

NEARING THE CRUNCH

Resident groups are preparing for the imminent release of our municipal planners' report on the five major development sites. The planners are to be commended for a herculean effort under unreasonable State Government pressure, but residents are still concerned at the limited public involvement and the fact that there is no formal provision for a full public discussion of the planners' submission and further refinement before the Council deliberation.

Not surprisingly, BURST (Balmain United Residents' Strategic Task Force) is investigating all possible courses of action to secure an environmentally appropriate overall plan, especially in the light of conclusions of the Traffic Report Stage I which recommend against the proposed rezoning under the present road system.

BURST delegates have met with the local MP, Dawn Fraser, who is very supportive and the Chief Town Planner, Allan Coker, who gave as much information as he could legally. The Minister of Planning, Mr Hay, has declined a meeting but the

shadow Minister, Tony Doyle, has agreed to an urgent meeting to discuss the planning issues and the role of the Labor alderpersons in the political impasse at Leichhardt Council.

Mr Doyle was a guest speaker at the Urban Environment Coalition Conference on 28th July, where he strongly supported public participation in planning and cited Leichhardt Council as an example of unacceptable blocking. Mr Hay declined an invitation to speak or be represented.

The policies of the UEC on planning, public participation and conservation give weight to the call for a plan for Balmain and show the legitimacy of local concerns and claims in a much wider context.

Similarly, local demands that remaining foreshore and headland areas of the Peninsula must be public open-space echo the call for public acquisition or retention of waterfront land at Lavender Bay, Strickland House, Middle Harbour and Callan Park. Resident environmental groups know that their local proposals will assure a long-term benefit for the

whole public and that any site alienation or lost opportunity is irresponsible. Groups are working together to secure and link as much as possible of these scarce and finite areas.

Vincent Serventy, President of the Wild Life Preservation Society, is spearheading these moves with a "Save Sydney Harbour" campaign. On 29th July there was a public meeting at Lavender Bay and there will be a further gathering on Sunday 19th August at Long Nose Point at 10am and a Heritage Walk at Watsons Bay at 2pm (see box below).

The critical problem for public waterfront acquisition continues to be the failure by all authorities to devise a satisfactory funding mechanism for dedication of publicly owned land and for purchase of privately owned land such as Ballast Point. It is imperative that growing public demand for foreshore land become a political and economic priority at all levels of government. In continuing to fight this battle Balmain residents are truly visionary.

Jane Ward

Noise

As we wrote in the last issue, noise and its adverse health effects are increasingly a topic of public discussion. Recently, Margaret Throsby's radio program on 2BL conducted a lively debate on a proposal to allow 24 hour building activity in the CBD. One caller, a noise consultant, said that "a noise level of 50dBA, which is lower than talking, would wake 50% of the population" and that such interference with sleep degrades people's motor reaction next day by 20%.

Noise is usually referred to in terms of loudness and is measured in decibels - dBA. Decibels are determined on a logarithmic scale - e.g. 40 dBA is twice as loud as 30dBA and 50dBA is twice as loud as 40dBA.

Noise can cause a wide range of medical and psychological problems arising as a result of disturbed sleep patterns, interference to speech and listening, interruption of concentration and general annoyance. Loud noise is generally a greater problem but quieter, intermittent

and individually discernable 'messages' can be equally deleterious.

With increasing pressures for urban consolidation, new airport facilities, more traffic, more mixed land use and more extroverted life styles the conflict between noise intruders and noise victims has never been sharper nor more closely analysed.

Inner city residents experience greater noise exposure and have least capacity to safeguard by appropriate planning of urban areas and dwellings. Modern buildings can be planned to insulate from noise, but modifications to older buildings are not viable or virtually impossible.

A major problem is that of double standards - i.e. people prepared to inflict noise on others that they would not find acceptable themselves. People should be educated to be considerate or be compelled by law to respect the rights of others to quiet.

There were two errors in the table in last issue. The train passing station has a noise level of 85dB and 'Pop' should have read 'Pop group'.

