

SEPTEMBER, 1987

NEWS SHEET

164

PO BOX 57 BALMAIN 2041

the balmain association

FOUNDED 1965

EXCLUSIVE ! SCOOP SHOCK MONORAIL HORROR PICTURE --- SEE INSIDE, PAGE 2

My Fellow Members..

As your new President I welcome your assistance in promoting the Association and its aims to improve the area's quality of life while preserving its historic features. Interpreting these aims has kept the Balmain Association a diverse and vital organisation with a wide-ranging membership from antiquarians to activists and from recent to fifth-generation residents. Like other members I work towards a balance of aims. As a historian I seek facts and I value the recording and conservation of our heritage. As a parent of three young children I seek a safer, healthier environment and I am acutely aware of the increasing traffic hazards and the diminishing usable open space.

Because the Association is not party political, it provides a useful forum for debating local issues, however controversial, and we are keen to involve increasing numbers of residents in our activities. This year we ask you to help us with a membership drive by talking to people about the variety and the relevance of the things we do.

Examples of our range of activities are that we recently participated in the Balmain Post Office Centenary (see article on page 2, Ed.), we are currently supporting the Save Rozelle Bay campaign, the Annandale Association, the Glebe Society and the Total Environment Centre in their call for a public enquiry into the compiling of the Environmental Impact Statement on Rozelle Bay, we are initiating a discussion on the future of the heritage classified old Copra Shed on the Unilever site, and we have just held a very successful exhibition of photographs of rare nineteenth century paintings of Balmain and Birchgrove.

This should be a challenging and productive year. I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Jane Ward

OUR FIRST CORPORATE MEMBER

The Association is pleased to be able to announce that we have our first corporate member - Colgate Palmolive. This welcome development is largely a result of the efforts of Committee member David Ramsay, himself an employee at the firm's Balmain factory, and follows an exchange of correspondence between the Association and Colgate's Information and Public Affairs branch.

Colgate-Palmolive has had a manufacturing facility in Balmain since the early 1920s and their plant has been somewhat of a local landmark since that time, as well as providing employment to many of the inhabitants of Balmain.

We will be featuring an article on the history of Colgate-Palmolive and Balmain in a future edition of the News Sheet. In the meantime we would like to reiterate our pleasure at the fine example set by Colgate-Palmolive to the Balmain/Rozelle corporate community in their contribution to our Association and their support of our aims.

HIGHER PLANE

As part of our policy of providing all our members with the very best in culture, we are pleased to announce that we have acquired, for a truly paltry sum, the services of a poet-in-residence. Well, to be truthful, a resident in a poetic sense only, for he ekes out a miserable, deprived existence in a garret in Chatswood.

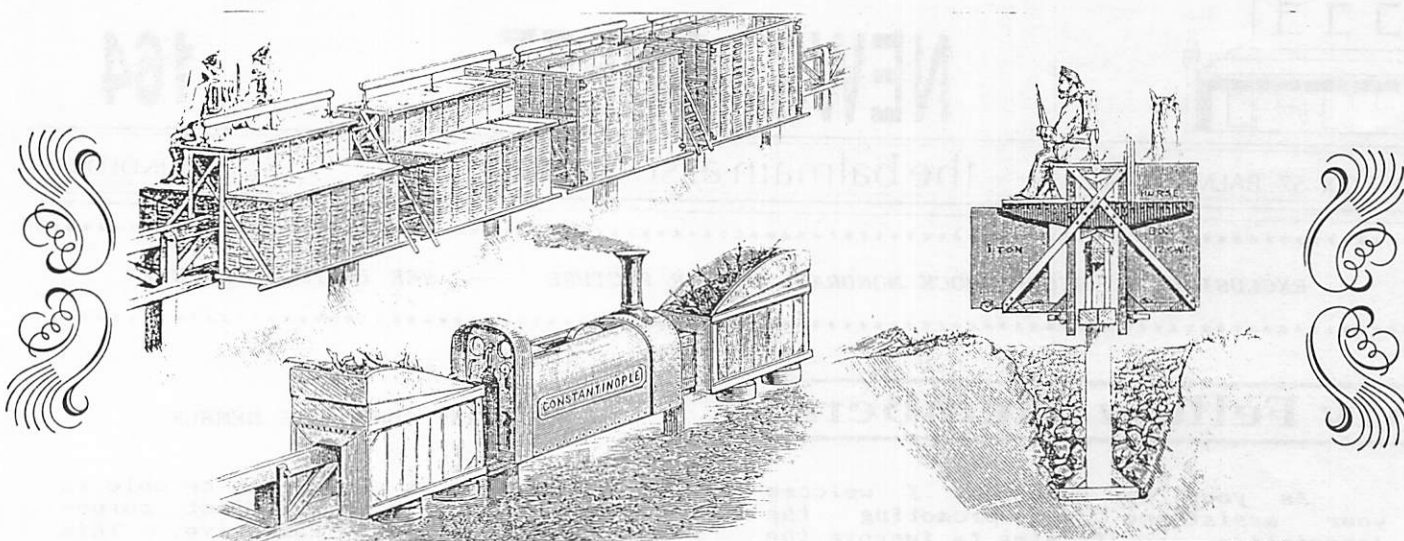
Vaughan Evans' work will appear on an occasional basis.

