

the balmain
association
incorporated

NEWS SHEET

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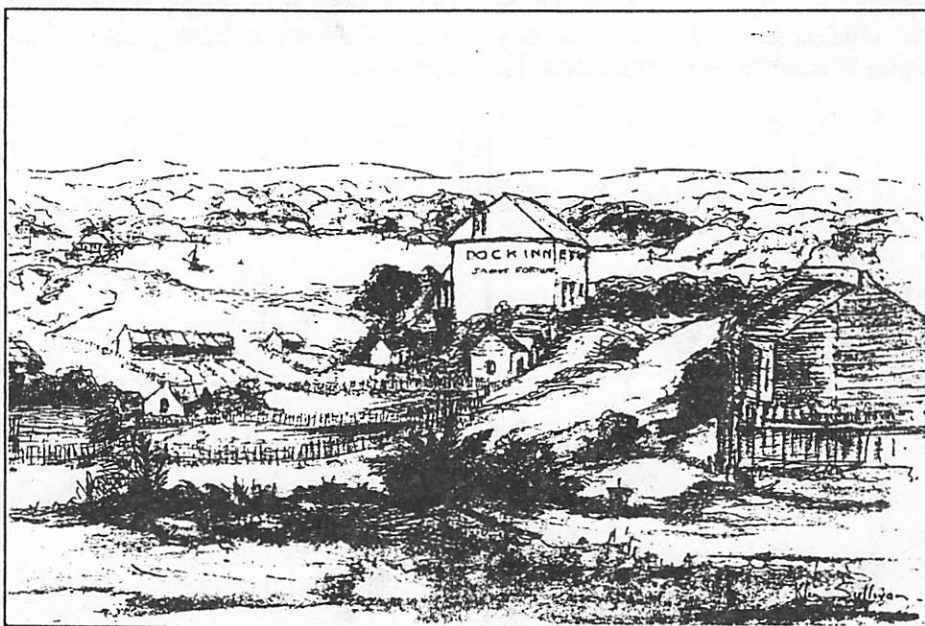
OCTOBER 1991

Back To Balmain Day

There will be many attractions connected with Back To Balmain Day during the last week in October culminating in a great day of re-union and reminiscence for those who grew-up or lived in the Balmain area.

On Friday 25 October the Balmain Association is launching a new book on the history of local hotels from the 1840s until today. The co-authors, Debby Nicholls, Kath Hamey and Bonnie Davidson, will present their work, *Called To The Bar*, at historic *Clontarf* from 6-8pm. Priced at \$12.95 it has photographs and information on the many hotels including a list of 1200 publicans and is a companion to the earlier book, *Around Balmain*. Guest speaker will be Dawn Fraser and you are cordially invited. If you have never visited *Clontarf* this is your chance to inspect the splendidly restored cottage. For catering purposes please advise of acceptance before October 18. A percentage of book sales is being donated to Camp Quality.

On the following Saturday, 26 October, a Heritage Pub Crawl will depart from the Watch House, 179 Darling St at 2pm. Adults \$10, concession \$7.50. It will view a good selection of the pubs of Balmain/Rozelle. Phone 818 4954 for bookings.



Dock Inn 1858 by Klin Sullivan

The program for Back To Balmain Day, Sunday, 27 October, starts with a re-union at Pigeon Ground (Gladstone Park) Public School at 9am followed by an Ecumenical Service at St Andrews Church at 10am. Casual dress is welcome.

The Picnic Day begins at 11am in Elkington Park. Bring your own food and refreshments. Steak sandwiches, ice cream, confectionery and soft drinks will be on sale

from the Police Boys' Club Stall. At 2pm the Leichhardt Municipal Band will entertain from the rotunda.

Enquiries—George Stone 810 1078, Cec Whitton 807 4427, Peter Carter 818 2674.

From 21 Oct-2 Nov the Balmain Library is presenting an *At Work & Play* Exhibition on laser video disk. There will be videos and classic Australian films. There is also a drawing competition for youngsters.

**You are Called to the Bar
at Clontarf, 4 Wallace St
6-8pm Friday 25 October
for the launch of our book**

***Called To The Bar*
150 years of Pubs in
Balmain & Rozelle.**

**Guest speaker: Dawn Fraser
R.S.V.P. 18 October 1991.
Ph 810 5185**

**The Balmain Association
PO Box 57
Balmain 2041**

New Directives

Residents are confident that the factional bitterness that characterised the previous Leichhardt Council meetings will not be repeated with the election of seven new councillors. Four are members of the Association and there are now seven councillors from the Peninsular, which says something of the voters' concerns.

