

the balmain
association

NEWS SHEET

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COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT EFFECTS

Welcome to the start of another year which greets us with many of our local problems unresolved and new ones arising. Balmainites battle on whether or not it is a Bicentenary.

In our last issue we explained that open space needs and control on excessive residential development can be achieved by a formula enforced through law. This was that:

- all future residential development on the Balmain Peninsula be restricted to the least dense zoning. Residential 2b(1) of 100 persons/hectare, unless there is a substantial increase of pro rata public open space, in accordance with the standard of 3 ha/1000 people endorsed by the NSW Urban Planning & Environment Coalition.

It was also explained that this formula allowed our area to contribute to urban consolidation because 100 p/ha is over twice the average metropolitan density.

Controlling the impact of commercial development is more difficult. Councils are introducing stricter off-street parking standards, but unlike residential development, it is more difficult to calculate the traffic generating capacity of commercial projects, as residents of Barr Street can attest after the redevelopment of the Big Sister factory site.

Whether or not new residential and commercial development provides adequate off-street parking, the overall build up of traffic puts great strain on an archaic road system. Measures taken to facilitate flow of traffic, such as roundabouts, traffic lights and parking restrictions reduce the amount of on-street parking for the occupants of the properties without parking facilities. Giving the desirability of preserving the historic character of Balmain, the parking needs of people living in or using existing buildings without off-street parking must be seen as legitimate and a priority in road use. It is not a phenomenon of greedy, grasping trendies insisting on having more cars than the rest of society fortunately living in newer or more spacious suburbs.

Traffic experts also have less understanding than local residents of how road networks will be used, whatever the theory. For example, the planners believe that the largely non-resident workforce for the proposed White Bay commercial development will come down Victoria Road and enter the Peninsula at White Bay. Experienced residents speculate that much of the traffic will enter the Peninsula at Terry Street and reach White Bay by way of residential streets. On past performances, too, with the Unilever site, there is no guarantee that workers will use on-site parking, even if provided.

All in all, the approach fairest to residents is to minimise commercial development density taking account of all these factors. Planners should remember that the best 'experts' are often residents. Only the wearer knows how the shoe fits.

Jane Ward

SHOOT-OUT AT MORT'S DOCK

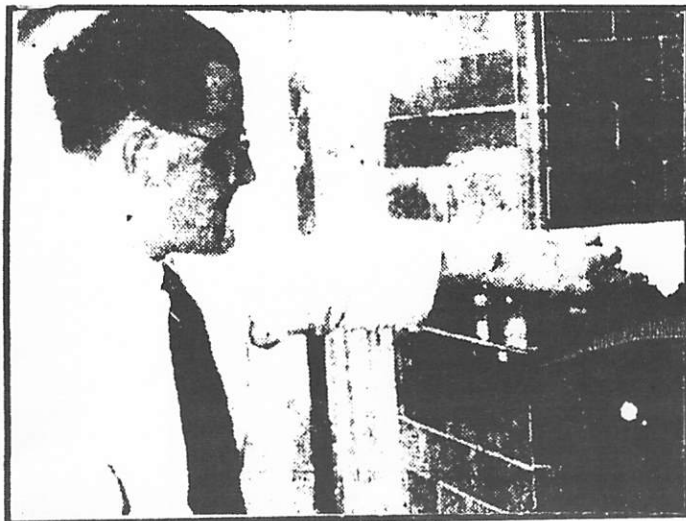
How time flies. Bonnie Davidson recalls that on February 3rd it will be 39 years since the attempted armed hold-up of the Mort's Dock payroll, which left the shop of her mother (Mrs. Adolfson) with many bullet holes. The episode is particularly significant to Bonnie as it occurred just one week before her marriage to Ray.

Two masked bandits, one armed with a sub-machine gun and the other with a revolver, fought a gun battle with the escorts. Harold Sale, a special constable standing in Mort St., was amazed to see the two men, dressed in boiler-suits and with handkerchiefs over their faces, rush the pay-roll car as it entered the gates. The tommy-gun bandit wounded Sydney Tuck, clerk, in the arm as he ran from the car with the money-bag. Mr. Sale's revolver jammed when he attempted to fire at the men and he had to take cover in the shop doorway. Bonnie's father, thinking that a movie was being made, had come to the door just as the machine-gun bullets struck the doorway and the shop front. There were at least six bursts of fire which hit cars and neighbouring homes. The bandits escaped in a stolen car, which was later found in Gow St. and a launch which they abandoned in Snells Bay.

