



NEWS SHEET

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PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

the balmain association

FOUNDED 1965

BIRCHGROVE BONANZA -- PHOTOGRAPH AND LEAFLET LAUNCH

By chance an article in a Saturday edition of the Sydney Morning Herald way back in 1984 led the Historical Division of the Balmain Association to embark upon an quest which has finally come to a successful conclusion in 1987.

The newspaper article was about an Auction of Topographical Paintings, Watercolours, Drawings and Prints that was to take place at Sotheby's in London on 8th November 1984.

Among the items to be sold, one of particular interest stood out. This was a volume of drawings and watercolours of Sydney and its environs by **GEORGE PENKIVIL SLADE**. The volume consisted of some eighty pictures, many signed with initials, almost all inscribed and dated between 1858 and 11 November 1864. The sketches were watercolour over pencil (some pencil only) occasionally heightened with body colour and gum arabic, bound in linen and leather and with the inscription on the cover:

Sketches/G.P.S.

Acquisition of a copy of the catalogue showed that included among the drawings were some 9 sketches of Balmain and Birchgrove dated between 1860 and 1864. The volume was purchased by Dr. Raven in Perth, Western Australia but the sketches remained in London for some time to be treated/restored.

Eventually after time and correspondence with Dr. Raven, the Association was able to view photographs of the Slade Sketches at the Mitchell Library and select any drawings that were applicable to Balmain and Birchgrove.

As a result of the generosity of Dr. Raven, the Balmain Association now has great pleasure in exhibiting 9 most unusual photographs of

"BALMAIN and BIRCHGROVE,"

taken from **GEORGE PENKIVIL SLADE'S** sketchbook.

These sketches are rare indeed and have certainly not been seen by many. They include **BIRCHGROVE HOUSE 1860** and the **BALMAIN REGATTA** held on 12th November 1864.

They will be shown for the first time at a special Watch House Exhibition on September 12 and 19 from 1-5 p.m. An admission fee of \$1.50 will include

"BALMAIN WALKS 2 - BIRCHGROVE AND BALMAIN NORTH"

with information on 90 historical dwellings.

Make sure you join us for this special occasion.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1986 - 1987

THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS have been a period of some achievement for the Balmain Association. At the end of 1986 we began a series of very successful art exhibitions at the Watch House: successful financially as well as bringing new people into the Watch House, increasing our membership and helping to raise the awareness of the community about the Balmain Association.

However, out of this success came a message about the Association that I believe needs to be addressed soon if the Association is to continue to grow and regain the meaningful place in the community which, I have often been told, it used to hold many years ago. The message can be seen in two things which occurred during our exhibitions. The first is that most of the people who came to the exhibitions were not from Balmain, in spite of the best efforts of the Association and the exhibitors to publicise the events in the area. The second concerns an event during one of the exhibition in which somebody who has lived across the road from this building for eight years was persuaded by the artist to venture across the road and have a look inside. The man had never before been curious enough to do so, but instead had spent years puzzling about the fact that the place is open to the public every Saturday afternoon.

The point I am trying to make is that the Balmain Association is not well known in the community it claims to represent and I am convinced that the community at large isn't all that interested anyway. My major commitment to the Association effectively ends at the conclusion of this meeting so I am not about to propose solutions that I will not be around to help implement, but as a relative outsider who has spent two years as your President I would like to place on record the question of 'relevance'.

Back to our accomplishments over the past year. We have increased our membership and the introduction of a new membership subscription system has streamlined our accounting and administration. We now have a very healthy bank balance, a big improvement on the situation at this time last year. Earlier this year the Association met with the National Trust to discuss the future of the Watch House, part of a process that has been ongoing for over a year and will continue to be one of the Association's major concerns into the indefinite future. Our efforts to assist in the Clontarf Cottage saga have been frustrated by Council's inability to answer simple letters and this will also remain as a very important issue as long as the fate of \$190 000 of taxpayer's money remains a mystery.

One disappointing development during the year was the cancellation of our 'Friday Night at the Watch House' social occasions due to lack of interest.

As in any club or voluntary organisation, the work of the Association is consistently handled by a dedicated handful of committee members. The Balmain Association keeps this fine old building open; sells publications of local historical interest, including a couple which it published itself; writes letters to politicians, produces a monthly news sheet and provides an invaluable network of contacts within the community. We also answer countless historical enquiries from people in Balmain and all over Australia. To all the people involved in these activities, at great expense of time - and phone bills and postage stamps - I would like to offer my thanks on behalf of all the members.