At an early meeting, the Mayor, Larry Hand, will present a mayoral minute dealing with the rezoning of the five industrial sites. It seems likely that the Council will consider stringent restrictions on development to counter expected traffic and equity problems. How these can be achieved in the context of the draft Local Environmental Plans will be of great interest.

Recent meetings of the City West Planning Advisory Committee have highlighted the Department of Planning's inability or reluctance to devise mechanisms to ensure adequate affordable housing in the Pyrmont redevelopment. A report prepared by Brian Elton & Associates states "Without a policy decision to create a socially diverse community, and without the required incentives or subsidies, the higher income groups will form a majority of the population. This would mean displacement of the remaining low income residents and vulnerability of already disadvantaged groups... Some groups are more vulnerable than others - the elderly, the remaining working class tenants - and they will have to be taken into consideration and protected (continued on back page)..."

Glebe Island and the MSB

The Maritime Services Board have released details of the review of their land uses in Sydney Harbour and particularly in their affect on Glebe Island.

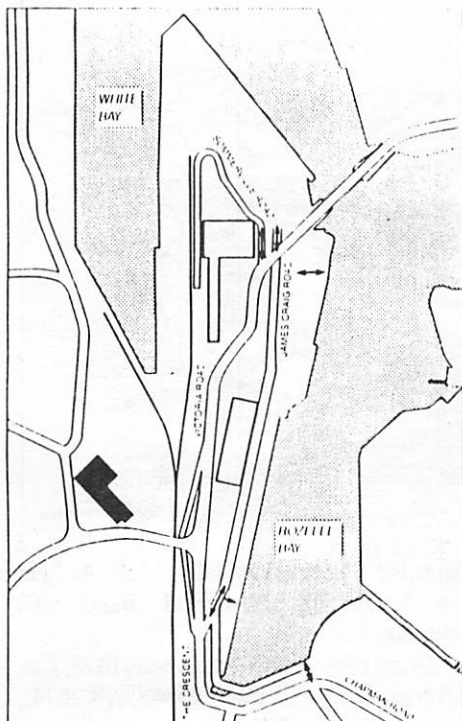
The Conaust lease of the White Bay Container Terminal extends until 2005 and the MSB is endeavouring to obtain a lessee to use Glebe Island as a motor vehicle importing facility. The Coal Loader will be shut down in 1993 if not sooner due to its poor efficiency. For Rozelle Bay they propose 64 fixed and 24 swing moorings for

private boats. There are 3 options for access to Glebe Island. The demolition of the old Glebe Island bridge is advocated to "improve flushing of Blackwattle Bay" and probably determined the site of the marine engineering workshops on Glebe Island adjacent to the new bridge pylon.

The MSB has no solution to the traffic problem at the Roberts St intersection with Victoria Rd and Option 3 actually increases traffic in and out of the area. They say that the RTA and local council are responsible. Unfortunately, the Department of Planning is not adopting a leading role in the planning.

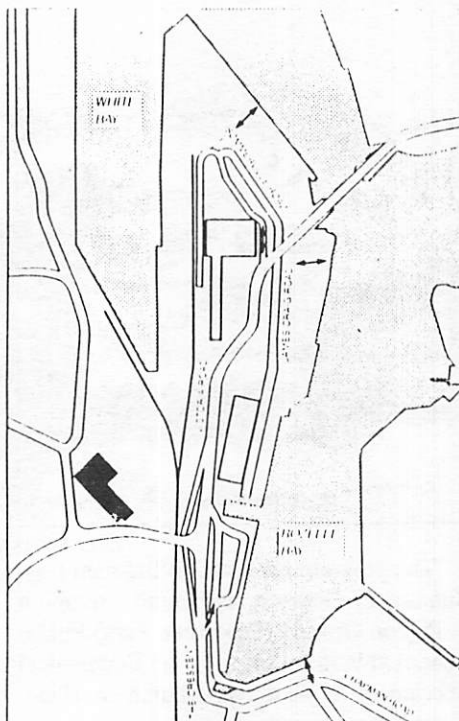
We shall have the opportunity to air our proposals later this month at a meeting in Leichhardt Town Hall. The Association is calling for the retention of the old Glebe Is bridge as it will be invaluable for local traffic and public transport. In our view the flushing of the bay is a red herring. We propose the restriction of heavy vehicle access to White Bay Terminal during peak hours, no right turn out of Roberts St into Mullens St for vehicles over 6m, and the construction of a road link on MSB land between White Bay and Sommersville St.