Batts in the Belfrey

*The possums leaping overhead,
Think thermal insulation's fine.
What else provides so snug a bed,
Or carpet so like trampoline,
On which to bounce and softly fall?
Give them the batts, they'll have a ball.*

Our contact telephone number is: 810-7391

NEXT ASSOCIATION MEETING - WEDNESDAY 7 OCTOBER - THE WATCH HOUSE, 179 DARLING ST. 7.30 pm.



Your Association's News Sheet has obtained this dramatic picture of the new Darling Harbour monorail, which keen readers will note is quite different from the fake carriages recently shown on TV being unloaded from a ship. In recent secret trials over a short section of track the system was tested in its real, as yet undisclosed role of moving large bodies of armed men throughout the area, presumably as part of a plan to suppress citizen revolt. Environmentally-conscious members will note the fact that the system will be powered by burning twigs of wood, thus posing an additional threat of pollution to the already heavily contaminated inner city air.

POST OFFICE CENTENARY

The Governor may not have been present, bands may not have played and thousands may not have been in attendance as they were a hundred years before, but the sun shone, the crowds did congregate, a town crier cried, the Post Office staff were in period finery and a very happy day was had by all who were present at the Centenary Celebrations for the Balmain Post Office.

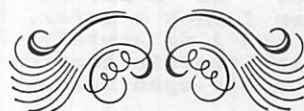
Inside the building, Vann Cremer, Australia Post's New South Wales historical officer had mounted a splendid display of postal artifacts. Outside, the Balmain Association had two booths of centenary commemorative envelopes in addition to the Association's other publications for sale.

The 10.30 ceremony was delayed until 11, awaiting the arrival of Mayor Brady, and the centenary plaque was not unveiled by Peter Baldwin, MP, as planned, but in all other ways the ceremonies went without a hitch with addresses by the State Manager and Divisional Manager of Australia Post and brief words from Vera Randall, Commissioner and Balmain resident, before presentation of the awards to the school children who had won prizes in the art competition.

As all readers will be aware, the painting of the Post Office in its original colours is now complete and a very fine addition to the streetscape of Balmain.

The commemorative envelopes were extremely popular and only a very limited supply now remain - 15 complete sets of 6 or approximately 100 individual envelopes. They are available at \$1.50 singles or \$10 a set (which is the only way to get all 6!) from the Balmain Watch House any Saturday between 1 and 3 p.m.

All members of the Association who manned the booth and attended the celebrations thoroughly enjoyed the day. It was also a financial success for the Association, and we are grateful to Australia Post for making our booths and envelopes possible.



A NEW INDUSTRY IN BALMAIN

Every new industry, however small its beginnings, if of a legitimate kind is welcome to the Borough, and the beginning of what may grow to be a big establishment has recently been started at the southern end of Beattie street. We refer to the Tasmanian Cascade Dandelion Brewery, owned by Messrs Benn and Edwards. The beverage produced therein is specially designed to provide a drink which shall allay thirst, without having the cloying effects of the usual cordials or the slightest intoxicating quality. It is made from the best dandelion root, imported from Tasmania, which is treated by boiling so as to secure all the taraxacum (*) (the active ingredient of the dandelion) and treated by a system of slight fermentation, producing a beverage which will keep good for years, having a taste like a very mild ale, of a clean and refreshing nature with a slight tonic quality acting beneficially on the liver. It is recommended by one of our leading physicians as the perfection of a summer drink and is guaranteed free of any intoxication principle whatever. The establishment is now turning out four gross a day and can be much enlarged. The beverage is to be procured at all hotels and shops by the dozen or a single bottle. As an interprise (sic) to provide a healthful and agreeable temperance drink, suited to this climate, it should meet with every success?