Major activities of the Association over the next twelve months will include finalising plans for the future of the Watch House and organising some activities to help celebrate the Bicentennial. There are also plans afoot for the publication of a special Balmain tourist leaflet. Therefore the next year promises to be as good as the last.

Finally, I would like to finish by wishing the Balmain Association every success in the future.

Norman Bull



SAFETY HOUSE SCHEME

Parents and teachers of schools in the area are asking for help in implementing a Safety House Scheme for children. The concept has the full support and co-operation of the police.

There are many similar schemes operating in New South Wales.

The idea, for those of you who may not have heard of the scheme before, is that if children feel threatened on their way to or from school they will be able to seek refuge in an approved

"Safety House"

Obviously, the more Safety Houses there are, the less likelihood there is of a child coming to harm.

How You can Help

By offering your house, flat, shop, surgery, business premises etc as a Safety House. If you or some other person over 15 years of age are normally on these premises during the times children are walking to and from school, you could take part in the scheme. However, for the children's security, all occupants of a Safety House are screened by the police. The results of their investigations are confidential and the Safety House Committee will not have access to them.

If for one reason or another you don't feel that you can offer your premises for the scheme, the Committee would welcome a donation to help defray the cost of erecting the special signs at schools, in the streets, or at Safety Houses, or, failing that, your assistance in fundraising for the scheme.

The Scheme is based on Birchgrove Public School but covers all schools in the area. Further information can be obtained from the school or from individual co-ordinators who are on:

818-2464, 810-6885, 810-4026, 810-6203, 810-6790
or 810-3950.

A ROYAL VISIT

NINETY MEMBERS and friends of the Royal Australian Historical Society arrived en masse at the Watch House on Saturday 25 July at the start of a guided walking tour of Balmain. After a week of winter rain the weather on the day was perfect, with clear skies and sunny.

The President of the R.A.H.S, Mr Bob Irving, and Dr Peter Reynolds imparted their groups with so much infectious enthusiasm that there was a brisk trade in the Association's books and pamphlets to the tune of \$148. In addition a couple of valuable contacts were made on early Balmain residents.

The highlight of the afternoon was the inspection of Ewinton. Some of the more agile of the groups were seen disappearing up a makeshift ladder to the second floor as the house belies its outward appearance of having been restored and the inside is still a shell awaiting the new owners' attention.

Thanks are also due to the ladies of Saint Mary's Church who prepared a most welcome afternoon tea at the conclusion of the walk.

Thank you all for a 'right Royal' occasion.

Kath Hamey.

TREASURER'S REPORT

THE YEAR ENDED 30 June 1987 has been one of the most financially successful in the history of the Association. Total income for the year was \$8390, which was just \$400 short of the record set in 1986, however careful control of expenditure meant that there was an excess of income over expenditure of more than \$5100. This excess, when added to excess from 1986 gives us \$6300 cash in hand. In addition we have considerable stocks of the publications Around Balmain and Half a Thousand Acres, sales of which will assist our revenue in the years ahead.

Apart from book sales, the main areas which have contributed to our income were hire of the Watch House (this activity also increased our income from donations) and membership dues. Although the number of members has not increased, our decision to raise the dues and annualise our renewal system account for the increase.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Management Committee for their support and energy during the year.

Warwick Purser

Statement of Income & Expenditure as at 30 June 1987

Expenditure			Income		
1986		1987	1986		1987
44	Petty cash			Membership:Dues 1753	
3168	Watch House	977	1416	Post 64	1817
1266	News Letter	1220	207	Donations	816
83	Bank charges FID etc	109	639	Fund Raising	243
87	Fund Raising	203	269	Reports & Publications	348
251	Publicity	24	724	Bank Interest	228
75	Subscriptions	128	254	Half a Thousand Acres	307
9826	Around Balmain		4746	Around Balmain	2765
746	Miscellaneous	53		Leichhardt Hist Journal	86
	Stationery	97		Miscellaneous	199
16212		3257	8757		8390
7455	Excess of Expenditure over Income				
8757	Excess of 1986/87 Income over Expenditure	5133	8757		
		8390			8390

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

YOUR ASSOCIATION held its Annual General Meeting on 12 August at the Watch House. Nineteen of us - getting on for 10 percent of the membership - turned out to hear reports on our activities during the year. The President's and Treasurer's reports are to be found elsewhere in this issue.