Should you have any other concerns on this area we will be pleased to have them.



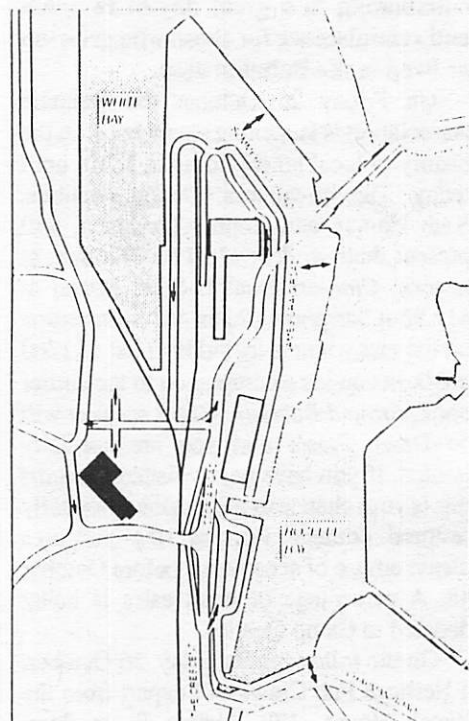
OPTION 1

- Continue existing port access
- Public mooring - 1st stage plus foreshore rehabilitation
- Construction traffic access off Chapman Road



OPTION 2

- Port access off Sommersville Road
- New recreational access



OPTION 3

- Principal port access off Sommersville Road
- Exit via White Bay
- At grade level crossings
- Low level connection to Mullens Street

Waterman's Cottage

The Leichhardt Council has received a Development Application for alterations to the historic Waterman's Cottage near the Darling Street Wharf.

Leonie MacDonald reports the proposal, which is not by an architect, will add a bedroom, family room and kitchen. The most controversial feature is the extension of the sandstone stairwell which is to be capped by a perspex cone. The same design was presented in 1985 when the issue went to the Land & Environment Court. Permission was obtained with 18 amendments. The owner, who lives in Malaysia, did not proceed and the application lapsed.

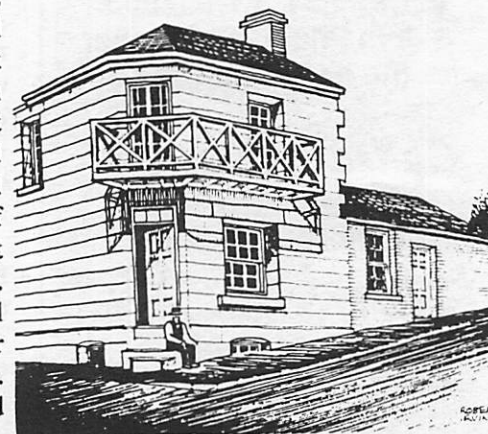
Waterman's Cottage was built in 1841 by the stonemason, John Cavill, and was the

home of McKenzie the Waterman until 1907. Before a regular ferry service was started he rowed people across to the old Grafton Wharf at Jack the Miller's Point. It is one of the earliest surviving buildings in Balmain and has been given a significant listing in the Leichhardt Municipal Heritage Study. The Development Control Plan No 1 permits considerable choice of materials "provided finishes do not conflict with the predominant Victorian character. Roof forms should maintain the traditional relationship to the street with balconies or verandahs in keeping with the streetscape. Preferred roofing materials are corrugated iron or equivalent, or slate."

Residents of Darling and Weston Streets complain that the design is not in keeping with the simplicity of the original structure.

"The Waterman's Cottage"

12 Darling Street



Our apologies for incorrectly naming the children of Fergus and Caroline Fricke. They are of course Harry and Clare.

Gourlie's Corner

Commonwealth Bank 60 yrs in Balmain

The Sydney Credit Union occupies the site of the American Milk Bar on the corner of Darling and McDonald Streets and in the late 1910s it was standing room only for mostly young people on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. The bar sold American style ice-cream, milk and soda drinks. It closed in the 1920s.