The infamous criminals, Dugan and Meers, were subsequently convicted for the attempted hold-up and spent several years in jail. The bullet holes can still be seen in the walls of the old Star Hotel.

The Sydney Morning Herald, Saturday, Feb. 4, 1950 3

TOMMY-GUN BANDITS FOILED; ESCORTS SAVE £12,000 PAY-ROLL



Harold Sale points to bullet holes in the wall near where he was standing with Mr. Adolfson during the attempted hold-up.

PRESURE FOR DEVELOPMENT

The recent sacking of Mr. Matt Singleton, Minister for Administration Services has vividly demonstrated that the change of government has brought little comfort to people threatened with large development projects.

This is especially true for Balmain and Rozelle residents because of the number of attractive sites in their locality. Over 40 tenders and expressions of interest have been made for the Elcom properties - White Bay and Balmain Power Stations.

There is glimmer of hope in the guidelines that the Town Planning officers of Leichhardt Council have prepared for the development of the Balmain Power Station and adjoining Chemplex(Monsanto) sites. They are exhibited at the Administration Centre, Leichhardt and at the Balmain Library. Submissions can be made before the end of February.

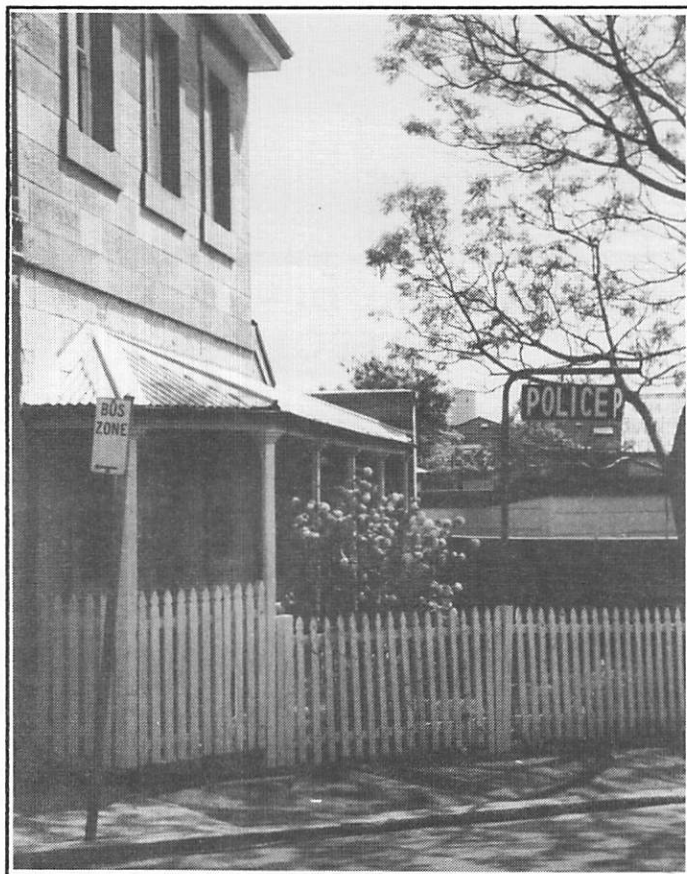
A group of residents approached the Balmain Association last December before attending a Council meeting to express their concern with the medium density housing complex designed by architect, Mr. Phillip Cox for Mr. Kerry Packer. Under pressure from the Government, the density has been increased. The Aldermen and their officers tried to allay the fears that harbour views may be lost by pointing to the way that the buildings step down the slope.

However, the Balmain Association is not convinced that vehicular access is satisfactory. Although the guidelines mention that new streets are required, the plan does not show them and is rather vague. Victoria Road access to the Balmain Peninsula is limited to four intersections and they are inadequate for their peak loads. The one-way streets, Wellington and Terry will be hard-pressed to serve the increased traffic that will be generated by the new housing. It may be necessary to widen part of Terry St. to convert it to two-way traffic to accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed marina and the car park near the Iron Cove Bridge.

THIRD RUNWAY THREAT

Balmain is not on the flight path to Sydney Airport but its quiet is threatened by renewed efforts to build a third runway.

Because it would be located at the northern edge of the airport the new runway's flight path would include Balmain and noisier aircraft such as DC9's and 727's are more suited to the short length.



