

Old Council To Decide Peninsula Rezoning

Commissioners Simpson and Carleton will publish their report and recommendations from the public hearing on the rezoning of the five Balmain industrial sites in early August. Council had requested an extension of time on the original deadline of 26 June and the Minister of Planning, Mr Webster, has now made 6 September the last day when he will receive Council's determination. Perhaps he is wary of a new council. The last meeting of the present council is on 20 August.

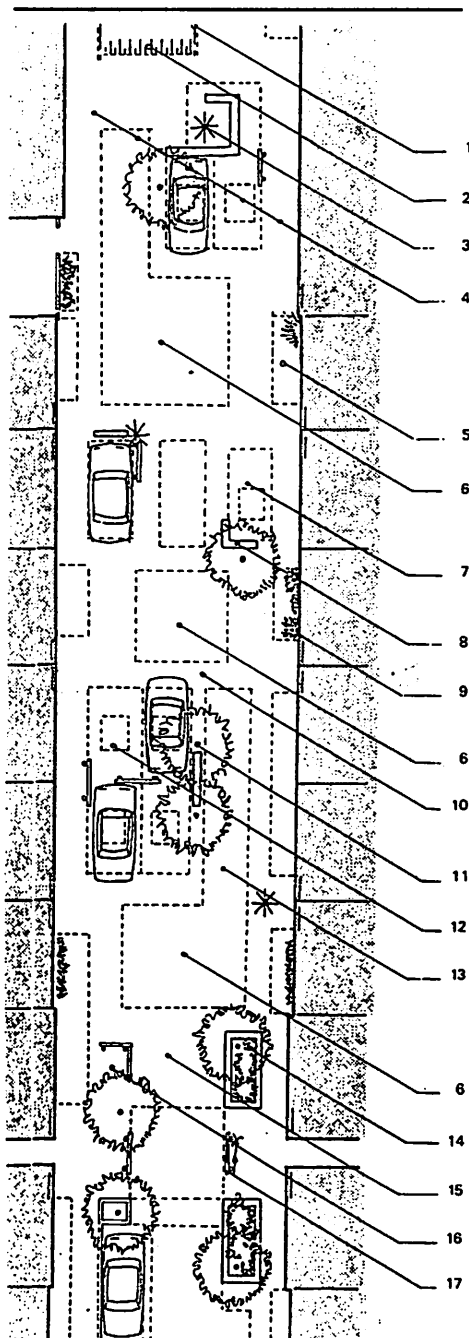
The last day of the public hearing, 11 June, revealed the complete refusal of Governmental departments to address the issues of traffic control and road funding. The Roads & Traffic Authority claimed to have no funds for projects designed to solve the blockade of the Peninsula even though they are proposing to spend \$27.5 million per kilometre on the Castlereagh Freeway. Traffic consultants and town planners agree with the necessity of an extension of Mullens Street to integrate traffic with the City West Link and the approaches to the new Glebe Island Bridge. The Balmain Association has requested action on the intersection of Victoria Road with Darling

Street as traffic studies reveal what Peninsula residents know from experience — it has the worst delays over longer periods than any of the other outlets.

The Commissioners asked Mr Alan Davidson of the Department of Planning about effects of the City West Urban Strategy on the development on the Peninsula but he was particularly evasive and stated that the department had yet to determine the details of development in the White Bay/Glebe Island area. The Maritime Services Board adopted a similar stance by claiming that their land requirements for the Port of Sydney were still under review.

The Balmain Association in the previous week presented a plan to move heavy vehicles from the White Bay Terminal on a road under the Coal Loader connecting with Sommerville Road on Glebe Island. At least this would keep semi-trailers out of Roberts and Mullens Streets in peak hours.

We were not satisfied with any of the statements by the officers of the RTA, MSB and the Department of Planning. The Government is obviously determined to stay away from any investment in Peninsula infrastructure.



What Is A "Woonerf"?

While new low density suburbs are being planned in the north-west of Sydney the inner suburbs are competing for funds to solve some of their traffic problems.

