

the balmain
association
incorporated

NEWS SHEET

Vol 25 No 8 Issue 195

FOUNDED 1965

SEPTEMBER 1990

RESIDENTS WANT THEIR SAY

On August 23rd Leichhardt Council, with overwhelming community support, set up a public hearing into the planning of the peninsula under Section 68 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. An independent, highly-qualified commissioner would assess submissions from all interested parties. Such a process would be efficient, proper, democratic and objective.

However, on August 30th the Greiner Government abruptly terminated the democratic process by installing Mr Sean O'Toole, an Assistant Director with the Department of Planning, as Planning Administrator to "act in place of the Council to deal with the planning decisions on the Balmain Peninsula portion of Leichhardt Municipality". Mr O'Toole was a planner at Bankstown and Fairfield Councils from 1972 - 1989.

This attack on local government must not succeed. The Government's interven-

tion will not achieve better or more efficient planning and residents are highly concerned about the propriety of an employee of the State Government, a major landholder on the Peninsula, being put in charge. Residents object to a token role in planning and resent the denial of access to legitimate public hearing funded by rates.

As a result, The Balmain Development Trust is being established to raise funds to give residents their say in the overall planning for the Balmain Peninsula. The Trust, headed by a board of appropriately qualified residents, will ensure that the public process initiated by Leichhardt Council will, in fact, take place. Mr Greiner must be prevented from taking away our rights to participate in determining the future of our environment.

The Greiner Government, as well as appropriating planning control over the Peninsula, has set up an inquiry into the

performance of Leichhardt Council. This inquiry is designed to distract us from the planning process and divide the community while providing a fast track for the developers. This sets a precedent for future over-riding of all councils.

The political games-playing has not deterred residents from a detailed review and compilation of available data for a strategic plan. We are very serious about producing an integrated, balanced plan for development on the Peninsula which safeguards the amenity, character and charm of Balmain. Reports are yet to be completed on site contamination and traffic, but material to date demonstrates the complexity of the issues and the need for sympathetic planning. "The sensitivity of Balmain residents to the impact of traffic is heightened by the 19th century road network and widths and by the average building set-backs" - P5, Traffic Study.

Jane Ward

Grand Final Mania

Once again the Tigers have done it the hard way. It's becoming an annual event so it is better to remember some of the Balmain successes and players of yesterday.

Although he never played for Balmain, the famous centre three-quarter, Dally Messenger, was born in Balmain in 1883. He inspired awe among his fellow players and, more than any other player, he helped to put Rugby League on the map.

The Tigers won their first premiership in 1915 and they were the first club to win all three grades. Junker Robinson scored the only try in the second half to atone for his earlier unsuccessful "stark" dash for the line after his knickers had been torn off. Junker lived in Ryan Street Lilyfield and died only a few years ago. His son Jack still lives in Thames Street Balmain. Balmain won the premiership again the next year defeating Souths once more with a Chook Fraser conversion. They were premiers again in 1917. An

impressive feat of three consecutive premierships. The Balmain Club won the Premiership in 1919 & 1920 for five wins in six years. They also took out the honours in 1924.

Great sporting feats live in memory but few have ever equalled Jorgenson's heroic performance in Balmain's 1947 Premiership. Playing in his only first grade match of the season he brought the fans to their feet by lifting Balmain from a half-time deficit of 7-4 to win the match 13-9. Harry Bath returned to the field after a cut over his eye had been stitched.



BALMAIN - PREMIERS FOR THE FIRST TIME: 1915
Back row: M Stewart, B Craig, W Noble, L Wall, D Cranston, J Stone, G Cummins, E Burnicle, G Brennan, W Schultz, T Davidson. Middle row: W Green, A Hallway, C Turner, W Kelly (C), J Atkins, M Beukwell, A Johnston. Front row: A Latta, J Craig, J Robinson, C Fraser, T Fitzgerald

Jack Branighan played in that side and is still living in Mort Street.

We will close with a tribute to our own Wayne 'Junior' Pearce in his testimonial year. He has been a wonderful role model for the younger players and led Balmain in the 1988 and 1989 grand-finals to experience great disappointment.



"Chook" Fraser in his sky-blue 1911-12 Kangaroo jersey. His caps are (front) Aust 1911-12, NSW 1912, Aust 1914; (back) Aust Day Sports 1915, Balmain 1914

Balmain Personality

Last month Mr & Mrs M Wilson from Tullamore visited the Watch House to present to the Association a silver trowel and wooden seal which was a memento of his grandfather, James Johnston.

The trowel is engraved with "Presented to James Johnston Esq. MLA on the occasion of his laying the Foundation stone on the Post & Telegraph Office, Rozelle. May 5th 1894. John Gibson, Contractor".