Foreshore Appreciation Walk

On Sunday, 19th August at 2pm the Woollahra History and Heritage Society is conducting a Heritage Walk from Watsons Bay to Rose Bay taking in every accessible point along the foreshore and dealing with its particular history. Meet at the Rotunda in Robertson Park. Cost \$3 single, \$5 family. Take Bus 324 or 325 from Circular Quay or Elizabeth Street. More information from Woollahra Library, Ph 327 7818.

When do you think this was written?

"Practically, Sydney Harbour has now become a pond in a privately owned and guarded paddock. Sydney visitors are disgusted at the scarcity of foreshore reserves and anathemas are freely hurled at those responsible for this vandalism of Nature's gifts".

No, it's not from a current environmental claim! It's from the Harbour Foreshores Vigilance Committee to the Royal Commission for the Improvement of the City of Sydney and its Suburbs, 1908.

25 Years of the Association

The Balmain Association was formed in September 1965 at the instigation of Sibyl Masterman and the preliminary meetings were held in her home on Long Nose Point. The first public meeting was held in November 1965 and the first News Sheet was published in April 1966. As her own pet project, Mrs Masterman took on the rehabilitation of the derelict Watch House as headquarters and soon after working bees were organised.

In its first year the Association was active in campaigning for public libraries and became involved in protests on the development of White Bay and Morts Dock as container terminals. The Askin Government ignored local objections and our president, Dr John Power, after attending a session at Parliament House on February 28th 1967, said "Today Balmain was spat upon by Parliament."

The campaign raged for a number of years, when the residents, especially those of Mort Street, were subjected to the pollution and danger from many semi-trailers. They forced a curfew and a boom was erected to prevent the transport of containers outside the working hours.

Late in 1967 unsuccessful attempts were made to prevent the demolition of "Birchgrove House", the oldest house on the peninsula. There was another protest against chemical storage tanks in Vincent Street and Aldermen Origlass and Wyner were expelled from the Labor Party for their support.

June 1968 saw the signing of the lease for the Watch House. In March 1969 power was connected to the Watch House

and the first evening meeting was held there. By June the membership had increased to 412 and a Drama Group was formed. The Watch House was officially opened to the public on 12th April 1970 to celebrate the Cook Bicentenary. On 14th January 1971 Sibyl Masterman died. The kitchen annex was built in June 1972 and the triangular block adjoining the Watch House (site of the second Presbyterian Church) was leased to the Association in November 1972. The News Sheet became a monthly publication in July 1975 and the history group led by Peter Reynolds was active in the researching of Balmain houses.

In 1974 the independents lost power on the Leichhardt Council and Labor under Mayor Rodwell rejected the 1974 Town Plan claiming that developers were not being attracted. He said "We must have progressive development. Pull down the old houses in Balmain and replace them with commercial and high-rise. I don't want to live in a home unit, but plenty of others do." One of the houses threatened was *Clontarf Cottage*. The Association joined a widespread protest movement against the Rodwell/Casey 1976 Plan. Over 16,000 petition signatures were obtained in three weeks, but these were ignored until the Association made representations to the State Planning Commission and the plan was thrown out late in 1977.

The *Clontarf* action spread in 1976 when the Association offered to make the cottage safe from the weather and vandals until restoration. The history of the Balmain land grant "Half a Thousand Acres" by Peter Reynolds and Paul Flottmann was published by the Association in November 1976.

A second harbour crossing was proposed in 1981 and Balmain residents geared up for another battle and protests continued throughout 1982. The Clontarf Action Group was still active. Mort Bay Housing was lurking in the background and controversy broke out in 1984. The protests were organised by the Mort Bay Action Group as the Association had lost most of its experienced activists and was in the process of rebuilding.

"Around Balmain", compiled by Debbie Nicholls, was published in March 1986. Leading up to the Bicentenary, the Association and Balmain Rotary were preparing for the establishment of the historical plaques. A successful exhibition was set up in the Westpac Bank in April 1988 in conjunction with their Travelling Museum. A grant of \$2500 from the Department of the Environment was used for restoration of the Watch House stonework and floors. In July we welcomed the First Fleeters at the unveiling of the first of the Historical Plaques and we were the first to propose a moratorium on development on the peninsula. A group of volunteers, including some Association members, was formed to restore *Clontarf Cottage* and their success will be demonstrated when the building is officially opened on 25th August. The very successful Pubs Exhibition of last April is to be repeated by popular demand from October 13th to 21st.

