

the balmain
association
incorporated

NEWS SHEET

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People's Peninsula Plan

Demands for a public hearing on an overall plan for development have been ignored by the Planning Administrator, Mr Sean O'Toole, and he is set to rezone the 5 sites. He has declined to wait for the results of the Balmain Development Trust Ideas Competition as well as brushing aside 179 individual and 6 group submissions.

His decision to gazette individual LEPs (Local Environment Plans) highlights the inability of this type of document to adequately address the fundamental issue of a total environmental plan for the Peninsula. His traffic strategy relies on calming and management controls that are only palliatives and there is no provision for the developers contributing to the funding of the measures. Open space allocation is minimal and fails to secure full public access to the foreshores. Once the rezonings have been granted the residents are incapable of exercising real influence other than through the costly Land & Environment Court.

The Greiner Government's refusal to get involved in the planning of infrastructure is the crux of the problem. The aim of their Property Services Group is to maxi-

mise returns on their land sales and minimise expenditure on new urban infrastructure.

With traffic generation burgeoning they steadfastly adopt the user-pays approach and force rationalisation that leads to cuts in bus services. However, not only the commuter benefits from public transport but also road users and businesses. The Victoria Road blockade of the Peninsula can only be alleviated by reducing the volume of private vehicles, but motorists will not be induced to leave their cars at home unless the public transport is made more attractive, comprehensive and cheaper. Only 15% of cars on roads leading to the CBD are actually parked there. Most are being driven through the city to other destinations. Existing bus services follow old tram routes and their destinations are not necessarily that of travellers.

The Government's asset sales target for this financial year is \$800 million. It isn't too much to expect that some of the proceeds from their land in Balmain be reinvested in the area. Creating a park on Ballast Point is a project that would benefit all of Sydney not just Balmain.

Heritage Buildings To Go

On an early visit to the Unilever site Mr O'Toole had described his feelings as being transported back to the days of sailing ships and likened the experience to that from the ABC series "Onedin Line". The decision to demolish the Soapery buildings was made known on November 29 at the Administrator's meeting in spite of local residents' opposition.

The Soapery with its brick facade along Hyam St and the Pan Room are considered in the McDonald McPhee Heritage Study to be 'significant' for their aesthetic, social, historic and scientific value. Leichhardt Council's Town Planners had recommended the retention of the Vim and the Oil Mill group of buildings including the Copra House which has been classified by the National Trust so it is 'safe'.

Residents have sought details of costs of renovation commissioned by Vanadi Pty Ltd from Consulere Design & Con-

struction. Hill Property Development Analysts is quoted in the Town Planner's Report, p44: "The feasibility would appear to grossly exaggerate the cost involved in restoring/refurbishing the structures". The National Trust "reluctantly agreed" to demolition due to the excessive cost involved in retaining the buildings. No adaptive reuse assessment has been made by a genuinely independent source. The cost of demolition is estimated at \$100,000 but we are unable to compare this with the cost of retention.

Mr O'Toole and Mr Bob Ell will be remembered for ignoring an opportunity to cherish the heritage of NSW. Lever Bros produced a book on the historical significance of the complex to present to its retiring employees. Can anyone morally deny the atmosphere and surroundings offered by these buildings to residents, tourists and future generations? Thanks for preserving the memory but we'd rather have the buildings!

Kath Hacking, President, Unilever-Ampol Action Group

The Balmain Development Trust supporters are taking the Battle for Balmain to Parliament House on December 20. They won't be at the barricades. They'll be at lunch in the Members' Dining Room to hear progress reports on the Trust's competition for a visionary plan for the Peninsula which was launched on December 1.

The Government has been asked to delay the rezoning until the competition has been completed and judged.

Legal advice has been taken on Mr O'Toole's appointment and powers to rezone. It could involve an expensive process and \$7000 is needed immediately.

You can join them at the Members' Dining Room on Thursday, December 20 for \$60 including wine. Contact Jim McMahon 810 2101 or Susan Frisoli 569 8338.

