

# NEWS SHEET

# 153

PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

the balmain association

FOUNDED 1965

## NOTICE OF AGM

THE 1986 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BALMAIN ASSOCIATION

WILL BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13TH AUGUST

IN THE WATCH HOUSE

179 DARLING STREET

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

Nomination form for office bearers - Page 4

REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE AFTER MEETING - ALL WELCOME

### ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES

The Watch House now has a small electric oven installed, and a new collection of coffee mugs, thanks to the efforts of Bonnie Davidson and Carol Bennett. These will be most useful for future social occasions.

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The Association has written letters to the Premier, Mr Unsworth; the Minister for Environment and Planning, Mr Carr and the Minister for Housing, Mr Walker expressing concern at the state of confrontation that is developing in Balmain between resident action groups and the Government and offering to assist as a mediator to improve communications in regard to the proposed developments at Mort Bay and Clontarf Park. Copies of these letters are on display on the new notice board at the Watch House.

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If you haven't already put it there, the following can go in your diary NOW: on Saturday 20th September the Association is having a "Ghostbusters" party at the Watch House.

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The Committee is keen to promote the Watch House as an Exhibition Centre. Any interested artists, potters, sculptors or others with work that would be suitable for display in the Watch House are welcome to contact Norman Bull on 810.1611 a/h or Steve South on 810.1411 a/h.

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We need a drop-sided table or large coffee table for the Watch House. If anybody has one that they could donate or sell to us at low cost please contact on the phone numbers below.

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If you wish to contact the Association on any matter:  
Norman Bull, President - 810.1611 a/h  
Frances Heathfield, Secretary - 818.2307 a/h

NEXT MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY 6TH AUGUST 1986

7.30 P.M. AT THE WATCH HOUSE, 179 DARLING STREET, BALMAIN



THE FOLLOWING IS THE MBAG RESPONSE TO THE LEAFLET DISTRIBUTED RECENTLY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING TO "SELL" THE MORT BAY PROPOSAL

WHAT THE D.E.P. LEAFLET SAYS

"Mort Bay, an attractive well-designed project...."

"How much of the Mort Bay site will be devoted to park?"

The old Mort's Dock site covers 7.3 hectares. Of this total, more than half or 4.2 hectares (10 acres) will be developed into parkland...."

"How much of the old dock will be set aside for housing?"

Of the total 7.3 hectares of land, less than half - or 3.1 hectares - will be developed as homes. Eventually, there will be 211 units to house a maximum of 525 people."

"Where will the residents park their cars?"

The project itself will provide 143 off-street parking spaces within the development and a further 41 kerb-side spaces on the new access roads."

"The State Government will make funds available....to ease any traffic congestion during peak hour. (at Victoria Road)"

"How much open space does Balmain have?"

...Leichhardt Council shows that Balmain has 22.5 hectares of open space....seven times more open space than Leichhardt (3.2ha), four times as much as Annandale (5.9ha) and twice as much as Rozelle (12.2ha)."

"The Municipality of Leichhardt as a whole has 11 times as many small parks and playing fields as Concord, five times as many as Lane Cove, Mosman and Strathfield and twice as many as Willoughby, Drummoyne, Burwood, Ashfield, Auburn, Botany, Kogarah, Manly and Rockdale."

"Why should Balmain be chosen to accommodate new public housing development?"

Between 1971 and 1981, Leichhardt Municipality's population fell by 20 per cent....public housing accounts for just two per cent of Balmain's residential accommodation and with the development at Mort Bay, this will not rise above five per cent - less than the Sydney average."

"Will public housing decrease property values in the area?"

THE FACTS

(From publications by the Department of Housing and the Department of Environment and Planning)

Look at the plans! Overdevelopment at its worst. Does not conform to Leichhardt Council's Development Control Plan and shows no concern for existing residents, let alone the environment.

What a con! 4.2 hectares includes the parkland we may get if they acquire the privately owned land. The amount of parkland we are really getting is about 3.6 hectares including the existing park at Thames St. wharf, the concrete wharf and the dock.

Actually 3.7 hectares. They must be ignoring their backyards, streets and courtyards in the calculation. This calculation excludes the privately owned land, which they add in to help their park figures and leave out to help their people figures.

This is 68 offstreet spaces less than the number of units. No other developer would be allowed to do this. Who is going to see that new residents don't park in the street - everyone else does!

They tell us there won't be any traffic to speak of! Why do they need to ease the congestion?

This is just a lie. Total open space for Leichhardt Municipality (which includes such areas as the Victoria Road toilets) is 83.1 hectares. Their total adds up to 43.8 hectares. Where did the rest go? Leichhardt Oval seems to have disappeared! Have a look at your Gregory's and see if you can figure it out.

Concord has 113.8 hectares of open space; Lane Cove 127.4; Willoughby 311.4; Manly 336.3; Rockdale 314.8; Botany 100.9; Kogarah 144.1

**Leichhardt has 83.1 hectares of open space.** Much of this is in tiny "parks" such as the Victoria Road toilets and includes two large parks that are controlled by sporting bodies and are not available for public use. Who are they trying to fool? 1985 Open Space Survey is available from the DEP for \$7:50 if you want to check the facts.

