

the balmain
association

NEWS SHEET

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FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

RUNWAY THREE?

The recent Federal Government capitulation to State Government pressure and vested interests promoting the expansion of Mascot Airport epitomises everything that is third rate, cynical and chaotic about urban development and economic decision-making in Australia.

This decision should not be received as a fait accompli. Defeatism and apathy are far too prevalent in Australian thinking. They must be overcome and the real facts and alternatives publicised.

RUNNING FREE?

By now, members of the Association should be well aware that our area has sub-standard open space, gauged in general, statistical terms. Our municipality ranks 37th out of 40 in the provision of public open space. We have 1.67 hectares per 1000 persons whereas the median for the Sydney region is 4.25 h/1000. Lower than us are Burwood 1.47, Marrickville 1.46, and Ashfield 1.11.

What does all this mean in non-statistical terms? What should we aspire to, especially now that we are being targeted for urban consolidation, one of the arguments for which is that populations must be located to take advantage of existing facilities? How do our active and passive facilities compare with other areas, in particular the newer, outer suburbs which proponents of urban consolidation repeatedly tell us lack facilities?

The answer is badly in general terms as you know, and worse in specific terms, particularly in the provision of active facilities that are necessary for the fitness and recreation of all age groups, especially younger people.

We don't have a golf course (Marrickville has). We have no year round swimming facility, and Leichhardt Pool is over-crowded and often closed at times of peak public demand. Leichhardt Municipality has only 4 netball courts compared with 146 in Blacktown, 142 in Bankstown, 139 in Warringah, 107 in Lane Cove, 105 in Mosman, 100 in

Sutherland, 73 in Liverpool, 47 in Sydney, 34 in Randwick, 33 in Concord and 26 in Marrickville. We are similarly deprived in terms of tennis courts, larger playing fields, bicycle paths and skate board areas.

The Balmain peninsula is particularly deprived and the situation is exacerbated by the increasing development, the loss of defacto open space, the use of our local open space by the wider public and the topographical isolation of residents from adjacent areas and their facilities.

Areas designated in the past as future open space are rapidly dwindling, but we must not be defeatist about residual opportunities. Site C at Mort Bay must be a priority for public open space with a regained vista of the harbour. The Balmain Power Station and Chemplex sites must yield some active hard court facilities for the Balmain High School, and the White Bay area must accommodate some netball courts, tennis courts, bicycle tracks and a low-key oval for local schools. The White Bay facilities are particularly important as it is possible to position them away from residential areas.

All these sites are government-owned land which can and must be transferred for open space use. Land value and urban consolidation must not be rationalisations for further alienation and deprivation.

The State Government was prepared to spend a large amount of money on sporting facilities at Homebush for the 1996 Olympics. That area is already comparatively well endowed with open space and sporting amenities. The Government should be prepared to spread expenditure now on much-needed facilities for inner city residents who are not just short-term visitors.

(Note: Open space ratios are from the 1986 census. Playing fields data comes from the 1985 Dept. of Environment & Planning Open Space Survey, which gives the most current relative figures available).

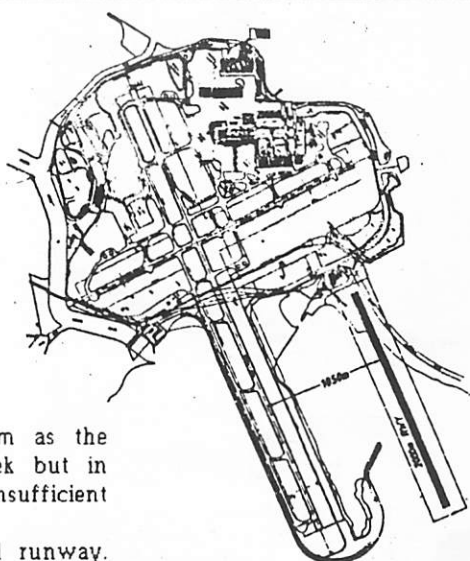
Jane Ward

CAUTION - THIRD RUNWAY

The Federal Government decision for the airport extension has dislodged all caution from the powerful business lobby and the State Government. To highlight their insincerity, as soon as the 37% increase in aircraft movements was accepted, aviation interests are advocating a 100% increase with simultaneous landings and take-offs. Mr. Greiner has implied that the environmental study is unnecessary and work should be started.