The Commonwealth Bank occupied a new building on this site from 7 September 1931 until 1964 when it moved to the site of the Warwick Castle Hotel at the corner of Darling and Mort Streets.

The Commonwealth Bank traces its association with Balmain to October 1871 when the Government Savings Bank of NSW established an agency at the local post office. Upon Federation the post offices became Commonwealth instrumentalities and on 13 January, 1913, the day that the Commonwealth Bank first opened in NSW, the 642 post offices throughout the state commenced acting on its behalf. On the same day the Government Savings Bank opened a branch in Balmain in shop premises next to the corner shop.

In November 1930 the GSB purchased the property on the corner of McDonald and Darling Streets from Mrs Elizabeth Woods for £1,000. The old shop and dwelling were demolished and a new single storey banking chamber was erected by Mr R Gillies, under supervision of well known Sydney architects Messrs Ross & Rowe, in July 1931 at a cost of £3068/2/3.

The brick building had a flat roof, cement rendered walls, featuring in the Darling Street facade, two arched windows and an arched doorway with a further six arched windows down the McDonald Street



wall. The Manager's office was alongside the entrance and featured timber panelling to doortop level with glass panelling from there to the high ceiling. The large inverted "L" shaped counter separated work and public space and the floor was covered with linoleum. The strongroom was located at the rear.

The new premises were first occupied on 7 September 1931. Shortly after, on 15 December 1931, the GSB merged with the Commonwealth Bank and the Balmain branch was opened on that date utilising the GSB building.

During World War II the Balmain branch was heavily involved with Commonwealth Bonds and Government fund-raising activities as well as acting as local agent for the meat and clothing rationing authorities.

The premises were externally renovated in 1948 and again in 1952. Staff numbers grew to 14 by 1957 and the branch was experiencing difficulties coping with the increased work load in cramped conditions. Renovations costing £1735/17/- were made

to provide a better layout with additional counter length and fluorescent lighting was installed. By 1961 the branch conducted 8224 savings accounts with balances totalling £1.48 million and had a staff of 15. Saturday morning bank trading ceased in NSW on 20 January 1962.

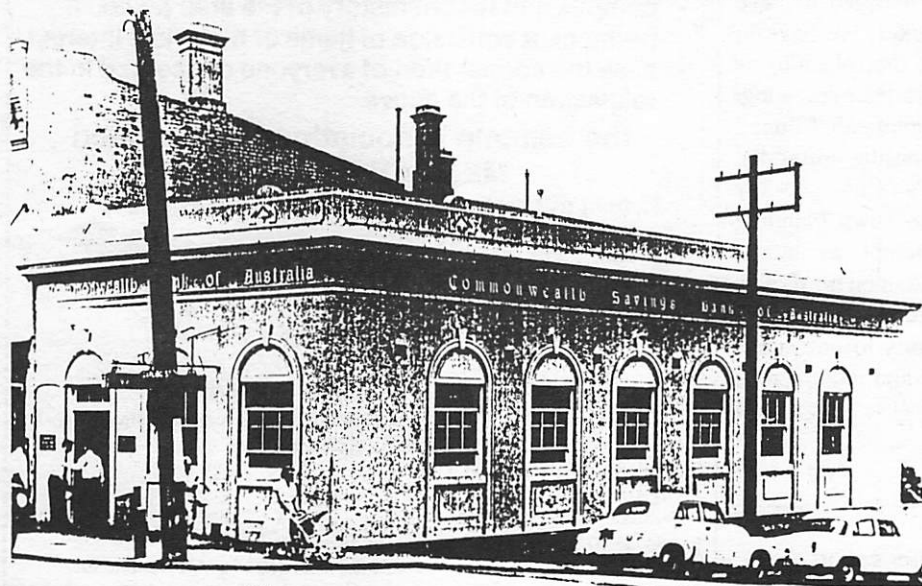
The branch had almost reached saturation point and consideration was given for an alternative site closer to the centre of the shopping area. In October 1963 the Warwick Castle Hotel on the corner of Mort and Darling Streets was purchased from Toohey's Ltd for £20,000. While negotiations for purchase were proceeding a fire occurred in the vacant hotel and the roof was destroyed. The demolition contract was given to H Rothwell at a cost of £2060. However, Mr Rothwell was killed in an accident only days later. Whelan the Wrecker executed the demolition in August 1964 for £3569. The new building was completed early in 1966 at a cost of £37630 by Alex Gall (Constructions) Ltd of Mortdale to a design of architects, Stephenson & Turner of North Sydney. Minor alterations were made in 1978 and 1984. The old GSB premises were sold in 1967.