Johnston attended the Pigeon House School and was an apprentice boiler-maker at Morts Dock. He joined the Boilermakers' Society and as a staunch unionist became President of the Society. He represented Balmain in the years 1891-94 and was a member of the first Parliamentary Labor Party in 1891.

Johnston voted with the majority to keep Governor Sir George Richard Gibbs in office in the dispute over the 1892 Broken Hill strike and was expelled from the Labor Party in June 1894 for not

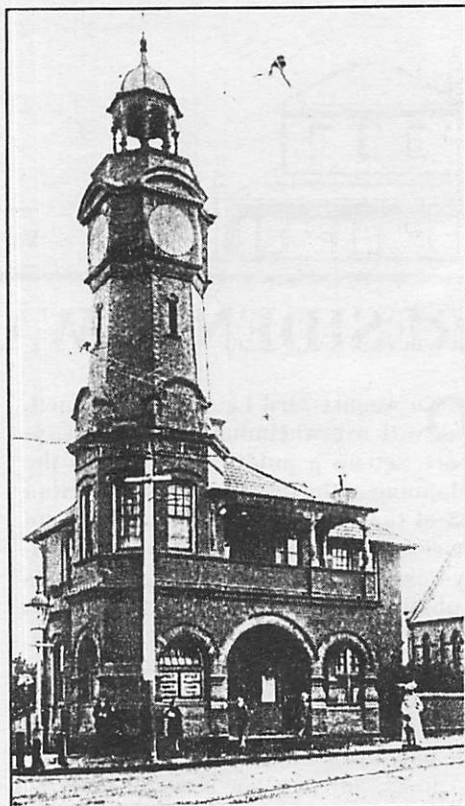
upholding the Party line. He lived at 20 Byrne Street Rozelle from 1894 until his death in December 1930.

Up until the opening of the Rozelle Post Office the area was known as Balmain West. A fierce argument had developed among the residents over the names Balmain West, Garry Owen or Rozelle. Unexpected objections came from the Balmain Council. At its meeting on November 1892 the Council voted 7-3 to insist the new post office be called Balmain West. As the Postmaster-General had the final authority in naming postal districts the post office opened as Rozelle.

Opinions vary on the name derivation and range from the rosella parrot to the rosella hibiscus but the bay on the southern extremity had been called Rozella (Rozelle) Bay and it seems likely that the Postmaster-General chose the Bay's name.

The satin lined presentation box containing the trowel and the seal will be displayed in the glass cabinet in the Association's meeting room.

Right: Former Rozelle Post Office.



James Johnston



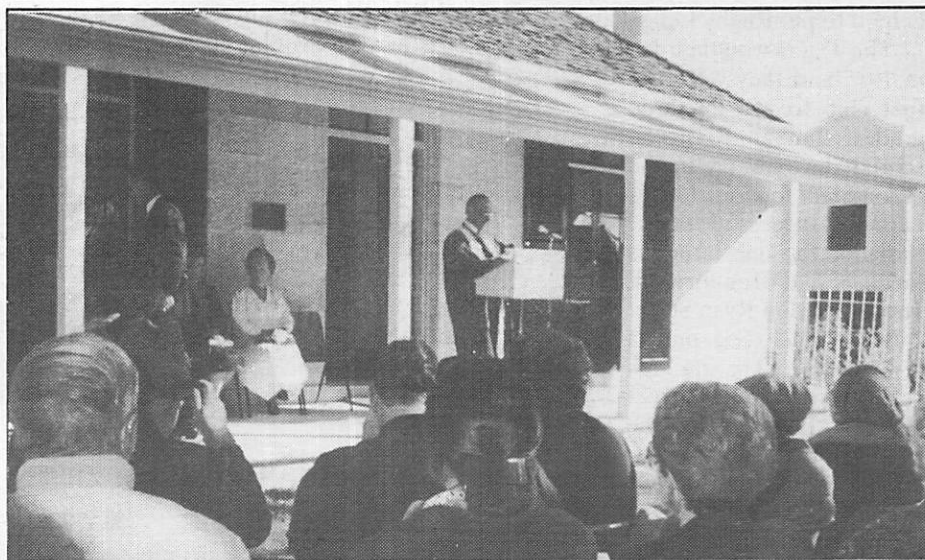
Part of the group from the Ryde Historical Society on their visit to the Watch House on August 18th

Clontarf Cottage

The Mayoress, Mrs Ruby Wyner, opened the restored "Clontarf Cottage" on Saturday, 25th August, after addresses by the Mayor and Sheila Swain of the Heritage Council of NSW.

When refreshments had been taken the public was invited to inspect the building and were impressed by the quality of the restoration. Mr Trollope had kindly loaned some antique pieces of furniture to enhance the occasion.