The third runway is undoubtedly an economic proposition in the short term as the Government is faced with a large outlay for a new airport at Badgery's Creek but in the long term it will be the most expensive solution. The extra capacity will be insufficient for the last decade of this century.

The accompanying drawing shows the position of the medium spaced parallel runway.



GOURLIES CORNER

BALMAIN R.S.L.

In the 1920's returned servicemen from the Balmain area held their meetings in the Soldiers Memorial Hall, St Andrews Congregational Church, corner of Curtis Road and Darling Street. The hall remains there today in Darling St. besides the church and the name is still over the door.

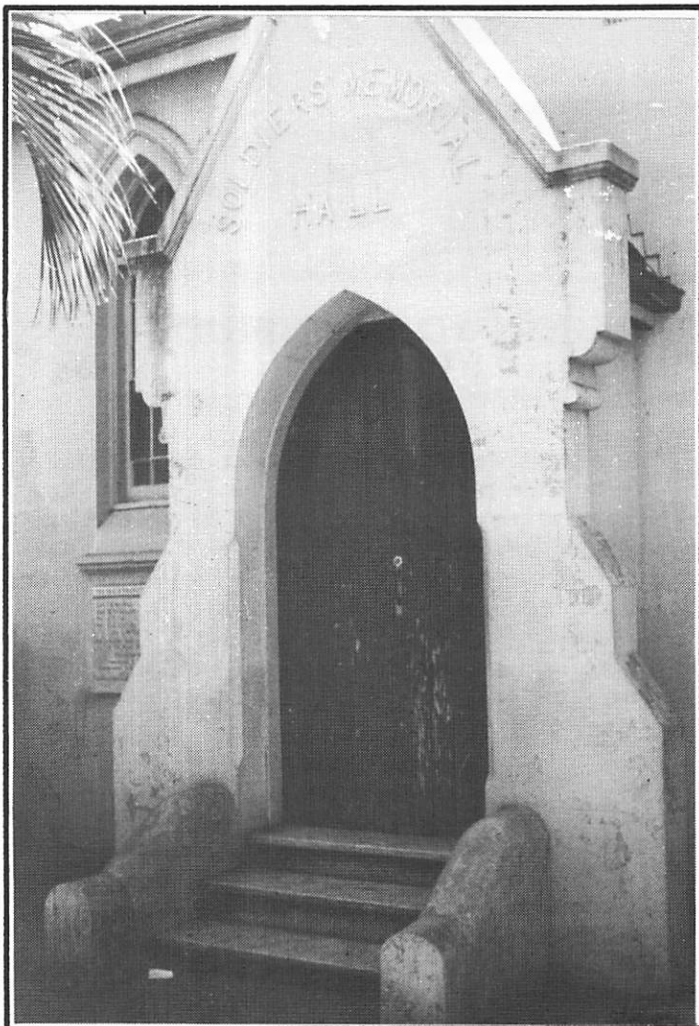
The foundation stone has the following inscription:

*This Hall is erected to the memory of
Capt. T.R. MacNee Capt. H.L. Henley
Serg. W.H. Burlace Pte. W.G. Henley
Pte. A.R. Rae Pte. J.L. Shepherd
Pte. C.D. Butler Pte. E. Bolus
Pte. G.W. Gilberthorpe
who laid down their lives for liberty & truth
in the Great War 1914-1919
This stone was laid by
Commander E.C. Boyle, V.C.
commanding HMA Submarine Flotilla
30 August 1919*

The beginnings of the Balmain-Rozelle R.S.L.