Final Chance

You have until December 20 to write submissions on the Third Runway. Many residents are still unaware of the potential impact of further expansion of Kingsford Smith Airport on this area. Others are overwhelmed by the serious issues on the Peninsula to confront another major question.

But it remains to be done. For more information contact the Second Sydney Airport Coalition on 569 0605.

You should send your submission to:

The Secretary
DASET
GPO Box 787
Canberra ACT 2601



SEASON'S
GREETINGS



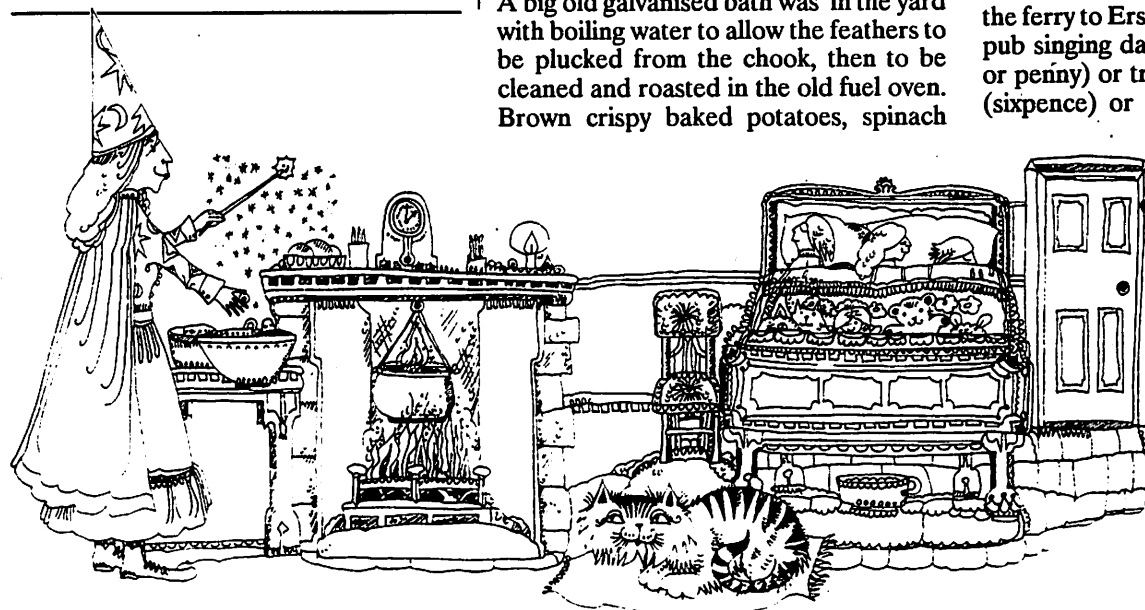
GOURLIE'S CORNER

We always looked forward to Christmas. In the 1930s parents were not in a position to give too much. A lot of toys were hand made or hand-me-downs brightened up with some paint. Decorations were home made a couple of weeks before.

The most favoured one was the cutting different coloured streamers into eight inch lengths and pasting (home-made paste) the ends to making a chain to go from wall to wall. This kept the children quiet for hours and proud in their achievement.



Poultry, ham or pork was a once a year thing. Xmas was the only time you would have such fare. The same with mixed nuts. It was always a thrill cracking them with a hammer. The really poor families received hampers from various church groups. The Salvation Army being the biggest in hand-outs. Many housewives made their own plum puddings weeks before Xmas. Calico cloth housed the puddings and tied at the top with string before being boiled in the fuel copper.



Love at Christmas

by Beryl Wensley (nee Lyne)

Christmas is coming

The ducks are getting fat

Please put a penny in the old man's hat

If you haven't got a penny

A half-penny will do

And if you haven't got a half-penny

God bless you.

