

20th anniversary year NEWS SHEET

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PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

the balmain association

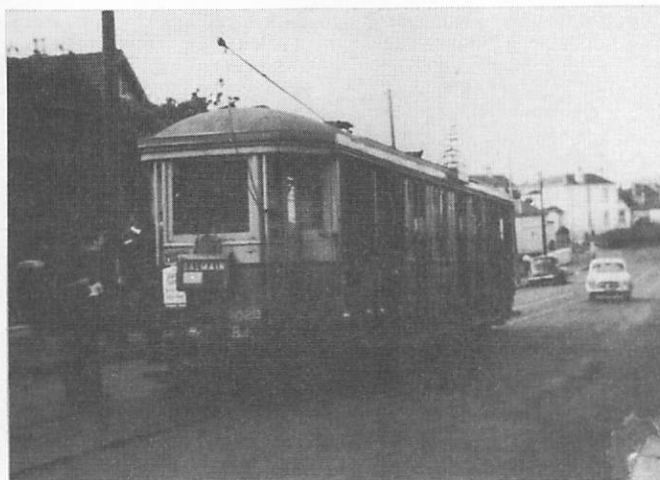
FOUNDED 1965

ANY MORE FARES, PLEASE

'Go by Bus' was the ominous legend appearing on the front of the 'O' class electric tram featured in the illustration. With some relevance, as the picture was taken 27 years ago, shortly before the last tram ran from Balmain to the city. Thus ended almost 70 years of using the tram as an option for those who left the peninsula for work or pleasure.

The first trams to service Balmain were powered by steam. An hourly service started operation in 1892 from Bridge St in the City through Forest Lodge and West Balmain (where the residents of the day were fighting a losing battle with the PMGs department who were insisting that their new Post Office be called Rozelle), and along Darling Street. The line was extended to Gladstone Park by October that year. Perhaps because there was little other traffic on the road, the trip took 40 minutes, which compares quite well with the 1985-era 433 bus in off-peak hours.

Around the turn of the century the line was converted to electric operation, and was extended along Darling Street to the ferry wharf in 1903. The final part of the trip down to the wharf was conducted with the aid of a large counterweight which controlled the speed of the tram in its path from Nicholson Street to the wharf and gave a helping hand to the car on its way back up the steep hill there. Another service operated through Rowntree and Grove Streets to Birchgrove. According to a 1931 timetable the services to the terminus at Fort Macquarie, which is now an opera house, operated at a frequency of 10 minutes



during most of the day and five minutes at rush hours. Time taken for the trip was still about 40 minutes.

In addition, a 'cross-country' service operated to Canterbury along much the same route as the 445 bus now takes.

Trams on the runs to Balmain were generally of the 'toastrack' model, with the conductor collecting fares by using the narrow footboard on the outside of the car.

Progress caught up with the Balmain trams as it did with the rest of the Sydney network.

First to go was the extension of the route to the city from Birchgrove and from the Darling Street wharf to Canterbury, both of which were replaced by buses in November 1954. The Darling Street wharf service to the city ceased a year later, leaving the service from the city terminating in Rowntree Street, where the photograph was taken in 1958, shortly before this service too, came to an end.

Nostalgia yes, but a practical 'people mover' for the late 80s needs surely to have more in the way of comfort for

the commuter. Perhaps some of the designs mooted for operation (would anyone care to take a bet on one of them actually coming into use?) in connection with the Darling Harbour development are possible. It is significant that most cities in the world seem to have dispensed with the light railway/tramway option. Although many have conducted studies with a view to resuming this mode of transportation few have bitten the bullet to the extent of putting such a service into operation.

PEVERLY'S WHARF

During Heritage Week we had a visit from Margaret Shain who, with her husband Christopher and two sons, has recently moved to Smith Street.

Margaret's father has been accumulating family history for 55 years or so by noting conversations with older members of the family. One of his problems was that he had been unable to locate where Peverly's Wharf was situated - until now!

The Association was able to come up with the information - it used to be on Peacock Point, facing Darling Harbour, on what is now Illoura Reserve. (Reference: Leichhardt Historical Journal No.11 p 25.)

It seems that Margaret's great, great grandparents, Thomas Hart and Agnes (nee Bruce) arrived at Moreton Bay on the ship "Glentanner" on 8 July 1859. With them was their son William aged two years old. Will later became a Mounted Police Troupier in the Central West of New South Wales at the time when Ben Hall was active.