Between 1971 and 1981 Woollahra's population fell by 12% It has 0.38% of public housing. Balmain peninsula has 3.9% already, i.e. ten times the amount in Woollahra. With Mort Bay, Balmain peninsular will increase to 8.7% - this is well above the Sydney average - without counting the 58 units in Rozelle Valley. Why isn't there a massive project planned for Woollahra, Mr Wran's home suburb and a marginal seat?

This issue has never been raised by the MBAG. Our concern is for safe playing areas for children and preserving harbour foreshores for future generations.

QUESTIONS THE MORT BAY ACTION GROUP WOULD LIKE ANSWERED

1. Why the rush? The Dept. of Housing has many other sites it has owned for much longer. 2. Why not wait for the 1986 Census to see what's really happening to Balmain's population? 3. Why no referendum on this burning community issue? 4. If this is such a desirable project why does it need supporting with lies? 5. Are taxpayers and the aged getting value for money from the Department? 6. How much is it costing the taxpayer to have Balmain wrecked?

## HISTORICAL QUESTION & ANSWER

This question and answer column, we hope, will interest readers of our newsletter and may help us gain information we may not otherwise find. Can you help?

1. Mrs. Davies wishes to know where the grandmother, Pearlina, with sister Rubina, performed their song, dance and comedy routine between 1910 - 1920, or possibly earlier. Their stage name was the "Pearl Sisters" and the theatre was called Clay's Open Air Theatre which may have been situated where Leichhardt Stadium stood (stands?). She believes there was also a Clay's Theatre in Harris Street, Sydney (Ultimo?) which may have been a tent structure. Her grandfather, Alfred Ernest Leslie, was also an entertainer at that time.

2. Mrs Mitchell wrote to us about her aunt, Nurse Walker who came to Australia aged 16 in 1913. Her family settled in Balmain and conducted a grocery store at "The Lion Tea House", 433 Darling Street. "Polly" Walker moved in 1960 to her cottage on the corner of Hampton and Addison Streets after the death of her only daughter. From 1922 or 1923 her marriage was dissolved and she began her midwifery training at Crown Street Womens' Hospital which was to eventually make her Balmain's best known midwife.

For many years she had no car and always being "on call" both day and night, she walked in all weathers to attend her patients. She and her brown bag - which every child knew contained a new baby - became so well known that just about every man, woman and child would have known who she was and where she lived. Her nursing duties were not confined to the Balmain area alone, but reached to Pyrmont, Ultimo, Glebe, Leichhardt, Drummoyne and Fivedock. Over the years she had lost count of the number of babies she helped bring into the world and once said that if only half her unpaid fees were paid she would be a wealthy woman.

Times changed and it became no longer fashionable to have babies at home, so her nursing skills became daily house calls to care for the sick. This she continued to do up till a short time before her death, when arthritis made it difficult for her to get about.

Aged eighty two and a half years, she died in Balmain Hospital on 18th October, 1979. After a church service at St. John's, Birchgrove, she was cremated at Northern Suburbs Crematorium and her ashes were interred in the family grave at Rookwood Cemetery.

3. Mr McDonald, while researching the explorer Hovell, whose family lived at 26 Darling Street, came upon his information by ingenuity, clue by clue. He advises all people who file paper clippings to identify them by naming not only the paper or publication from which they were obtained and the day, month and year of publication, but also the number of the column and page from which they were obtained.

4. Mr Duncan, tracing his ancestor Samuel Edward Smith of Rosser Street, Balmain, asks where on the 6th November 1877, would Mr Smith have been working as a fireman or foreman at the Balmain Gas Works?

Does anyone know where this same Mr Smith might have lived between 1877 and 1899?

5. Mrs Noble's great-great-grandfather lived at 177 Darling Street and had a candle and soap factory. He also had a candle shop (possibly in the 1850's). In later years he had moved to 226

Abattoir Road. Family lore says that Campbell Street was named after him. He had a partnership in the abattoirs in Glebe with a butcher shop in the Rocks. John Campbell died in 1880 at Abattoir Road, Balmain, aged 69. He was survived by four daughters: Mary Anne, thirty eight; Margaret and Bathia, thirty six and Fanny, thirty four. Any information would be helpful.

6. Jeanette Greenwell, descendant of the Wood family, tells us of William Henry Wood, an upholsterer and cabinetmaker in 1861 who was also an undertaker in 1867. He lived at several addresses in Darling Street including No. 63 in 1883. Three of his six sons carried on the family business, the principal being Arthur C.J. Wood who lived at 238 Darling Street until about 1910-12 when the business was either taken over or merged with another funeral company to become Wood Coffill which is still in existence.

William Henry's grandson, Ernest Arthur Wood who worked for Wood and Co., Wood Coffill had his own funeral company. He lived at various times in Nos. 238 and 348 Darling Street Balmain and 5-9 Darling Street Rozelle.