This is the song my mother taught me. Owing to the poorness during the 1930s, Christmas was a special time in the life of the poor. There was no Xmas tree, no streamers in our old kitchen—that's where we spent most of our time on cold days huddled around an old fuel stove watching the dancing embers in a make-believe world of beautiful lights on a dazzling Xmas tree, pretending to hang our stockings up for gifts—for the results were all the same, next morning nothing, not a pocket handkerchief—so little feet that came running down those stairs on Christmas morning, hoping that Santa could have at least but once put the sparkle back in our eyes. Did our hearts feel pain? Yes they did. Our little heads bent with a small tear dropping on our little rosy cheeks.



Do you see mothers of today boiling their Xmas pudding, wrapped in heavy calico and cooked in the old fuel copper, days before, or see your Dad chop off the head of the fowl, hanging it from the yard's tap to drain the life from the poor animal, so we could have a Xmas dinner. A big old galvanised bath was in the yard with boiling water to allow the feathers to be plucked from the chook, then to be cleaned and roasted in the old fuel oven. Brown crispy baked potatoes, spinach

from the garden if you were lucky to have one and, of course, the good old-fashioned green mushy boiled peas and the rich brown gravy. No lovely white tablecloths donned our table, only oilcloth. No nuts, no bon bons to crack, only a dish of salt stood in the middle of the table, no pretty chairs to sit on, only two long benches.

Our mother, God bless her, would serve us in turn, our plates heaped. She would not sit, she would poke the stove getting ready to give us her plum pudding with flowing yellow custard for it to swim in. Bloated as we were, we all had our pudding hoping to find the trays (three-penny pieces) for our baths' fare.

We would bolt from the table with the money in our hands, one towel between us and off we would go for a long hike on the melting asphalt, the burning sensation making us jump to the gutter to cool the soles of our feet. When we arrived at the turnstyle to pay our fares, craning our necks to see how high was the water, the smiles on our little faces made up for Xmas morning disappointment. After our happy day, it was off home. We would go and raid a few peach and lemon trees and then back to our big house with a happy smiling mother still playing with the stove. Christmas tea consisted of bread and left-overs from lunch and pudding. The lovely smell of the days' Xmas dinner still lingered in the big old kitchen.

At night down under the street light to play cocky laura or statues with Christmas beetles buzzing around your ears and mosquitos playing havoc with your skin. A few arguments amongst ourselves, then the old familiar cry from the dark 'Home now you kids and off to bed'. No showers or hot baths only the old baby's bath to wash your face and hands and feet. No pretty nightdresses or pyjamas, only a singlet and bloomers. No we were not dirty—only poor.

Next morning. Up early to dress in old clothes, an empty jam tin in each hand, and down to Bald Rock Wharf to catch the ferry to Erskine Street for our pub-to-pub singing day for coppers (half-penny or penny) or trays (threepence) or zacks (sixpence) or maybe deeners (shilling).

What joy we felt when we would pool our takings and straight to Mrs Southers' shop for our big bag of lovely lollies and we would also buy mother a shillings' worth of lovely leg ham from Mrs Howell's shop in Mullens Street.

My heart fills with happiness when my mind travels this far back, my true love for the old Balmain of by-gone years.

Balmain Personality

The Rev John J Glassop

When J J Glassop died on February 24, 1894, he was the oldest Baptist Minister in New South Wales. Born in 1807, in humble circumstances, Glassop became pastor of the Shoreditch Chapel in Webb Square, London and was one of the first city missionaries.



His success in city work — such as visiting the abodes of poverty and distress, affording sympathy and assistance, as well as spiritual instruction — was very considerable, and being a student of homeopathy, he also dispensed medicine to many. Mr Glassop's work was such as to attract the financial assistance of the Duchess of Kent.

He was induced to come to New South Wales by Rev John Saunders, the first minister of the Baptist Church, Bathurst Street, Sydney, and soon after his arrival in 1840 he was appointed the superintendent of the Sunday school of that church. Subsequently he became the pastor of a

church in Parramatta for several years before removing to Balmain with which suburb he was connected for nearly fifty years.