The Hart family stayed at Moreton Bay for 18 months or so before moving to Sydney Town in 1861, where they lived at Peverly's Wharf.

William Hart related to Margaret's father that in those days there were 5 houses near the wharf, and whenever a sailing vessel moored nearby, the

NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY 7TH AUGUST 1985,

7.30 PM AT THE WATCH HOUSE, 179 DARLING STREET, BALMAIN.

menfolk had to stand guard over the well which was shared by the 5 households, to prevent the ships' crew replenishing their water supply and emptying the well.

In 1865 the Hart family sailed to Grafton in the "Agnes Irving", where Thomas Hart was a cobbler (bootmaker) and saddler. On 10 July 1896 Thomas Hart died at Forest Lodge, and his wife Agnes died on Christmas Eve 1916 at Bellbird near Cessnock.

* This article was contributed by T. B. Murray of Batehaven, Margaret Shain's father.

** We are most fortunate that anecdotes such as this about guarding the well, and covering events which occurred 125 years ago can be passed on virtually first-hand.

EWENTON

A member of the Association kindly lent the curious photograph seen below, taken some six or seven years ago, with the information that the object was situated in the grounds of Ewenton.

After making this photograph available to Clive Lucas & Partners, who are responsible for the restoration of Ewenton, the Association has received the following reply:

"This photograph of the well at Ewenton shows it in its present state. There is a copy of a letter which mentions the well. It was written by a Mr. Cronin who played with the children of Ewen Wallace Cameron, the man who bought the house from William Blake in the late 1850s and who was responsible for the addition of the extra storey, oriel window and porch of Ewenton in 1860, and the southern four storey addition in the early 1870s.



"The filter under the back verandah is worth a mention. It was filled from a well alongside, which was never known to go dry, the only water supply. A force pump was used to fill a large tank on the top of the house and from there water was laid on through the house".

The photo shows the upper part of the brick dome to the well, originally below ground level."...

Clive Lucas & Partners has kindly given us permission to print this information in the hope that we may unearth other photographs from readers, friends of readers or just plan "jog someone's memory" about facts concerning Ewenton.

RETAILING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

We have received a request for information on people and their efforts to establish a retail store in this suburb, during the period 1788-1908. The Association will pass on whatever information it has on the first stores in Balmain and Rozelle, but if you have any additional personal information regarding your family and their efforts to establish a retail store during the specified period, please write to the Association, P.O. Box 57, Balmain NSW 2041.

URBAN CONSOLIDATION - OUT OF CONTROL

Leichhardt Municipal Council is now considering a developer's proposal for conversion of the existing properties at 95-97 Mullens St. and 18-20 George St. into 40 units on behalf of the Housing Commission of New South Wales.

In support of the application an objection to the Leichhardt Local Environment Plan No.20 has been lodged. The notes on design supporting the application suggest "that the levying of open space contributions is in effect double taxation, the levy having to be met through an increased cost to the Commission with consequent detriment to its chances for success". In other words, the existing residents of the area are expected to forego usual open space requirements set by Council to support "critical" public housing. Why not an already undeveloped area? Why not the power station site or other government industrial wasteland not already required for open space?

The application uses "adjusted" census count figures compiled by the Department of Environment and Planning, showing a population decline between 1976 and 1981. The figures are outdated and do not reflect the pressure on land use placed by lifestyle improvements in the area since 1981, nor do they consider the effect of vehicular traffic increase in the area, which has necessitated traffic lights and road diversion installations not to mention residential road closures. Since 1981 there have been numerous high density housing approvals made by Council such as Darling St. Mews, Cameron's Cove, The Avenue, Louisa Road, Grafton St, Hosking St. and other smaller townhouse sites. With the large scale Housing Commission proposal for Mort Bay hanging over the suburb, what price will the future residents of the area have to pay by the time correct census figures are available, and the burden of overpopulation will have taken its costly effect on both lifestyle and ratepayers' pockets.

This proposal takes a quiet back-street haven, George Street, and confronts it with Mullens Street Michigan madness, which is already frequently blocked with traffic.