It is ironic that the Greiner Government chose the next week to take away the planning powers of the Council. All who know the history of the struggle to restore Clontarf recognise that it embodies all that the residents strive for on the Peninsula.



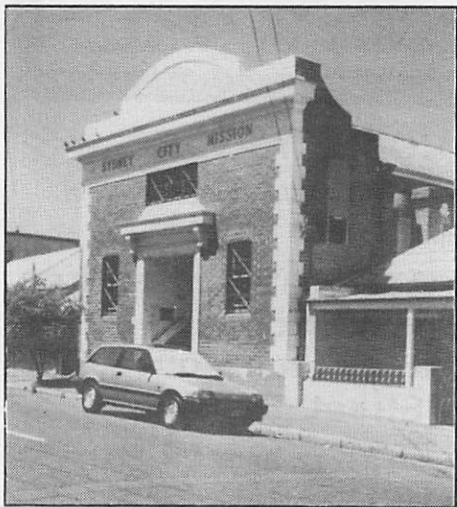
The Mayor, Ald Issy Weiner addressing guests at Clontarf

GOURLIE'S CORNER

Soup Kitchens

During the Great Depression in the late 1920s and early 1930s most churches had a soup kitchen, and down-and-out families could get free soup providing they took along their own billy-can or pot.

The Sydney City Mission in Beattie Street (see photo) was the biggest and also supplied clothing to those in need. The building is now a photographic studio and residence. Even today the Sydney City Mission continues with community welfare in the city.



The Future of Goat Island

The future of Goat Island is again under consideration by the State Government. This stems from the imminent departure of the Maritime Services Board in order to relocate their shipbuilding activities to the mainland as part of a consolidation move. Their departure will leave this historic site vacant.

Goat Island has many historic buildings, including a guard house, magazine and other quarters stemming from the time when the island was first a penitentiary for up to 200 convicts, then a source of building stone, the store for the colony's explosives and the headquarters of the Water Police. The shipyard has been developed as an installation capable of slipping and repairing the craft of the MSB's fleet.

The Sydney Maritime Museum has now proposed to the Government that they will be able to provide a caretaker role for the island when it becomes vacant, which will be in about six months or less. They suggest that they occupy the shipyard in order to carry out essential maintenance of their important fleet of historic ships. At present they are being maintained at a temporary site in Rozelle Bay. At the same time the Museum's important collection of books, documents