The first meeting of about 20 returned servicemen was held in the rear section of Mr. W. Warburton's Tattoo Shop in Darling St., opposite Gladstone Park.

The money was raised by public subscription to enable the Soldiers Memorial Hall to be erected as a recreation centre and meeting place for the returned men of the district. At the time the returned serviceman's badge portrayed the figures of a soldier and sailor only.

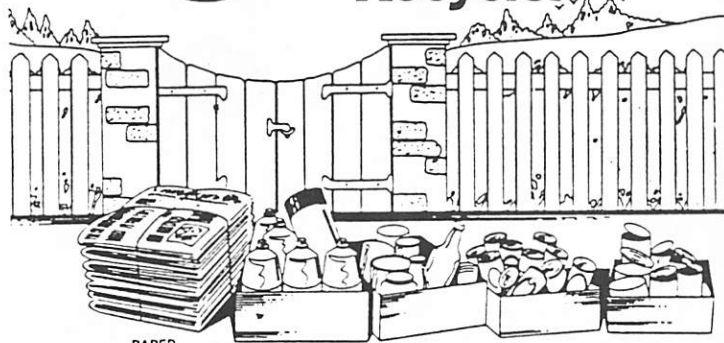


In 1926 another S. & S. Memorial Hall was built at 442 Darling St. (still standing). The property adjacent was purchased and the present R.S.L. building was erected in 1972. A showcase in the foyer contains memorabilia of World War I & II.

Leichhardt Municipal Council RECYCLING SERVICE



**'Do the
Right Thing.
Recycle.'**



PAPER

PET BOTTLES GLASS BOTTLES & JARS ALUMINIUM CANS FOOD CANS

Please place all glass bottles and jars as well as newspapers and cardboard, PET soft drink bottles (with the distinctive dark base cup) aluminium cans and clean steel food cans, in cartons outside your front gate on the night before...

THE BALMAIN VINTAGE YACHT RACE AND THE BALMAIN REGATTA

The lucky winner of the Balmain Vintage Yacht Race Raffle, run by Balmain Rotary, will have in their possession a very rare and exceptional photograph of a sketch of the Balmain Regatta, dated on 14th November 1864. The proceeds will be kindly donated by Rotary towards the restoration of the Balmain Watch House.

The photograph will be displayed during the Association's Heritage Week Exhibition being held at the Watch House on 15, 16 and 22nd April. Tickets will cost \$1 and will be available at the Watch House.

This sketch and others of the Snail's Bay area between 1860 and 1864 by George Penkivil Slade were shown at a special exhibition at the Watch House in September 1987.

**THE RAFFLE WILL BE DRAWN ON
SUNDAY 23RD APRIL.**

BALMAIN RESIDENTS OF YESTERYEAR

JOHN CALDECOTT (1819-73) was born in Manchester, England, the son of a soldier. He became a blacksmith and sailed from Liverpool as an assisted migrant in the **CHAMPION**, arriving in Sydney in February, 1842. Also on board was **ANN JANE COATES** (1821-1902), a nurse born in Liverpool, whom he married at St. James Church, Sydney in 1842. After living at Black Creek (present day Braxton), the Caldecotts return to Sydney where John Caldecott commenced working at Mort's Dock about 1865. The family lived in firstly in Adolphus Street, then Campbell and in "Kincora Cottage", College Street.

In March 1873 John Caldecott, by this time an engineer and third foreman at the Dock, and in charge of the night shift, fell about 4m from a ladder whilst connecting a steam pipe to a steam hammer. He died a few minutes later. The Coroner's inquest was held in the Forth and Clyde Hotel.

His widow remained on in Balmain, living her last 15 years in "Fairlie Cottage", the present day 38 Llewellyn Street.