AN ELECTION of office-bearers followed. As a result, you have a new Committee. It comprises:

President:	Jane Ward
Vice-President:	Jeremy Arnott
Treasurer:	Warwick Purser
Corresponding Secretary:	Debby Nicholls
Minutes Secretary:	Michelle South

Committee Members - some without portfolios at present:

Tikwis Begbie	Historical correspondence and research
Carol Bennett	
Norman Bull	Watch House exhibitions/hire
Yvonne Davidson	
Kath Hamey	Photographic curator
Frances Heathfield	Watch House custodian
John Henry	
Jean Lennane	
Bob Nicholls	News Sheet editor
Steve South	Watch House exhibitions/hire
Jan Wood.	

Accumulated Account as at 30 June 1987.

	1985/86	1986/87
General Account	275	792
Book publishing account	211	
Savings Investment account	678	5505
Electricity	10	10
Petty cash	50	50
	1224	6357
Excess of income over expenditure	5133	
	6357	6357

Stock

Half a Thousand Acres
Around Balmain
Gilchrist booklet

BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB

Plant Propagation by Cuttings

Increasing plants by growing from cuttings is an interesting activity for home gardeners. Most evergreen plants can be multiplied by taking tip cuttings about 5" (12cms) long. Leave a leaf or two at the top, but remove all flowers and flower buds. Probably the best times to try are in autumn - March and April - and in spring from August to October, as it gets more difficult as the weather gets hotter and nothing grows in mid-winter.

Though hardwood cuttings such as from deciduous shrubs and trees are usually taken when dormant in winter they do not make much progress until spring.

With all cuttings the important thing is to conserve their moisture and not allow them to dry out. On the other hand, over-watering will predispose them to rotting. Geraniums are especially susceptible to this. Rooting powders sold at nurseries can help, as they contain fungicides. If rotting does develop, throw away the plant and its potting medium as it obviously contains 'nasties', and nothing can save it.

The usual mixture for potting of cuttings is 3 parts coarse sand (not beach sand) and 1 part peat moss. Some people get best results by covering the cuttings in the pot with a plastic bag supported by a couple of sticks over the cuttings, but the bag needs some small holes for ventilation or the cuttings may go mouldy. Sometimes it seems better just to sprinkle several times daily with water and not use a bag. Make the holes for the cuttings with a pencil (don't just push them in), firm around with fingers and water well, and place pot in a shady place at the start, gradually bringing them out into the sun. The months August to October and March to May seem to have worked best for me, as our summer from November is too hot for anything delicate.

Rose Cuttings are considered as hardwood cuttings, use pieces that have flowered, but present season's growth which is starting to firm up, about 8" (20cm) long and plant at least half in the soil. The South American Indians say all cuttings should be planted slanting and facing the east. Perhaps this gives them more light. Don't trans-plant the rose cuttings until the following winter. A fungicidal spray is useful.

Camellias and Azaleas use top pieces, about 5" (12cm) long with a small bunch of leaves when the spring growth has hardened. Trim base cleanly and leave only 2 or 3 leaves at the top. If leaves are large they can be cut horizontally in half to lessen transpiration of moisture. Give Gardenias, Daphne and Bougainvilleas the same treatment. Take cuttings in January when they may be planted as cuttings straight into sandy soil in semi-shade, with a clear glass jar placed over each one. Remove cuttings very carefully when rooted.

Hibiscus Use fairly hard pieces.

Hydrangeas, Fuchsias and Chinese Lanterns (abutilons) strike easily from tip cuttings of a few inches, taken in March or April, although with the best temperature for striking being about 20 degrees C either autumn or spring will do.

Jessica Murray.

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

SAINT JOHNS THE EVANGELIST
Cnr Birchgrove Rd & Spring St,
BALMAIN

ST. JOHN'S FETE

to be held on

THURSDAY 10TH SEPTEMBER 1987

10.00am to 7.00pm

MEALS WILL BE SERVED

Lunch: 12.00 to 1.30pm

Tea: 5.30 to 6.30pm

STALLS:

*Cake *Guild *Jams *Plants *Bathroom
*Oddments *Hoop-La etc *Drinks *Refreshments

===ALL WELCOME===



the balmain association
representing
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 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.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Return to: Treasurer, P.O. Box 57, Balmain 2041

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE: HOME:

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (including News Sheet Delivery in Balmain-Birchgrove-Rozelle)

Please circle ... NEW MEMBER / RENEWAL

Single/Family/Household	\$ 8.00
Organisation	\$12.00
Pensioner or Student	\$ 1.00

Add \$5.00 to above rates to have News Sheet posted.
Cheques should be made payable to "The Balmain Association".