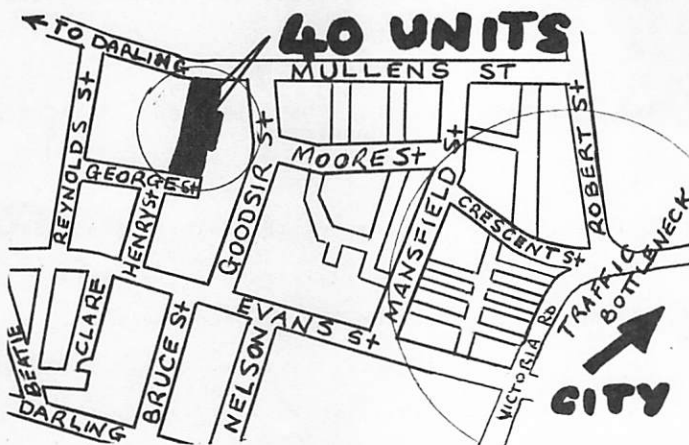
The objection continues "There is no public benefit in maintaining the planning controls adopted by Local Environment Plan.20" (which are in fact for our benefit) "to retain and enhance the heterogeneous character of the precinct and permit new development which respects the predominant scale and character of the particular street".

The Rozelle Valley is characterised by a diversity of mainly small scale 19th century housing and a patchwork of small and obsolete industrial buildings. Small is the word, and this is where more open space is really needed as well as Mort Bay. What place does a 2 to 3 storey 40 unit population density problem and traffic conducive development have in our precinct?

Consider the piecemeal approach of "reversing the trend" towards better living standards over recent years. This application requires special attention - as will any future proposals - from all those who care about healthy lifestyle, and don't wish to see the rates, already spent on formulating the Local Environment Plan, wasted through ignorance or political extremes. Can we afford to let local residents' opinions be dismissed as unimportant?

The bottom line is contained in the notes on design:-

"The density is slightly greater than Council's Code might allow, but the design limits its impact to that which would arise from a development within Council's guidelines. It is also essential



CLONTARF PARK ACTION GROUP

c/o 22 adolphus st balmain 2041

The decision to hand the Clontarf Park site in Adolphus Street, Balmain, over to the Housing Commission in 1981 has been followed by constant renegotiation with the Housing Commission. Each time the Council has backed down from its original "guarantees" to residents.

The latest concession to the Housing Commission is to release it from its obligation to restore the historic cottage "Clontarf" on the site.

Despite Mayor Brady's claims to the contrary in The Glebe of 3 July 1985, we have documentary evidence to prove that the restoration was a central part of the previous Council's plans.

Clontarf's history is well documented and it stands as one of 5 houses built by Robert Blake, (who seems to have been Sydney's first "spec builder") still in existence. It is of interest that another, the mansion "Ewerton", is now being restored as part of the Cameron Cove development.

Built in 1844, Clontarf was one of the earliest buildings on the Blake Estate which in turn was one of the earliest subdivisions on the Peninsula. As if the plan to build 2 storey Housing Commission units around it was not bad enough, the Council has now put its fate in question.

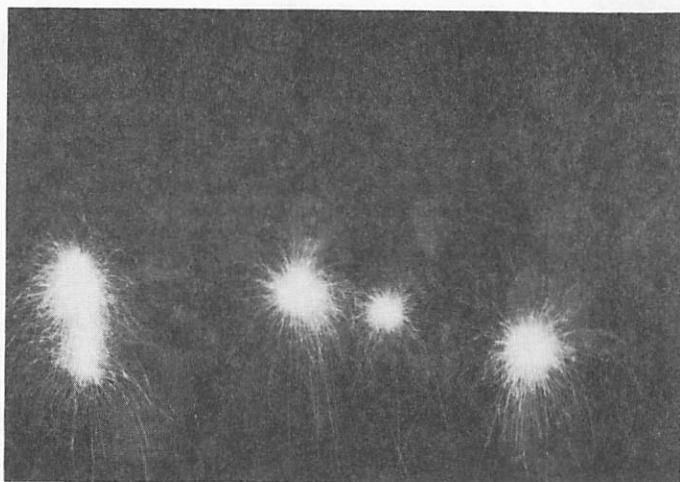
This decision is opposed by Balmain Aldermen Nick Origlass and Issy Wyner, who have the thankless task of battling an ALP Caucus unsympathetic to the needs of our suburb.

Paddington and Glebe have been saved. Balmain is still facing tremendous pressure as industrial sites are developed for private townhousing. Now the ALP State Government, instead of competing for these sites, is building on public open space (e.g. the Clontarf site and the Rank Kirby site), as well as the historic Mort's Dock site.

Balmain is a peninsula and contained on all sides. Without a strong Council bent on preservation, the old traditional buildings will fall under the demolishers' hammers, to be replaced by more and more new and characterless townhouses and units.