The cheapest and most fuel-efficient transportation modes rarely achieve much priority in an automobile oriented society. Where land use is sufficiently

concentrated the opportunities for more walking and biking can be greatly encouraged by improved facilities. "Woonerf" treatment of high density streets allows complete car access, but by careful landscaping and parking provision narrows and winds streets to give greater priority to pedestrians.

What is a "woonerf" you may ask? It is an area in which the residential function clearly dominates over any provisions for traffic and which is expressed in the accompanying drawing. The idea originated

1. no continuous kerb
2. private access
3. bench around low lighting column
4. use of varied paving materials
5. private footway
6. bend in the roadway
7. empty parking lot: place to sit or play in
8. bench/play object
9. on request: plot with plants in front of facade
10. no continuous roadway marking on the pavement
11. tree
12. clearly marked parking lots
13. bottleneck
14. plant tub
15. space for playing from facade to facade
16. parking prevented by obstacles
17. fence for parking bicycles etc.

in Holland in the early 1970s and by 1976 over 800 such precincts had been established there. In Australia these areas are called shared traffic zones.

Not every street can become a woonerf. Those that carry a significant volume of through traffic rarely have the necessary potential. A woonerf is essentially planned congestion as it involves limiting the movement of private vehicles as well as parking. If the street has adequate space for all of the residents' vehicles it is possible to limit the number of extra spaces. This makes it particularly attractive for residential streets near public facilities and workplaces. There are no continuous kerbs and no footpath—the whole street is shared by pedestrians and vehicles.

The disadvantage is the cost of reconstructing an existing street. New drainage and paving are required. Landscaping and furniture contributes to the cost. However, new streets need not be more costly than conventional streets.

Balmain Personality

Doctor Owen Evans (1830-1889)

Owen Spencer Evans was born in London and educated at Midhurst and later at Winchester. He entered St George's Hospital for training and graduated with honours from the Royal College of Surgeons. He acted as house surgeon at St George's where he won the prize for anatomy.

The news of the goldfields brought him to Australia to seek his fortune at Ballarat. His prospecting efforts proved unrewarding and he was forced to return to his profession.

On settling in Balmain in 1853, he began medical practice as a partner of Dr George Elliott and subsequently married Sarah Harpur, the daughter of Balmain's first doctor. After 1857 Evans became a partner in Elliott Bros' Drug Company.

His first child, Owen Frederick Seymour, was born on 17 June 1856. He moved to Jamison Street, Sydney in 1858 but returned to Balmain in 1860 and took up residence in 85 Darling Street which he renamed *Cromwell Cottage* and lived



there the rest of his life. His house is now part of St Mary's Rectory complex.

As well as being Government Medical Officer for the Balmain district, Dr Evans was Council Alderman from 1860 to 1864 and was Chairman in 1864. He was a

prime mover in the foundation of the Balmain Cottage Hospital in 1883. Both the Evans Ward at Balmain Hospital and Evans Street are named after him. He was vice-president of the Balmain Bowling Club and the original chairman of the board of the Balmain Public School.

Sarah Evans died suddenly at Bowral 22 December 1879 aged 45 years. She had 8 children (7 surviving). After a 36 year medical practice in Balmain, "old Doctor Evans" died on 20 November 1889 when his horse bolted and overturned the carriage in Darling Street opposite the Congregational Church. His eldest son, Owen Frederick, died 5 months later aged 33 years. He had a practice at *Eveleigh*, 326 Darling Street (site of old Esso Garage) before moving with his wife, Evelyn Taylor, whom he married in 1883, to *Warren*, Darvell Street (recently restored). Mother, father and son were all buried in Section 6/E of the Balmain Cemetery.

Sources: Leichardt Historical Journal No 13. Small Beginnings 1883. Further information from a descendent, Mrs Susan Bell who has a bible given to Dr Evans in 1854 by Zenobia Crook, wife of Samuel Crook, Balmain cabinetmaker.