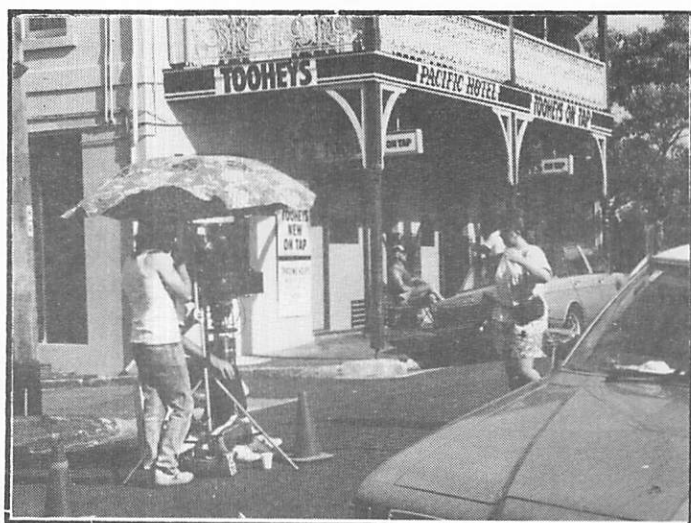
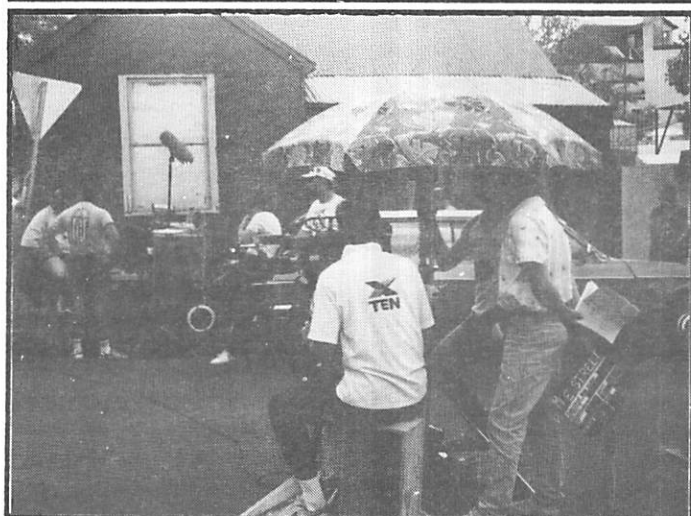
SOAPY SAGA OF SUBURBIAN MYTH

Sharp-eyed readers may have noticed something unusual about the photograph of the Watch House in our last issue. A new 'POLICE' sign had appeared.

However, anyone passing the building most days would see nothing extra because the sign is only erected when filming takes place for the new TV soapy, "E Street". External scenes of the Watch House as well as other Balmain locations are used to portray the mythical suburb of "Westside". Luckily, the fence had been repaired just in time for the first shots. The hire of location will help the restoration funds.

For an upmarket launch of the series last month, Channel X built a tree-house restaurant among the she-oaks on Long Nose Point and brought their guests over from the Opera House by ferry.

The lower pictures show the crew shooting scenes at the Pacific Hotel, Stephen Street.



GOURLIE'S CORNER

The Balmain Branch of the Central District Ambulance was stationed at 4 Montague Street in the early 1930's. One ambulance serviced Balmain, Rozelle, Leichhardt and Drummoyne and the vehicle was a Nash.

This station was transferred to Drummoyne in the late 1930's but the old Balmain station still remains. A hire car service took over the premises and after World War II, a taxi-cab service operated until the early 1960's. The last person to occupy the building was the late Mr. Arthur Pillinger, Second-hand Furniture Dealer. Mr. Pillinger opened a furniture shop 30 years ago in the area of the Esso Garage, Darling St.



Left: Headquarters of the Balmain Ambulance Service, 1919 in Montague Street. Picture from Govt. Printing Office, Ultimo. Above: The building as it is today.

CAROLS, CANDLES & COALITIONS

It takes an event like the the "Carols & Candles" last December for the Music 2041 committee to fully appreciate the community spirit of Balmain people.

Once again the threat of rain forced the venture indoors to accept Father Titmuss' hospitality in St Augustine Church.

The Waverly/Bondi Beach Band, conducted by Cliff Goodchild, brought the professionalism of well-performed carols, while David Lathwell excelled himself as Master-of-Ceremonies. We were all delighted with the liturgical dance group, "Daughters of the King", coordinated by Peggy Francis, and to hear the contribution of the Music 2041 choir.