Several of the Caldecott's ten children settled in Balmain. One of the daughters **JANE CALDECOTT (1846-1925)** married **ALEXANDER BOWEN** in 1865. By 1873 Alexander had established himself as a painter-decorator in Balmain, living in Darling Street, near the Town Hall. Other business interests, as advertised in The Balmain Observer of 1886, were "House and land agent, House, sign and ornamental painter, Houses and land for sale, Moneys to lend upon Mortgage. Alexander Bowen was a member of two masonic lodges and conducted the Campbell Street Presbyterian Choir for many years.

In 1889 he built "Currawinya" at 90 (now 94) Elliott Street where he lived until his death in 1914. Members of the Bowen family lived in the house until the mid 1930s.

The Bowens had 13 children, the eldest of whom, **EDWARD JOSEPH BOWEN**, was an architect in Balmain. The New South Wales Cyclopaedia of 1907 credits him with "all the Public Buildings in Balmain with the exception of the Post Office and the Town Hall. Edward Bowen represented Balmain in local government for eight years".

[Information supplied by Mr. John Ellis of Westleigh.]



Clontarf cottage before restoration

UNUSUAL BEQUESTS

Thomas Vallance Wran, Sculptor, 1885, left his son Harry Walton, all his Masonic trinkets, collection of silver and Copper Gins, Shells and other Curios, all his clothing all drawings, models, drawing instruments architectural work and tools and the benefit of all contracts in which he might be engaged at the time of his death.

His son Harry Walton Wran of 4 Caroline Street, whose will was drawn up in 1901, left some strange bequests: To his son Thomas Wran a large stone carving "Dead Larks", to Joseph Wran a stone carving "Dead Linnet" and a musical box to his son George Wran.

CLONTARF -- BEFORE RESTORATION

Reaching south from the ridge to Johnston's Bay
Sheriff Blake's home speculation estate lay:

eleven sandstone cottages did grace the land,
ruined Clontarf one of five that still stand.

The land was scarred, and lost the cockatoo,
gone the gums and wattles, gone the kangaroo;
and the architect Bibb's Georgian lines took shape
in timber and stone on a cleared landscape.

'Twas Soldier Blake who gave the house the name
of Ireland's battlefield of ancient fame

where died King Bryan in defeating the Dane
at Clontarf, where ten thousand men were slain.

There stands the house, or what remains today:
crumbling sandstone, timbers burnt or in decay,

imprisoned by confining barbed wire plait,
its grounds submerged 'neath pensioner flats.

Land once pledged to the people for open space,
clandestinely filched -- a lasting disgrace.

But goodwill and friendship long abiding
for the underprivileged in the flats residing.

Ruthless government and its bureaucracy
and a council that shunned democracy,

joined forces to pilfer the people's park,
a place where children could romp and lark.

Then these powers that be with evil intent
sought their deed to conceal, turn aside discontent

with crocodile tears 'midst the uproar
by claiming concern for the homeless poor.

But this ruse to cover a shoddy act
on people betrayed had no impact:

why steal land, spend needed funds, on a few new
flats,

with Glebe renewals half-done, left to the rats?

At election time, people's anger was clear,
open council replaced the insincere.

Now work has begun to establish a shrine
of people's power 'gainst the Philistine.

And those who rose to demonstrate and strive
and struggle strongly to keep the park alive,

now labour at the task of restoration

of the house that stands sadly in isolation.

They labour mightily to clear and clean,
removing the vandals work that did demean,

and the old house, now bereft of its roof,
stands mutely defiant and proudly aloof.

Its chequered career soon will come to an end
when skills of craftsmen and volunteers mend

the havoc that foundries and vandals have wrought
and restore the lines that the architect caught.

Issy Wymer

EXHIBITION AT THE WATCH HOUSE

HERITAGE WEEK Photographic Exhibition

Sat 15th, Sun 16th, Sat 22nd April

1 - 5pm Watch House

Leichhardt Municipal Brass Band

Sat 15th 2 - 4pm

Next to the Watch House

Balmain Vintage Yacht Race & Fair

Sun 23rd April 12pm Elkington Park

COMING

Snapper Island Barbecue

20th May 10.30am - 3pm

Adults \$10 Concession \$6 Children free

Includes Ferry, fireplace, tables & seats.