To our calls to save Clontarf Park and Save Mort Bay, we now add "SAVE CLONTARF" and more important still

"SAVE BALMAIN"



Shown are some of the local Balmain children enjoying the Queen's Birthday weekend bonfire, barbecue and firework display in Clontarf Park.

to achieve a reasonable density in order to achieve the cost per unit within the range that the Housing Commission will consider."

WHAT IS THE REAL DESIGN ON BALMAIN/ROZELLE AND WILL COUNCIL CONSIDER THE RATEPAYERS' LOGICAL OBJECTIONS which have been sent by letter and petition?

Should you wish to support local residents' action please quote: D.A. 170/85/GAS/PF/ in any correspondence to Council or your local members. How can our Council pay for open space at Mort Bay when it is being asked to forego usual revenue by developers interested in its precinct? It's a poor excuse!

BALMAIN ASSOCIATION'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

This year is the 20th anniversary of the Balmain Association and we will celebrate the occasion on

SATURDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 1985

at the Watch House, 179 Darling Street, Balmain 2041.

Drinks and supper from 7.30 p.m.

All members - old and new - are heartily welcome. Details will be available in the next News Sheet.

LOCK AND KEY DISPLAY

Thanks to the kind donation of a Birchgrove member, a range of padlocks, door-locks and keys as used in old Balmain is being prepared for display in the Watch House "lock-up".

The dating and classification of the items in the display will be done with some assistance from the Museum of Applied Arts and Science - as well as other sources - in order that it becomes a correct point of reference.

A suitable display cabinet is required to mount the collection. Anyone willing to assist with this item please contact:

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

LOCAL GOVERNMENT QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Do the right thing ... "leave your garbage in the street"

... AND DAVID RAMSEY'S QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

".....it's as high as an elephant's eye."

Once again time is upon us when all the Management Committee and Executive positions are declared vacant and new elections are conducted. Take an active part in the running of your Association by nominating for one of the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer or member of the Management Committee. We are not "the gentry" of Balmain, as some may think, but people just like you. We always need new blood to make the Association an active body of concerned residents.

DAY TRIP TO WOLLOMBI

Wollombi is one of the oldest settlements outside the Sydney area, dating from 1823, when a convict-built road was opened in Howe's Valley and later when the Great Northern Road linked Parramatta with Maitland.

Among the places of interest in the settlement are the school and residence, the Church of England Cemetery, Kenny's Folly, Wollombi Post Office, two churches and, in particular, the Court House, now the Endeavour Museum.

Other attractions include Jurd's Wine Saloon where descendants of an early settler still serve Jurd's Jungle Juice. There is also a cafe and barbeque facilities in a nearby park.

Des Kennedy of Trailer Tours, himself a long time member of the Association, will provide a 48-seater coach for a day trip to Wollombi at a cost of \$300. If the coach is full, this works out at \$6.25 a head. This is cheaper than doing the trip by car to say nothing of the risk of sampling the Jungle Juice.

The Association is proposing leaving the Watch House at 10.00 a.m. on Sunday 23 September-by which time the weather should be warm enough to tempt barbeque-ers-, returning to the Watch House by 5.00 p.m. or so.

If you are interested in joining us please fill out the form below and let us have it by 30 July, so we can decide if the trip will be a goer or not. It is some time since the Association had an outing and we hope to re-establish excursions with this one, so try and come along.

TRIP TO WOLLOMBI - 13 October 1985.

[] I would be interested in the trip to Wollombi on 13 October 1985. The number in my party would be.....

[] I would be willing to go even if the bus cost \$8.00, \$10.00 \$12.50 (that's a half-full bus) each (Circle one)

[] I would be interested in a bus trip to Wollombi, but not on 13 October 1985. The number in my party would be..... I would prefer.....(date)

Balmain Association
P.O.Box 57
BALMAIN, NSW 2041

Name.....
Address.....
Telephone No.....

NOMINATION FORM

THE BALMAIN ASSOCIATION 1985-86 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

We and being financial members of the Balmain Association hereby nominate as of the Association for the forthcoming year.

DATEDSIGNED.....

AND

I,of.....
(Name in full) (Address)

SIGNED

NOTE: This form may be lodged with the Hon. Secretary, P.O. Box 57, Balmain 2041, at any time prior to the election at the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on WEDNESDAY 21 AUGUST 1985.

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"