During the recent 60 year celebrations, long time customer, Mr Bill Hill, and Association Committee members enjoyed morning tea with the manager, Mr Cross and his staff.

Balmain branch managers have been:

1931 N Elliott, 1933 G Martin, 1933 L Nalder, 1946 J Crum, 1949 R McShane, 1953 J Guinane, 1959 E P Cunningham, 1962 W Sheppard, 1966 W Tavior, 1967 G Turner, 1971 S Jones, 1974 W Purvis, 1977 L McKnight, 1981 A Thurgate, 1985 L Wilson, 1988 M Halpin, 1990 M Cross.

Source: Commonwealth Bank Archives.

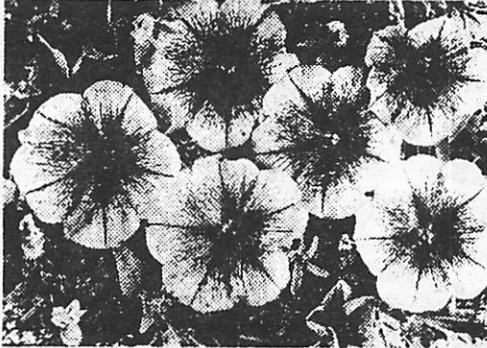




In Your Garden

Mid-spring sees glorious colours all around the garden, with azaleas, flowering fruits, rhododendrons, prostantheras, callistemons, weigelas and many other plants in bloom.

Lawns grow quickly now, so mow regularly and feed with a lawn fertiliser, being sure to water well after application. New lawns can be planted into well prepared areas.



Ornamental fruit trees, still at a manageable size need a trim when their flowering is finished. Most evergreen plants can be planted. Choose one or two that produce perfumed flowers such as boronia megastigma and daphne odora.

Using an all-purpose garden fertiliser, give a feeding to roses, fuchsias, hydrangeas, daphne and tub plants. Dahlia tubers can be planted during the late spring. Gladiolus corns planted now will bloom in about ninety days.

During the next few weeks, lots of flower annual seedlings will be available. Look for any of these: zinnia, petunia, aster, marigold, amaranthus, torenia, gaillardia and helichrysum.

If your cymbidium orchids haven't been repotted for three years do so when their flowering is finished, using a special prepared orchid mix available at garden outlets.

Bonnie Davidson

(continuing New Directives)...

from development changes wherever possible.. There is strong support for some form of intervention in the housing market so as to provide a proportion of housing which is affordable to low and moderate income groups and so safeguard accommodation for existing groups of vulnerable residents and keep a mix of socio-economic groups..."

A similar situation confronts the Council in its deliberations on rezoning. For a viable, vibrant community a social mix is a necessity. Negative gearing is generally acknowledged to have pushed investment into the top end of the market. We have to reject the dry economic rationalists who think that planning is unnecessary because the market place will determine everything. Some advantage may be had by consulting the Fremantle Council as to how they were able to obtain affordable housing during the development that went with the America's Cup. A key administration decision was to make Fremantle Town Planning into Planning and Development in an attempt to attract development of the Fremantle kind. Leichhardt Council needs new directives that will encourage developers along proper guidelines.

It may be necessary to offer density bonuses to encourage developers to include lower cost dwellings and commercial buildings for job creation in their projects. In any case there should be consultation to achieve these objects.

The Editor

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WHAT'S ON

- Belinda Swan—Paintings. Oct 18-Nov 3
- Pubs Book Launch—Clontarf, Wallace St 6-8pm Friday, October 25.
- Heritage Pub Crawl—2pm Sat October 26
- Back to Balmain Day—Elkington Park Sunday, October 27
- Janet Scott—Paintings. Nov 8-18
- Helen Engles & Friends—Pots. Nov 23-Dec 1
- 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

the balmain association incorporated
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

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Organisation \$15.00

Pensioner or Student \$1.00

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