By 1844, Glassop and his wife, Sarah Elizabeth, were living in a weatherboard hut on his Balmain allotment. He built a stone shop and residence (53 Darling Street) in 1850 and his wife ran the drapery shop and was the local distributor of the Sydney Morning Herald and the famous remedy for all ills — Holloways Pills.

In 1854 he opened the first private school in the area with his daughter's assistance. He also formed the first Sunday school which was unsectarian. The first services were held in Mr Glassop's own cottage until it was found necessary to move to a hall in Elliott Street. He built a second stone shop and residence at 55 Darling Street and moved there in 1856.

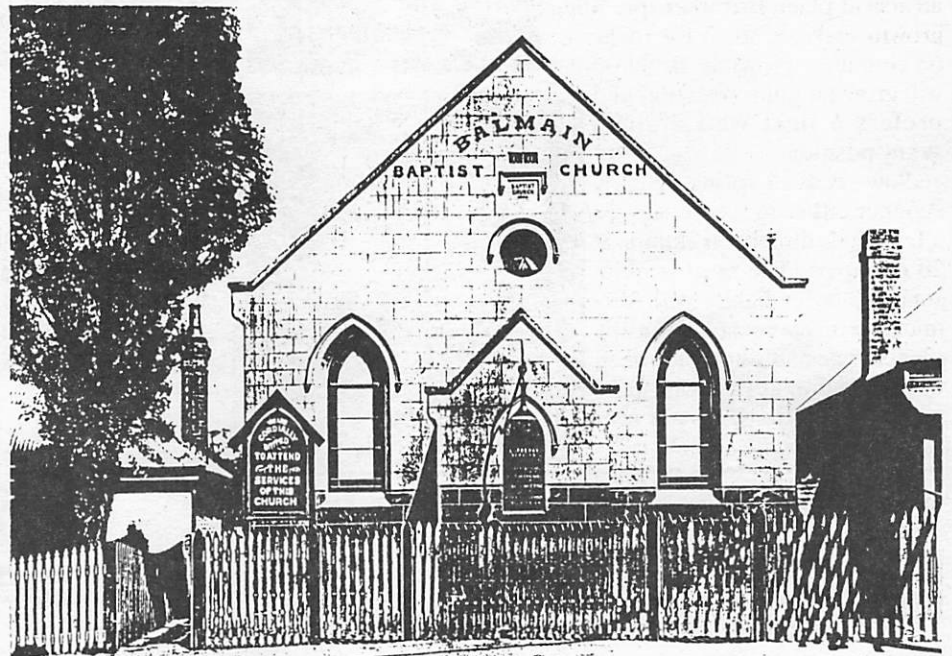
He achieved a great desire in 1883 when a Baptist Church was built on land in Mullens Street that he donated. He

also subscribed substantially to the building fund as well as urging the members to continued effort until the building was free of debt. He resided in the adjoining *Lilian Cottage*. The church at 87a Mullens Street is being renovated by Keith Arnold for use as a studio.

Mr Glassop was passionately devoted to Sunday school work, and for several years conducted a Ragged school in Sydney. He was an enthusiastic temperance advocate and closely identified with the Sons and Daughters of Temperance of which he was a chaplain for many years. He remained pastor of his church until declining health led to his retirement in 1890. He preached his farewell sermon on the last Sunday evening of 1890.

He left two sons and five daughters, also 41 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Sources: Town & Country Journal, March 10th 1894. Leichhardt Historical Journal No13. Baptist Archives.



A Mariner's View

The NSW branch of the Merchant Service Guild of Australia in a submission to the CityWest Urban Strategy has disputed the reduction of commercial port facilities in Sydney Harbour promoted by the Maritime Services Board.