There has never been any shortages of issues in Balmain and the Association is currently supporting BURST in the struggle to achieve a satisfactory development plan for the Peninsula. The Watch House is the focus of our general activity and most of our funds go towards the maintenance of this valuable building.

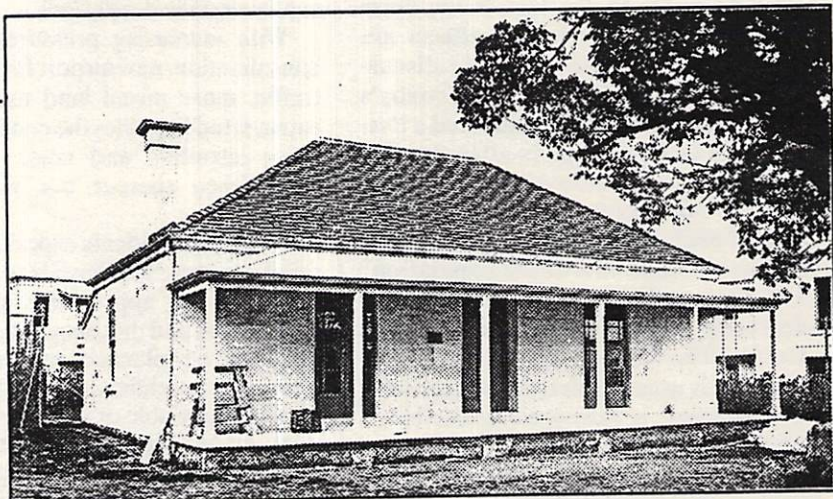
Glebe Island Bridge

The Road & Traffic Authority has revised its requirements for the new bridge at Glebe Island. Future plans envisage no use of Blackwattle Bay by large ships eliminating the need for a high-level bridge.

The RTA has suspended the contract for the foundations as a low level bridge will not be able to span the distance between Glebe Island and Pyrmont without additional supports. The penalty cost of the contract suspension is not known but the new design of the bridge will no doubt result in substantial savings.

The Glebe Society's 21st Anniversary was celebrated on 22nd July with a concert in St Johns Church, Glebe followed by a Cocktail Party in the Darling Mews restaurant. The Balmain Association was represented by the president, Jane Ward, with Kath and Val Hamey.

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Clontarf Cottage almost restored. Photo from The Glebe.

The Clontarf Park Restoration Committee invites you to attend the official opening of the newly restored Clontarf Cottage at 2.30pm on Saturday 25th August.

Robert Blake built the dwelling in 1844 at a cost of £450 and named it after

a part of Dublin, the site of a battle fought in 1014. Wards Stoves acquired it in 1947, with a foundry, a real eyesore of rusty, corrugated iron sheds. A symbol of Balmain's surrender to industry. The Committee is excited with the restoration which has taken 2 years and \$350,000.

GOURLIE'S CORNER

Fuel and Ice Merchants

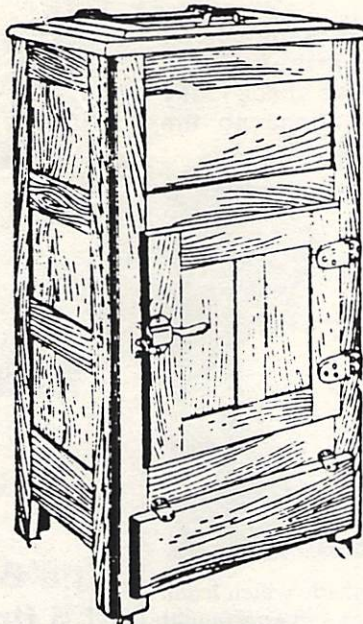
During the 30's Balmain had many these merchants, namely, Pont & Sons (corner of Mullens and Roseberry Streets), W Wardrop (Little Llewellyn Street), W Holly (corner of Mort and Cameron Streets), G Small (Darling Street), L Sloane (College Street), Andrew Bros (Darling Street where Balmain RSL carpark is today) and G Collings (Cameron Street).

