Lavender scent. There are many sub-varieties of the English type. I would not recommend the Rosea, though it is a lovely soft pink, like mushroom gills, but it is finicky. Another one to avoid is the so-called green lavender with lime-green foliage and white flowers. A fairly strong grower is the Italian Lavender, with finely cut foliage and deep purple flowers. All types grow easily from cuttings, kept fairly dry, and shaded until rooted.

Lavender originated on the shores of the Mediterranean, Asia Minor and North Africa, and several types are found in Arabian deserts. This all gives a hint of the conditions suitable for growing. Lavender likes light sandy soil, full sun, fairly dry conditions, only a little fertiliser and grows well near the sea. Few diseases or pests. Keep dead flowers picked off and it should flower most of the year. The plant can be given a light trim to make it tidy. Do not cut into the hard wood. Sometimes dies suddenly, usually from over-watering or after a prolonged rainy spell, as these plants abhor wet feet. But if conditions suit, it can be long-lived. I have in mind a bush of French Lavender at Coogee, 30 years old, surviving in almost pure sand, complete neglected, only watered by rain, and salty sea air. Perhaps now getting rather woody, but still producing masses of flowers.

JESSICA MURRAY.



THE BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB

"Doe men proyne the straight yong bowes that blush with thousand blossoms". (A quotation from Two Noble Kings, Chapter III, vi 242, written in 1612)

The Balmain Garden Club will be holding a rose pruning demonstration on Saturday 15th June at 2.00 p.m., at 1 Rose Street, Birchgrove 2041.

On the 21 July 1985, at 2.30 p.m., Mr. Bissett, well-known nursery man and entertaining speaker, will be giving a talk at the Watch House on "Care of Plants in Pots in Winter".

OF NOTE TO LOCAL GENEALOGISTS

The Leichhardt Municipal Library at 64 Renwick Street, Leichhardt holds microfiche copies of the civil registration "Pre-1900 Indexes to Births, Deaths and Marriages in New South Wales". There are now some 68 public record centres in New South Wales known to be holding copies of the index.

ATTENTION

The dismantling of Storey & Keers in Louisa Road is currently taking place. Macgregor Navire Australia Pty Ltd, facing Snails Bay, is also up for sale. What will replace them?

MORE TOWNHOUSES?!
MORE TRAFFIC!

THE WATCH HOUSE CONSERVATION PLAN

The Association is pleased to announce the forthcoming completion of the Conservation Plan for the Watch House by Meredith Walker. This exercise has been necessary in order to implement repairs and general conservation of the Watch House; together with plans and possible ideas as to how best to utilise the Watch House in the best interests of the community.

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



the balmain association

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"