7. We would like people to write with recollections of the late Dr Barry, who was quite an institution in Balmain.

## FETE

St. John's Anglican Church, cnr Spring St. and Birchgrove Rd. is having its Annual Fete on Thursday, 11th September. Stalls will include cakes, toys, sweets, jams, oddments, plants, hoop-la, and afternoon teas. Lunch will be served from 12 Noon - 1.30 P.M. and an evening meal from 5.30 - 6.30 P.M.

"All Welcome"

## CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME!

We would be pleased to receive any news item or other articles for inclusion in this news sheet. Short stories or anecdotes about life in Balmain, historical enquiries, notices of coming events of interest to the community, are all suitable. We also have a policy of publishing articles from both sides in controversial issues such as Mort Bay and Clontarf Park. Contributions may be sent to P.O. Box 57 Balmain 2041. Otherwise you may ring Norman Bull or Frances Heathfield, whose phone numbers are listed on page one of this edition under "Association Activities".

## "AROUND BALMAIN" PUBLISHING TRIUMPH CONTINUES

Sales of our highly successful book "Around Balmain" continue to grow. The book would be ideal as a gift and is of interest to anyone who has ever lived in Balmain. It has a combination of photos from past and present, a detailed commentary and a map showing where to find the interesting buildings it describes. \$9.95 at the Watch House, local bookstores and newsagents.

"The text is well-researched....photographic collection is comprehensive" National Trust Magazine

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|----------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Other publications available from the Association: |        |
| HALF A THOUSAND ACRES                              | \$5:00 |
| BALMAIN WALKS                                      | \$0:60 |
| THE BALMAIN WATCH HOUSE                            | \$0:60 |
| BALMAIN PLACES 1. MORT'S DOCK                      | \$0:60 |
| BALMAIN PLACES 2. COAL MINE                        | \$0:60 |
| BALMAIN PLACES 3. GLADSTONE PARK                   | \$0:60 |
| LEICHHARDT HISTORICAL JOURNAL NO.14                | \$8:00 |

## THE BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB



THE GARDEN CLUB meets on the third Saturday of each month (except December and January) at 1:15 P.M. at the Watch House, 179 Darling Street Balmain. Good gardening library available for members. All interested welcome

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## BALMAIN HOSPITAL FETE

The Garden Club will be having a stall at the Balmain Hospital's Annual Fete, which will be at Gladstone Park (also known as the Pigeon Ground) on Saturday, 6th September.

The fete is one of the major fund-raising activities for the Hospital and the Garden Club has been working towards the success of their stall for many weeks. A wide variety of plants will be on sale, as well as the opportunity to gain advice so your garden will look the best for Spring. Come along and enjoy yourself while supporting your local community.

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The Garden Club uses hundreds of pots every year, so if you have any you do not need please leave them at the Watch House, 179 Darling Street or if more convenient at 1 Rose Street, Birchgrove. Required sizes are 4", 5" and 6" with 5" being the most favoured. These measurements are taken across the top and even if you do not have any to spare now please keep us in mind in the future!

## FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE WATCH HOUSE

The Watch House is open EVERY Friday night from 8:P.M. for a BYO social evening. This an ideal opportunity to meet other Balmain residents, put up your feet after a hard week at work and ease into the weekend while enjoying the warmth of an open fire. All members, guests and other interested people are welcome.

## SATURDAY AFTERNOON AT THE WATCH HOUSE

The Watch House is also open on Saturdays from 1:P.M. to 3:P.M. Coffee and biscuits available.

## THINGS TO DO IN WINTER.....

A couple of issues ago, under the same heading as above, this news sheet carried a plea for more members to attend our monthly meetings because many of our regulars were going to be absent for some time. Well, now its time to say "thankyou" to those who have braved the cold and been at recent meetings.

Since the fireplace in the Charge Room has been operational monthly meetings have been conducted there instead of upstairs and have become even less formal than usual. We meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 7:30 P.M.

The AGM will be on Wednesday 13th August (2nd Wednesday of August) at 7:30 P.M. to elect office bearers for 1986-87.

## FROM THE PAST

The "Balmain Observer" was Sydney's first free suburban newspaper.

NOMINATION FORM  
BALMAIN ASSOCIATION 1986-1987 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

NOMINATION FOR POSITION OF.....

PERSON NOMINATED.....

PROPOSED BY: (Name).....

(Signature).....

SECONDED BY: (Name).....

(Signature).....

I,.....  
(Name in Full)

.....  
(Occupation)

of.....  
(Address)

consent to this nomination.

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....

Note: Proposer, Seconder and Nominee must be financial members of the Balmain Association.

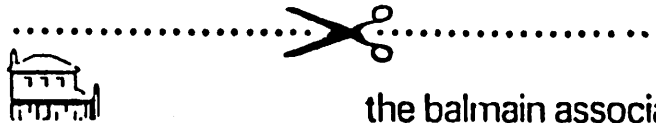
This form may be lodged with the Hon. Secretary, P.O. Box 57, Balmain 2041 at any time before the elections at the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 13th August, 1986.

# 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".