Governor's Visit

NSW Governor, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair, will unveil the Balmain History Trail Directory at Thornton Park on Sunday 21 July at 9.30 am. At the instigation of Dave Ramsay and organised by former MP, Dawn Fraser, the Governor's visit has been negotiated.

The Governor, accompanied by Mrs Sinclair, will arrive by launch at the Darling Street Wharf where they will be greeted by the Mayor, Ald W Brady and a spokesperson for the Balmain Association. He will then unveil a plaque marking the occasion which has been presented by Dawn Fraser.

At 10 am the Governor will inspect the Watch House and at 10.20 am he will meet the people at Elkington Park. The Leichardt Municipal Band will entertain. The Balmain Rotary Club have arranged for a marquee for morning tea. The Governor is scheduled to depart at 11 am.

All members are welcome.

Jamisontown School Visit

Over 100 children from Jamisontown Public School with teachers and parents arrived by ferry on 27 June for a visit to Balmain. They were guided by Association members in a walk to the Watch House. On the way they visited local flag-makers, Bretts, where they were each presented with a bicentennial flag and inspected the workrooms. They had lunch at the park near Gilchrist Place.

Earlier Vice-Regal Visits to Balmain

The *Illustrated Sydney News* of 15 March 1886 carried a story and sketch of Lord Carrington, Governor of NSW, opening the Balmain Working Mens' Club shed at Elkington Park (now demolished). The *Balmain Observer* had a long coverage of his Excellency opening the Balmain Post Office on 20 August 1887. During this visit Lady Carrington christened the Fire Brigade's new horse driven fire engine.

On 6 March 1897 NSW Governor, Lord Hampden, made his first visit to Balmain to open the Evans Ward at the Balmain Hospital. The citizen's reception committee presented His Excellency with an illuminated address signed by each member.

In 1928 The Governor General, Lord Stonehaven, opened the Memorial Hall adjacent to St Andrews Church.

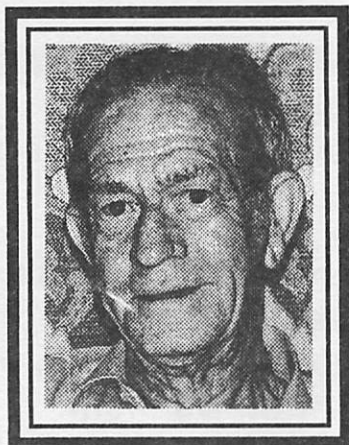
The picture from the *Illustrated Sydney News* shows Lord Carrington opening the Balmain Workingmens' Rowing Club Shed in 1886.



GOURLIE'S CORNER

It is with sadness that we advise that Wal Gourlie passed away on Friday 21 July just three days before his 69th birthday. The Rev Peter Carter read the following eulogy at his funeral service at St John's Church on 26 June.

Walter Malcolm Gourlie was born on 24 June 1922 at Gladesville and spent the whole of his life living, loving and working here in Balmain. He attended schools in the area and after leaving school he worked with his father and grandfather in the mixed business they carried out at 1 Cove Street.



In 1940 Wal joined the Army and served his country in New Guinea. He was a serviceman until 1946 when he went back to work in the family business. On 1 November 1947 he married his sweetheart, Adele, at the Congregational Church in Darling Street. He was a devoted and loving husband to Del and a caring, concerned and affectionate father to his two sons, John and Brian.

When the family business ceased in 1955 Wal went to work for Colgates where he stayed for 10 years, after which he went to Ampol where he worked as the mail room supervisor. It was from Ampol that he retired in 1987.

Wal was a tireless worker at the Police Boys Club for 15 years, enjoying, encouraging and helping hundreds of young people over the years. He had a buoyant spirit and was an eternal optimist. Enthusiasm and hard work are great

qualities and Wal had them both in good measure.

He never missed an opportunity to promote and enthuse about Balmain and its environs. His knowledge of past days and historic happenings in Balmain has been featured in the News Sheet for some time and in his 'Good Old Days' which he has handed out to anybody interested.