They say that Botany Bay is difficult to provide security for moored ships and that Captain Phillip got it right 200 years ago when he decided to move to Port Jackson. It is also difficult to contain oil spills and pollution. When the decision to build container terminals at Port Botany was made there seemed to be no alternative after the disastrous attempt to site a roll-on roll-off terminal at Mort Bay. Further mistakes have been made in the plan-

ning of Port Botany. There is no rail link. This has caused horrific traffic conditions in Rockdale and Bexley similar to that experienced earlier by Balmain residents with heavy vehicles clogging suburban streets.

Since then the White Bay Power Station and the Glebe Island wheat silos have closed and CSR is ready to evacuate Pyrmont making these sites available for port purposes. Cargo handling techniques continue to evolve with a trend back to unitisation.

Wharfage is becoming more of a ship/shore interchange than was its traditional role as a storage area until the consignee chose to collect. Consignees can't afford to have money tied up in stock awaiting delivery.

Coupled with 'smart port' technology at Glebe Island, the Rozelle railway would enable a 'supertrain' load of containers to be on its way within minutes of the last 'box' being landed.

What does this mean to Balmain? If accepted, it would force a change in the City West Urban Strategy. There is a suspicion that the driving force behind the Strategy is the Greiner Government's policy of flogging off public land, especially if it is on the waterfront.





IN YOUR GARDEN

Pimelea

A lovely little native shrub from the west, *Pimelea ferruginea* is a naturally neat, rounded bush about 1 metre tall and wide.

It is not often seen in the east, but should be encouraged for it literally covers itself in spring with clusters of soft-pink flowers. Just be sure to grow it in extra well drained soil if your rainfall is high and either in full sun or light dappled shade.

Pimelea ferruginea

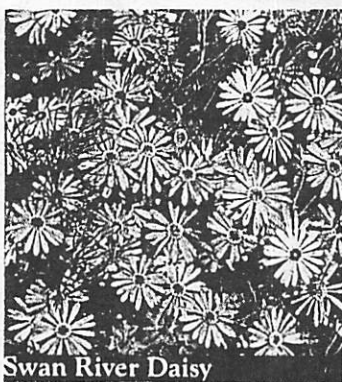


Swan River Daisy (Brachycome)

Here is another native from West Australia. This delightful little annual grows 20 - 30 cm tall with dainty single flowers in blue mauve and white. It is useful for low borders or an accent plant. Its rather spreading growth makes it ideal for rockeries or container growing. *Brachycome* will grow on quite poor soil and prefers a light well drained sunny position.

Sow seeds in spring or early summer either in seed boxes, or a few seeds directly in clumps at 20 cm apart. The seed is quite small so cover lightly with vermiculite or compost. When the plants are established they need little attention as they withstand hot, dry conditions. Do not over water.

Bonnie Davidson



Swan River Daisy

The Great Street Name Quest

In appreciation of research into the origins of street names in Balmain, Birchgrove and Rozelle done by Dr Peter Reynolds, the History Division has undertaken to complete the project.

Streets were named after early pioneers and family members, Governors, prominent citizens, famous battles, etc.

It is interesting to note that Terry Street, named after Catholic priest Father Therry, continues as the street named after Baptist John Glassop.

Heritage Pub Crawl

Acceding to public demand the History Division is holding another Heritage Pub Crawl on Saturday, 26th January, 1991. Meet at Watch House at 3 pm. \$10 including booklet. \$5 concession.

Raffle Winners

The History Division Raffle was drawn by a Watch House visitor, Nelson Mafia of Potts Point. Narelle Yui of Birchgrove won 1st prize of dinner for two at the Post Restaurant, 2nd prize of basket of fruitbox by John Gwatkins, Balmain and 3rd prize of chocolates went to Sandra Davidson, Leichhardt.

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Seasonal Greetings
Join us for Xmas
drinks at the Watch
House on Saturday,
22nd December
from 4 - 6 pm.

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

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

Please circle-...NEW MEMBER / RENEWAL
Single/Family/Household. \$10.00
Organisation \$15.00
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