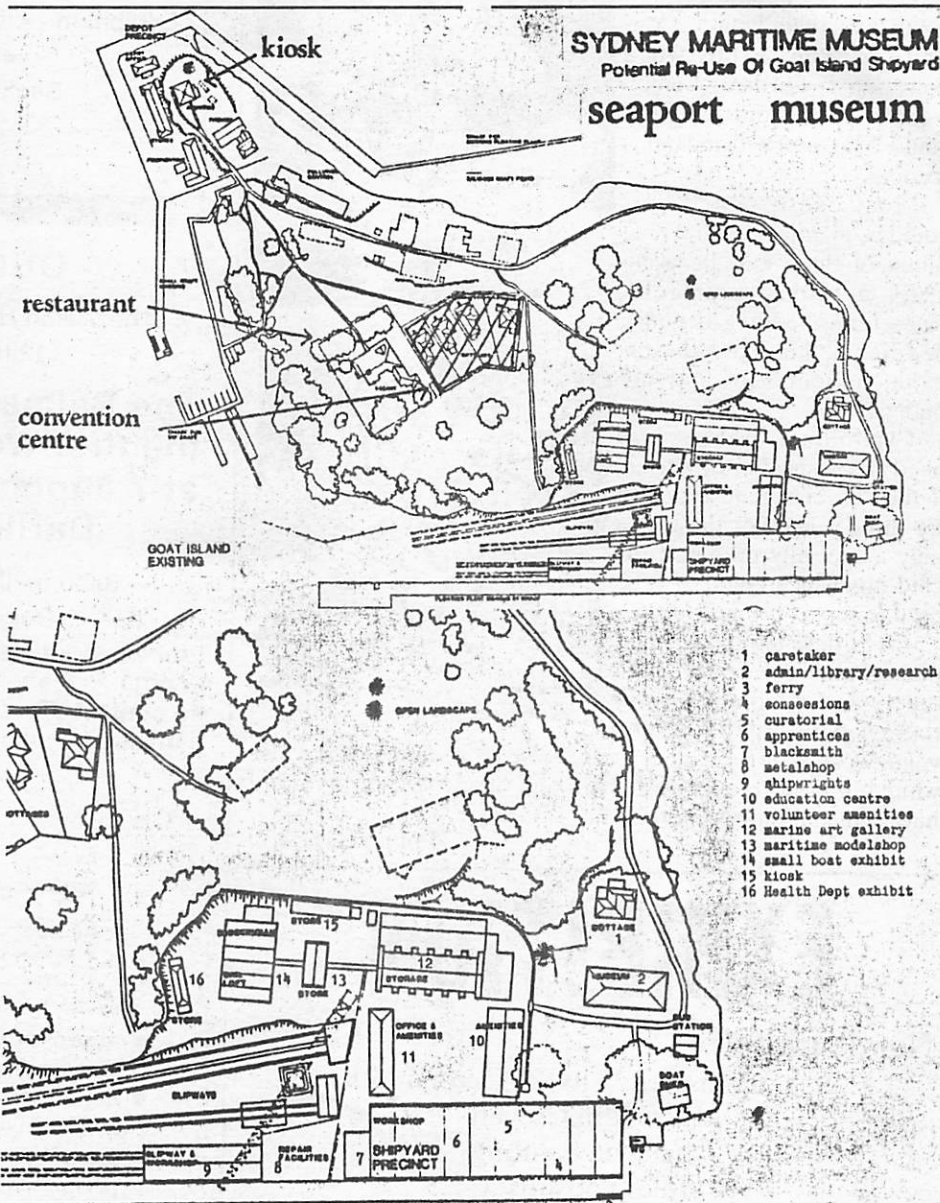
Noise

Following our article in the last issue we have received a note from a sound expert, Chris Rolfe, clarifying our noise data. We had been told that 40dBA is twice as loud as 30dBA. In actual fact 40dBA is 10 times as loud as 30dBA.

Because of the large range in noise levels that can be detected by the ear, the decibel scale is not a normal scale. A 3dBA increase in noise level, though barely perceptible, corresponds to a doubling

of sound energy; a 10dBA increase indicating 10 times the energy seems twice as loud.

Hearing loss caused by noise is insidious and permanent. The amount of damage depends on the total amount of energy received over a period of time. The most effective way to reduce noise is to change the noise source so that it makes less noise. Otherwise the noise can be prevented from reaching people by moving the source away or by enclosing it with sound-absorbing materials.



and other marine artifacts, at present in storage, can be moved to the many buildings on the island.

In the longer term the Museum has provided a comprehensive plan for the development of the island as part of impressive maritime tour linking Circular Quay with Darling Harbour. Visitors could find eating and rest facilities, a park, a museum, a working shipyard and the best views of the city. In addition the area can provide a much-needed home for the TAFE School of Ship and Boat Building and later on seamanship and other courses could be developed.

While it is clear the National Parks and Wildlife Service will play a major role in the longer term management of the parkland portion of Goat Island the Sydney Maritime Museum is ideally placed, both as a maritime and community organisation, to provide the government with an immediate solution to the problem of the care and maintenance of the island and, in the longer term, will have a significant part to play in the island's development by permanent occupancy of the shipyard precinct and those historic buildings nearby.

© Bob Nicholls



IN YOUR GARDEN

September Gardening

This month heralds the beginning of another growing season. It should be safe to cut back those frost damaged plants and to plant out new ones.

The woody stems on geraniums can be shortened by about half their length. Continue to trim shrubs when flowering is finished. Lemon trees and passionfruit vines could also use a trim and a feeding.

Most evergreen plants could be planted out now. Seedlings of these may be available; petunias, marigold, nasturtium, bedding begonia, bedding dahlia, phlox, verbena, helichrysum and impatiens.

Cymbidium orchids may need repotting after flowering, if they haven't been repotted for three years. For these, use only a specially prepared orchid mix which could also be used to report bromeliads.

From now until Christmas plant gladioli corms and dahlia tubers and established lawns rejuvenated. If aphids are on young rose growth use Clensel. For scale on lemon trees use white oil. Fruit trees, strawberries and other berry fruits could have some all-purpose fertiliser.



Cymbidium orchids



Pompon dahlias

Bonnie Davidson

EXHIBITION

AT THE WATCH HOUSE

New Paintings

Sat September 22 to Sat October 6th

Elizabeth Cregan
'Nocturne Paintings'
Julie Podstolski
'Suburbs and Islands'

Pubs Exhibition

Sat 13th, Sun 14th, Sat 20th, Sun 21st October

11am - 4pm in the Watch House
incl Pub Paintings by Klin Sullivan
Heritage Pub Crawl Sat 20th at 3pm

We invite our Members and their friends to attend our 25th Anniversary Afternoon Tea on Saturday 15th September from 1 - 3pm.

Printed on recycled paper

© Not to be reproduced without authorisation

WHAT'S ON

Come and welcome our visitors
Sun 9th 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 & Julie Podstolski
- 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