Unfortunately the rector of St John's, who Wal helped with the paper collection, is overseas in Canada and was saddened by the news of Wal's death. I have known Wal for 33 years but it wasn't until about 4 years ago when I returned to Balmain that I really got the full measure of the man and there would be very few days that I didn't meet Wal and his first words would be "How're you going Peter".

He was one of the Committee who put endless work into organising the 'Back To Balmain Day' in October. This has been a wonderful success and a lot of credit goes to Wal. I should think the saying 'Balmain boys don't cry' certainly applies to Wal. Whatever the job, however difficult the load, Wal shouldered it cheerfully and enthusiastically. There's no doubt that he will be sadly missed and our hearts go out to Del, John and Rosemary, Brian and Faye and grandchildren Charlotte, Lillee and Alisa.

We thank God for Wal's life. He was a man content and happy in his life; he had his priorities in order and he's left us with a legacy for life. We'd do well to take page out of his book, to greet each other with an outstretched hand, a smile and a 'How're you going' greeting. I can hear God welcoming Wal and I think his words would be "Well done thou good and faithful servant".

With pride Wal preserved Balmain's past. A tireless 'Balmain Boy' has now become another page in its long history. We intend to continue Gourlie's Corner and hope to publish "The Good Old Days" in extended form to preserve Wal's memoirs.

In response to many requests to the family of Wal Gourlie a memorial service shall take place on Sunday 14 July 1991 at 10 am in St Andrews Congregational Church, corner of Darling Street and Curtis Road, Balmain.

It Did Help Us!

The State election result seems to have brought a more equitable resolution to our court costs awarded against the Government.

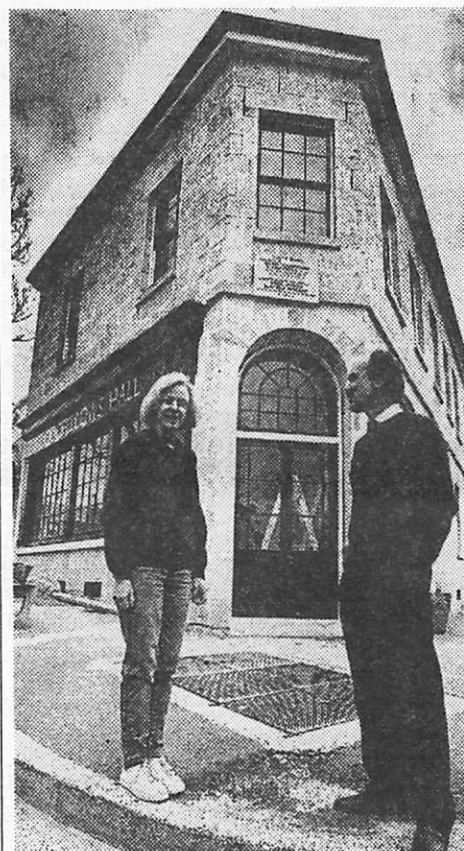
At first, assessors were sent to inspect the claims of our solicitor, Michael Mobbs, but on 16 June the new Minister of Planning, Robert Webster presented us with the original offer of \$44,000 which we accepted and a cheque changed hands the same day.

**1991 AGM
The Annual
General Meeting of
the Balmain
Association Inc
will be held at 7.30pm
on Wed 7 August in
the Watch House**

Oddfellows Hall

Innkeeper, Thomas Aiton, chose a prominent site on the corner of Darling and Nicholson Streets for his hostelry, Unity Hall Inn. Aiton had the fine two storey building erected about 1846.

The stonework was probably executed by the Cornish mason, John Cavill, a long term resident of Balmain. The inn had nine rooms with detached kitchen and stables in an enclosed yard with a "first rate well of water". He let the adjoining shop to a butcher for seven shillings per week. A third building on the site was a three roomed cottage which he also let. The Unity Hall received its name from the meetings of the Balmain Manchester Unity Independent Order of Oddfellows.