Wood and coal were packed in bags containing 56 pounds, while coke had 70 pounds per bag. It was law that bags had to show the weight and this was done by attaching a tin tag to the bag with wire or a safety pin. Weights and Measure Inspectors often checked these merchants in the street.

In the summer months these merchants turned to trading in ice. Small and large blocks were available. On the truck the ice was covered with hessian to reduce the melt. Ice claws were used to carry the ice into the homes to be placed in the ice chests which were mostly made of wood.

The Balmain Ice-Works was situated at the foot of Llewellyn Street (the site of the municipal carpark) and ice could be purchased directly from there on either week days or the week-end. A family called Lucey carried on this business for

almost the entire life of the ice-works. Wally Wardrop was the main ice-man and he could be seen carrying a huge bunch of keys which allowed him entrance to his customers' homes. There was always a secret place for his money.



ICE CHESTS.

Special value. Galvanised linings and nickel fittings. Thoroughly insulated and well polished.

No. 1—39 in. high, 20 in. wide, 15 in. deep. 72/6.
No. 2—40 in. high, 24 in. wide, 17 in. deep. 97/6.

Annual Meeting

Most of the officials of the Balmain Association Inc were returned at the annual meeting on 1st August.

The major change is the retirement of the Treasurer, Warwick Purser, who has left the peninsula. After 4 years in the position he has been succeeded by Debby Nicholls who is also in charge of Watch House conservation. Tim Davis has relinquished the job of News Sheet distribution because he will be visiting the USA for a short period. Our warm appreciation and thanks are extended to Warwick and Tim and family for their contributions.

We welcomed the return of Helen Styles to the Association and she was elected to the History Group with Kath Hamey, Bonnie Davidson, Ann Bastok, Debby Nichols and Tikwis Begbie. Kay Trippe was added to the Fund Raising Committee to join Bonnie Davidson and Pat Wray.

Retaining their positions were Jane Ward, President and Traffic Committee Convenor, Francis Heathfield, Vice-president, Jeremy Arnott, Minutes Secretary, Steve South, Watch House Hire, Dave Ramsay, Traffic Committee, and Val Hamey, Editor and Public Officer.

The Treasurer's Report below is encouraging but major stonework restorations are required on the Watch House.

Watch House—20 Years On

The original members of the Balmain Association worked very hard to have the derelict Watch House ready for the opening on April 12th 1970. From then on the old Police Lock-up became our headquarters and plays a major role in our continuing existence.

Built in 1854 to a design by Edmund Blacket the building attracts many visitors every Saturday between the hours 12 to 3pm. The attendance book shows signatures of people from interstate as well as overseas.

Many enquiries on family history and house search keep the members in attendance busy. Some more assistance is needed on Saturday afternoons. Could you help? Contact 818 4954.

After many years of neglect, two other local lock-ups have been recycled. The one at Rozelle is to be used as a leather warehouse. The original building in Darling Street has been retained with an extension at the rear.

The Camperdown Police Station, 210 Parramatta Road (attributed to James Barnett) was erected in 1882 and closed in 1967. It has been opened as the Cellblock Youth Health Centre, an annex of the Childrens' Hospital.

Treasurer's Report

Income to 30th June 1990

	1990	1989
Memberships	\$2653	\$2023
Fund Raising	373	930
Donations	815	419
Watch House Hire	5399	4214
Miscellaneous	2314	7493
Half Thousand Acres	297	772
Around Balmain	1330	1420
Leaflets	843	362
L H Journal	555	391
Clothing Sales	64	222
Index Enquiries	47	514
Balmain Book	85	
Other		1510
Total	14380	20270

History Division

Raffle	676.20
Family History Research	476.00
Donations	240.00
Pubs Grant	500.00
Balmain Regatta Print	40.00
History Walks	150.00
Photo Reprints	49.50
Pubs Catalogue	1986.00
Bank Interest	11.00
Total	4128.70

Expenditure to 30th June 1990

	1990	1989
Newsletter	1623	1651
Fund Raising	145	35
Donations		200
Watch House	7552	15006
Miscellaneous	1110	690
Govt Charges	26	56
Publicity	80	16
Publications	3252	360
Subscriptions	164	116
Stationery		438
Index Costs	37	347
Other		1300
Total	13990	20215

Computer Paper	57.00
Photos	272.00
Pub Sketches	190.00
United Church Research	10.00
Maps	46.00
Pubs Catalogue	794.00
Exhibition	83.00
Frames	406.00
Photocopy	22.00
Land Title Search	20.00
Miscellaneous	39.00
Total	1939.00



IN YOUR GARDEN

Growing Roses

The modern rose is a plant as much at home among abelias and grevilleas in full sun as it is in the huge old rosebeds of yesteryear. Few gardeners have space today to devote to large traditional rose plantings so the landscape use of the rosebush is changing.