*taraxacum; the root of a dandelion, used in medicine as a tonic, diuretic and aperient.

(Balmain Observer 20 August 1887)

'Acting beneficially on the liver' indeed!

HISTORICAL QUESTIONS, ANSWERS & NOTES

THE MOTOR YACHT LAURABADA.

The Association has been giving assistance regarding enquiries about the above vessel to Mr. Clark of Southport. Mr. Clark is writing a biography of Ivan Francis Champion, O.B.E. (born in Port Moresby, British New Guinea in 1904). He is the eldest son of Herbert William Champion, C.B.E., who went to Port Moresby in 1898 to work for Burns, Philp & Company.

Ivan enlisted in the Army and was made captain of Laurabada. In 1942 the vessel was owned by the Government of Papua and was commissioned by the Royal Australian Navy as a Motor Patrol Boat. She had a displacement of 150 tons, was 105 feet in length, had a beam of 22 feet, and a draught of 9 feet 6 inches. Her machinery was semi-diesel twin screw, and she had a speed of 10 knots.

Ivan took Laurabada to Palimal in Jacquinot Bay and rescued 150 people, survivors of the fall of Rabaul following the Japanese invasion.

The vessel was rebuilt in Port Moresby after the war and in 1973 was converted in Malaysia into a luxury ketch-rigged yacht catering for wealthy tourists, operating out of Singapore.

It appears that the Laurabada was wrecked off Guam some time prior to 1983.

Mr. Clark appreciates it would be a long shot, but one of our members may happen to know something about the launch Elevala and launch Bronzewing. Both of these vessels were sunk during the Japanese landing in Milne Bay in August 1942.

DR. ROBERT HUNTLEY

Mrs. Ruth Evans of Old Toongabbie has donated to the Association's Photographic Collection photographs of Dr. Robert Huntley and his wife Isett Rachael. Leichhardt Historical Journal No.12, page 13 mentions Dr. Robert Huntley, the owner of Staines House, now the site of E. Bretts, sailmakers. Below is a transcript of a letter written by Dr. Huntley from Balmain on 27 June, 1848 to his daughter Caroline:

"My Dear Caroline,

I am very sorry I have not been able to buy you a side saddle such as you would like. The near - of the best quality and from £9 to £10 each, and Colonial made, plain (?), about £7.10, but I have heard of and seen a second hand one now in pawn if not redeemed in a week, which I can get for £4 or £10. Fred Isaac leaves tomorrow and he could not have taken the saddle, if I had bought it, as no horse will be sent down for him and he has promised me not to abuse the horse he will ride to the Downs for Miles and take 3 days for the Journey. The Carts for the Children Books etc etc. I shall pack in the Clothes Basket and Fred Isaac has promised to see them safely lodged at Brisbane like there be an opportunity of getting them on the "Mrineapuses" (?). I will do up separately and hope he will deliver them safely with this letter. Mr. Bowden tells he has rece'd Miles letter with the Cheque on Pike Preston that they have accepted it. I will enclose the shot with the other things.

I am sorry to say that the Orders on Capt. Scott are not yet paid nor the one on Capt. Dumeresque. I hear Nicol is come down. He is going to sue Capt. Scott for wages.

In consequence of the decision against the Bank of Australia, there will be many Insolvencies.

Hannibal Macarthur has filed his Schedule and many more are expected to follow. Boyd too are winding up their concerns. Mr. Gordon is now in Sydney but I have not yet seen him. Mr. & Mrs. Macarthur are going to Nanda (?) with (?) him till their affairs are settled.

I hope Miles has rec'd all my letters with the Bank afar(?) - (?) as well as the Chest of Drawers containing the Clock, Books and many other things. The pair of side Combs you wished for were I believe put in with them. The Watch no doubt Mr. Forbes has delivered. I know it to be a good one, and hope it will not be thought too large. We have received no letter from Bessie, nor from England, since I wrote last but the Packet is daily expected.

Would Miles like to join me in the Herald as I should be willing to pay half and you would receive it just as soon as this, I did not read it first. I have given up the Atlas.

We have hoped to have rece'd a letter from you by the Tasman (?) which came in last night but none has been delivered.

Old Isaac seems fully to have made up his mind to settle at Ipswich. He is doing nothing here and I suppose in a new settlement there would be some conveyancing.