Margaret Scrivener and architect Otto Cserhalmi outside the Oddfellows Hall. "Glebe" photo.

On 16 May 1991 the Mayor, Ald Bill Brady, officially opened the restored Oddfellows Hall. Margaret Scrivener, her husband Barrie, daughter Janet and son-in-law Ralf Hogan obtained the three titles in February 1989 and commissioned architect, Otto Cserhalmi, to supervise the reconstruction which cost \$800,000. He had been responsible for the restoration of Glebe and Leichhardt Town Halls.

The complex will house 12 commercial tenants. Since 1846 the site has been used as a hotel, restaurant, antique dealer and a hairdressers. Congratulations to the Scriveners and the Hogans for a shining example of heritage preservation.

*Back To Balmain Day
Sunday 27 October 1991*



Camellias

Thriving on attention, Camellias are among the best behaved evergreen garden shrubs. Give them sun for half-a-day, a soil that is friable, free-draining, rich in organic matter and topped with an organic mulch up to 10 cm deep.

During summer and drought periods water them two or three times weekly with two hour soakings. Under these conditions your camellias will thrive, becoming green, healthy bushes laden with beautiful flowers which, in the japonica and reticulate species, are excellent cut flowers. It is a simple workable formula for successful camellia growing.

Fail to meet these conditions and your camellias will respond in a variety of ways.

In cold, heavy soils that remain wet for long periods in autumn and winter, camellias may decide not to grow. They won't die, they will simply sit there and sulk, their leaves slightly curled, buds tightly closed and their overall appearance one of arrested growth. The reason is that heavy wet soils drain poorly - too poorly for camellias. Soil air is missing under these conditions. Soil pathogens can then develop and attack the tips of the roots which are responsible for taking in moisture and nutrients needed for food making.

Camellias are said to want shade in order to protect the blooms, which can be damaged by the sun drying the dew on the buds in the morning. Camellias can be planted in pots and can be moved as you wish. I grew mine in pots and they are thriving beautifully.

Camellia sasanqua are the hardiest of all tolerating sun or shade and wind and growing readily in average soils. All camellias are long lived. The first camellia japonica varieties in Australia are believed to have been introduced by MacArthur early in the 19th century.

Bonnie Davidson



Cockatoo Island Ends

The submarine *HMAS Orion* has entered the naval history books by being the last submarine to be refitted at Cockatoo Island.

The submarine was floated out of the Fitzroy Dock and then berthed alongside for final preparations for the completion of the two year refit. *Orion* left Cockatoo for her home base at *HMAS Platypus* in June. She is the last in a long line of submarines which have been refitted, repaired, docked or otherwise supported at Cockatoo.

The first submarine to join the Royal Australian Navy, *HMAS AE1*, was docked in 1913, while the first submarine to dock in Fitzroy Dock was the Royal Navy's Australian Submarine Squadron's *HMAS Telemachus*, and that was in 1958.

Orion's departure marks the end of the RAN's association with Cockatoo Island Dockyard which has, since 1913, built about 45 HMA ships, as well as many smaller craft. Included, were an aircraft carrier, two cruisers, nine destroyers, nine sloops and frigates and the largest naval ship to be built in Australia, the oiler *HMAS Success*, which recently returned to Sydney after operations in the Gulf.

Bob Nicholls, Navy News

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WHAT'S ON

- **Paintings** — Ann Sheridan & Ly Ashburn
July 6 — July 14
- **Ceramics & Paintings** — Melinie Scarcella
July 17 — 21
- **History Trail Directory Unveiling**
The Governor, Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair will unveil the notice board at Thornton Park on Sunday 21 July at 9.30 am.
- **Share My Phantasy — Writers Aloft**
1st Sunday of each month. Readings, critique
Supper served.

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
Pensioner or Student \$1.00

Add \$6.00 to above rates to have News Sheet posted
Cheques should be made payable to The Balmain Association Inc