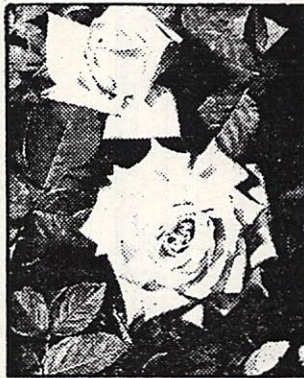
A few tips for planting roses:

(1) Select the sunniest position in your garden. (2) Avoid root competition with adjacent trees and shrubs. (3) Consider planting standard roses in a central position surrounded by bush and dwarf roses. (4) Prune damaged roots before planting. (5) Don't fertilise newly planted roses. (6) Plant roses with the graft union just above ground level.

Each plant requires roughly a square metre; the roots are not adventurous but they are heavy feeders. Avoid shade which leads to diseases such as powdery mildew, black spot and grey mould on the petals and leaves. Treat powdery mildew with Banlate; black spot with Triforine. Established roses need a matchbox full of a complete rose food every six weeks from November until March.

Here are a few fungal disease-resistant roses. Bella Rosa, Champagner, Fiesta, Goldmarie, Iceberg, Limelight, Mister Lincoln, Patricia, Red Ceder, Sunburnt Country, Tony Jacklin and Traumerei.

Bonnie Davidson



Balmain Traffic Study

The Traffic Study Stage I, prepared by Stapleton & Hallam, is a powerful weapon for residents demanding overall planning of development on the peninsula.

Examination of the report is recommended to members. It is obtainable from the Leichhardt Council.

Here is a brief summary of its recommendations:

1. The 5 proposed rezonings should not be collectively approved with their proposed development intensities.
2. All sites should reduce their intensity for traffic generation. The proposed intensity reduces the scope for additional development both in the peninsula and in the region. Pyrmont/Ultimo/White Bay will put greater pressure on the road network, in particular Victoria Road.
3. Unilever and Ampol should not proceed before completion of the City West Link and the new Glebe Island Bridge.
4. Balmain Power Station and Monsanto should not be developed until an appropriate package of roadworks is in place.

You haven't forgotten to book for our 25th Anniversary Dinner, have you? In case you have it's on the 12th September!

Pubs Exhibition

Because it was so well received in April the Pubs of Balmain & Rozelle Exhibition is to be remounted on October 13, 14, 20, 21. The History Division has received further information and has unearthed some photographs previously unknown.

Printed on recycled paper

WHAT'S ON

Come and welcome our visitors

- Saturday, August 18 Ryde Historical Society
- Su 1 5th September Blue Mts Historical Society
- Wednesday, September 12
25th Anniversary Dinner
- Saturday, September 15th
Anniversary Afternoon Tea
- Saturday, September 22 - October 7
Exhibition - Elizabeth Cregan
- Sunday, October 28
Back to Balmain-Rozelle Day
Elkington Park
Contact 810 1691

OUR HOUSE WATCH

The Watch House is open every Saturday from 12 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 balmain association inc
representing
Balmain-Birchgrove & Rozelle

Our Aims Are To:

- improve the living, working and recreational amenities 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 cooperation of everyone concerned in the realisation of the above

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Return to: Treasurer, PO Box 57, BALMAIN 2041

NAME:

ADDRESS:

.....POST CODE.....

PHONE HOME: BUS:

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION (incl News Sheet delivery in Balmain-Rozelle)

Please circle: ...NEW MEMBER / RENEWAL

Single/Family/Household. \$10.00

Organisation \$15.00

Pensioner or Student \$1.00

Add \$5.00 to above rates to have News Sheet posted