Behind the scenes, many others assisted to make this a very successful event. The Balmain Estate Agency provided the initial sponsorship, without which we could not have undertaken the project. Brash's loan of a keyboard, Leichhardt Council staff and Balmain Fire Station officers to assist us wherever possible, particularly with publicity and Charles Kent and Tony Romando of Balmain Rotary, were there to light the candles and take care of the audience, which jammed the church. Truly a community event. Through the good work of these and many other people, we raised over \$600 for Balmain Hospital.

With all that was involved with "Carols & Candles", the Music 2041 committee had little time to complete our proposal to amalgamate with the Balmain Association. I am pleased to report that this is now in draft form, ready for discussion by both organisations.

Beth Willis

NSW INC MEANS HIGH RATES?

Many Balmain homeowners have been hit with massive increases in rates because of the new system, introduced by Local Government Minister David Hay last November.

At the core of the problem is the State Government decision to use valuations later than 1980 in determining the rate.

The minister has stated that for everyone who had a hefty rate increase there was a significant number who had a decrease. Does anyone believe that they will actually get a reduction in anything in these times? Can anyone show the Balmain Association an example of this unlikely occurrence?

Local councils are already threatening to reduce their services. NSW Inc is determined to charge more for less.

ON SALE AT THE WATCH HOUSE
Leichhardt Historical Journals in the series No's 5
through 15 are available. No 16 due soon.

BRASS BAND RECITAL

The Leichhardt Municipal Brass Band struck the right chord at the Bicentennial Park, Rozelle on Sunday 29th January.

Balmain residents won't miss out with another free concert to be held at Elkington Park on Sunday 26th February between 2pm and 4pm.

Under the leadership of Arthur Satchell, residents will enjoy the band's rousing renditions of popular favourites.

EXHIBITION AT THE WATCH HOUSE

• **March 3rd - 9th**

Works on Paper - Ann Sheridan & Larri
Current works on paper. Etchings & Screen Prints

• **Writers Aloft**

Meetings and poetry reading. Open to the public.
2nd Sunday in month at 6pm.



BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB

LAGERSTROEMIA

Better known as Crepe Myrtle, Lagerstroemia does best in warm climates as they dislike frosts, but the deciduous types do well in Sydney. Crepe Myrtles look fine as lawn specimens. Cuttings can be taken of the hard wood and planted in sandy loam. Pruning in mid-winter keeps them in good shape.

Their companion plant, the Cassia (Senna) provides a splendid golden contrast to the Crepe Myrtle's pink, red or purple flowers. Both plants need an open, sunny position in well drained sandy loam, so they can be planted side by side. Prune Cassia back hard after flowering. They are grown from seed. Feed both plants on blood and bone.

HIBISCUS

Hibiscus love the sun, so they do best on the north side of a wall away from cold winds. The evergreen type is the most popular but there is a less well known perennial Hibiscus moscheutos that has very wide, single flowers in red, pink and white. It dies back to ground level in winter and shoots the following spring to a height of one metre.

Hibiscus are heavy feeders. Give them rich, sandy loam, with Dynamic lifter added monthly during summer and autumn. They have shallow roots, so must be well watered and mulched with leaf mould. Do not use lime in the soil. Prune evergreens in September. Place woody cuttings in pots of rich loam to produce new plants.

The deciduous one, called Rose of Sharon, has white flowers that turn pink the next day. This type should be pruned in mid-winter.

Cut half-way down the shrub as it is a vigorous grower.

Margaret Ford

The Balmain Garden Club meets on the third Saturday of each month at the Watch House at 1.30pm.

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

We hope that you noticed the enhancement in the December issue due to our use of Ventura Desktop Publisher and as we become more proficient with it there will be further innovations.

However, style and the mechanics of printing are not the entirety and your help with interesting contributions is encouraged. Text on disk is preferred (Wordstar, Multimate, Wordperfect, MS Word) but anything will be accepted. Drawings and cartoons are welcomed. Deadline for copy is the last Wednesday in the month.

WATCH HOUSE AFTERNOON

The Watch House is open every Saturday from 1 to 3pm
Call in for coffee

The Balmain Association meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Watch House, 179 Darling Street, Balmain.

Send mail c/o PO Box 57, BALMAIN, 2041
Contact Steve South on 810 1411 for renting of the Watch House

Our editorial phone is 818 4954

Don't forget that Membership renewals are now due!

For a truly modest sum you get:

- membership of the prestigious Balmain Association
- regular delivery of the News Sheet
- the warm, inner glow that comes from knowing that your subscription contributes to the well-being of the area and its inhabitants through the Association's activities

and much, much, more!



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".