Manager wishes me to thank you for your letter and she would answer it but her eyes will not - (?) of it by candle light. She was too busy in the day. She has put up 3 old shirts, thinking they would be useful in the Hospital, as well as some plain (?) like your Gingham Gown, supposing you may have some left and that together it may be enough to make one of the dear Children Frock. I have no particular news to tell you, having written many long letters lately. No great addition has been made to my Practice. It will be long before £100 annum can be made here. I have just in a few odd numbers of Gil Blas, one of Times Telescope, thinking they may amuse the men in the Hospital. The Panorama of London, I thought would please the Children old and young. Alfred talks of writing to George, but he does not always keep his promises that way. I am glad to say he is much better. I am afford well. They join with us in love to you all and not forgetting as usual lots of kisses to the children, believe me, My dear Caroline

Yours ever affect. Father
Rob. Huntley

P.S. Fany Norths/late Browns Husband is in the insolvent Court.

I have seen Mr. & Mrs. John Kent who came by the Tasman. His brother Wm. cannot yet dispose of his business."

(queries etc section)

CAPTAIN Frederic Henry TROUTON of Cliffdale House, which has since been demolished, in Looke's Street, was Manager of the Australian National Steamship Company. He was also Mayor of Balmain on two occasions. Born in 1826 in Cheshire, England, he married a woman called Harriet and died 19 September 1896. Any further information, such as years Frederic was mayor, date of death of Mrs Trouton, names of descendants, diaries, letters etc, requested by Mr & Mrs Marriott, PO Box 1, PORT FAIRY, VIC 3284. Phone: (055) 62 4529.

COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARD

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Have you noticed a rash of green and white plaques, attached to gate posts, letter boxes, front doors etc. throughout the Birchgrove area?

During November 1986, the people of Birchgrove were asked if they would like the Neighbourhood Watch scheme introduced to their area. The response was excellent, with a petition containing the signatures of over 200 of the occupants of 805 homes in the area was collected within a week. Those signing showed considerable enthusiasm and many more enquiries followed.

The petition was presented to the Police Community Relations department at their Enfield office in early December, but owing to the large number of groups wishing to establish the scheme in their area it wasn't until June this year that the first meeting was called.

The public meeting held at the Balmain Town Hall was well attended and the request for area co-ordinators had an excellent response.

Loiusa Road co-ordinator, Jacquie Johnstone, who lives at No. 28, urges residents to become involved in the scheme. She says that the principal things to do are;

- * put up a plaque on your house to warn burglars that you are a member of Neighbourhood Watch.
- * report any suspicious activities by dialling 000.
- * participate in Operation Identification.. This involves taking photographs of small valuables such as jewellery, stamps, coins, paintings etc. Also, an electric etching pen can be obtained so that you can mark your electrical appliances with an identification symbol or number.

Interested? Join an established Group or form a Group in your area.

For further information contact the Community Liaison Officer, Sergeant Doug Tysoe at the Balmain Police station - 810-0777 - or the Police Community Relations Bureau - 334-4128.

Newsletter No.1, Area 104.

Kath Hamey.

Contributions Welcome

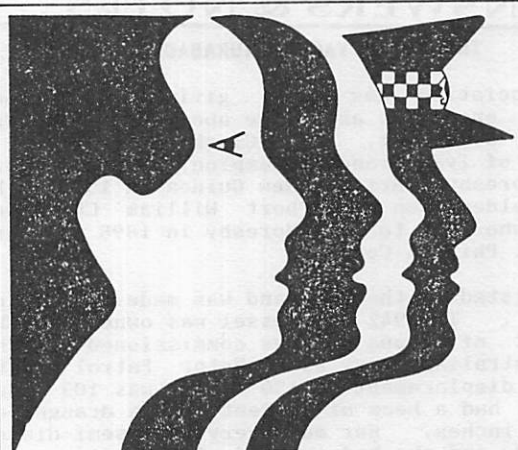
WE WANT NEWS !

If you have died, eloped, been married, sold out, been shot, been born, caught cold, been robbed, been qyped, bought a car, been visited, had company, been courting, stolen anything, sold your house, been snake bitten, cut a new tooth, bobbed your hair, been evicted, had an operation, been arrested, been in a fight, been to a party, gone to church, or done anything at all, tell us!

We want news!

(Balmain Observer 28 November 1935)

Well, perhaps not quite as blatantly as the 'Observer', but we're always interested in the off-beat, as long as it's in keeping with the aims of the Association.



Neighbourhood watch

WORKING TOGETHER

NSW POLICE

COMMUNITY CARING

CU
COMMERCIAL UNION
INSURANCE

NRMA INSURANCE



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".