Refreshments available. Contact 818 4954



BALMAIN GARDEN CLUB

THANK YOU JESSICA

Members of our Association know Jessica Murray through her 'Garden Notes', the only regular feature of the News Sheet for many years. Her clear, humorous style encouraged us to experiment and improve our gardens.

Jessica has recently retired from the presidency of the Balmain Garden Club after holding the position for over twelve years. The Club first met informally in March 1975, from a notice in Woolworths, but drifted for a year. In June 1976 it was reorganised and Jessica became its first president. The Club's energies raised \$500 through street stalls to equip itself with a reference library, and then proceeded with its various interests.

The Balmain Association offered the club the use of the Watch House as a meeting venue and somewhere to keep its library and we have benefited from their efforts. Many of us will remember the popular 'Garden Walk', an annual event of the seventies and early eighties which attracted hundreds of visitors to Balmain; the extensive sales of plants to raise money for functions - the best effort being \$1100 in 1989 with the Balmain Hospital Auxiliary; and the two day display of old-fashioned roses which filled the Watch House with perfume and people.

Jessica's driving force is also remembered by many members who have been shamed into doing something about the hostile weeds at the Watch House. Easy-care, hardy perennials, such as shasta daisies, geraniums and succulents, were planted and the miserable jacaranda was staked and attended to until it struggled to reach above the verandah to get sunlight.

We have been rewarded by tapping her vast store of knowledge on gardening, on the history of gardens and the arts. She still is a member of the Garden Club but has handed over the presidency to Margaret Ford who is also writing the Garden Club column.

FUCHSIAS

The potting mix for fuchsias is as follows: 1 bucket of coarse sand (crushed sand stone) and 3 buckets of pot and peat mix. The plants will rot away if the soil is too wet, but pots have to be watered every day in dry weather.

Be sure there is no draft. I use a screen of fine plastic shade cloth to keep the south wind at bay. If grown in

OUR HOUSE WATCH

*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

Our editorial phone is 818 4954

*Interested artists, potters, sculptors etc. who would like to
organise an exhibition in the Watch House are urged to
contact Steve South on 810 1411. The Watch House can
also be made available as a meeting place for local
organisations.*

the ground, mulch with cow manure making sure that it does not touch the fuchsias plants. Add some blood and bone. For pot-grown plants use osmocote (3 months type) to increase flowers. To grow standard fuchsias gently pinch off all side shoots with finger and thumb, then stake up the one and only main stem. Nip off all leaves that appear below the head of the plant. An extra layer of mulch will be necessary for standard fuchsias. Softwood cuttings can be taken in autumn or spring. Pot in light sandy loam.

Margaret Ford

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



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:

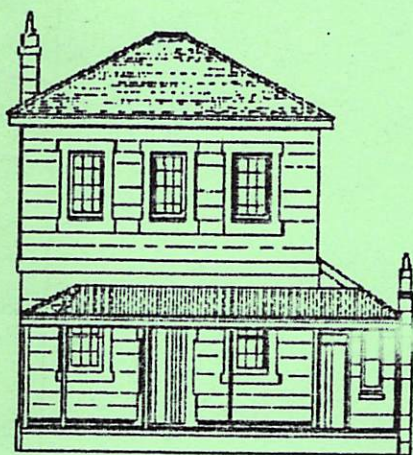
ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (including News Sheet Delivery in Balmain-Birchgrove-Rozelle)

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".



**THE BALMAIN ASSOCIATION
HERITAGE WEEK**

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

Sat 15th, Sun 16th, Sat 22nd April

1pm to 5pm

LEICHHARDT MUNICIPAL BRASS BAND

Sat 15th April 2pm to 4pm

**Dawn Fraser, MP & Mayor Doug Spedding
in attendance**

FREE ADMITTANCE

WATCH HOUSE 179 DARLING ST

contact 818 4954 or 810 5185