

the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

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Watch House Restoration

Association members, passing the Watch House recently, may have seen local stonemasons, Kel and Jason Munyard, repointing the exterior stonework. They are working on the exercise yard walls as well.

Quite an extensive restoration program is now underway starting with the repointing to reduce the amount of moisture entering the stonework. The hard, grey cement mortar used at an earlier stage under the verandah has also been cut out and replaced.

Further work on the stonework over the next 12-18 months will include application of sacrificial render to the inside walls of the charge room and the original cell to remove salts due to rising damp. Once the salt level has been reduced, a formal damp course can be inserted in the walls of these areas. Repointing is also to take place on the unpainted cell walls and removal of patches of hard mortar from the door thresholds and elsewhere. The timber floors shall be revarnished prior to general interior repainting.

Finally, we can attend to the spalling of exterior stonework, replacement of the foyer chimney and improved drainage in the exercise yards. These will be expensive operations and, though the spalling is unsightly, the damage is superficial and not accelerating.

Concurrently, work is proceeding on replacement of the northern fence and complete refurbishment of the kitchenette. Local shipwright, Ian Smale, is undertaking this project with a fastidious approach to detail and joinery workmanship. This will result in a far more functional facility for the Association and hirers of the Watch House, yet with the charm and character of the period building. The elevated rear courtyard has caused rising damp to the neighbouring property which shall be remedied by a low retaining wall set back from the northern boundary to retain the garden and the courtyard.

Members are welcome to inspect the work. It should be appreciated that the extent of the project would be severely limited without the revenue from the extremely successful publication, "Called

to the Bar", and commissions from some very successful exhibitions last summer.

The History Committee is preparing a permanent exhibit of modern museum quality for one of the cells.

Jeremy Arnott



Cars are Eating Balmain

Our streets and footpaths are now clogged with cars and what was once rows of cottages and terraces fronting the street is rapidly being converted into rows of garages. How much of our community are we prepared to sacrifice to this tin god? Has the motor car really increased our quality of life?

David Enwicht points out in his book "Eco-city" that the average time to travel to work late last century was about 1/2 an hour and now, 100 years later, it is still the same. David also maintains that the fundamental desire by humans to congregate in cities is based on a need for exchange on many levels socially and of goods and services. However the motor car has actually reduced our opportunities for exchange. Surely one of the joys of life comes from a diversity of friendships. It also promotes our sense of security, a chat to the neighbour at the bus stop could replace the need for a formalised meeting.

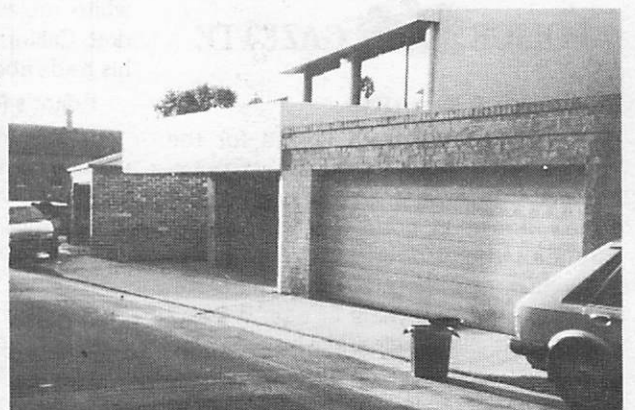
The motor car has extended the walled castle and given us privacy in the public domain but in doing so it has alienated us from our neighbours and our community. This negative feed-back loop spawns a series of others. For example, if we believe that the streets are dangerous, then they will become so, as less and less people will walk them. If we have no trust in our neighbours then we will be looking out for evidence to support that view. Slowly but surely our cities become more dangerous, alienating and ugly.

The question is how much of our community are we prepared to sacrifice, in the name of car convenience? Should Council continue to approve car-orientated development, or should it be seeking to promote development which enhances our sense of community rather than our dependence on the motor car? Cars have become a major problem in

19th century built areas of cities around the world. Leichhardt Council is pioneering new policies on garages, car parking and transport alternatives in general. How do we preserve the diversity of our community? Do we really want cars to swallow Balmain? Any submissions or contributions from residents to the Transport and Traffic Policy Committee about these matters are most welcome.

Ald Nick Masterman

Below: An unbroken line of garages in Louisa Rd



New South Wales Prisons

Although the vast majority of those incarcerated temporarily in the Watch House would probably have been dealt with summarily by a Police Magistrate, Stipendiary Magistrate or Justice of the Peace, it seems possible that one or more might have committed a more serious crime and ended up in one of New South Wales' prisons.

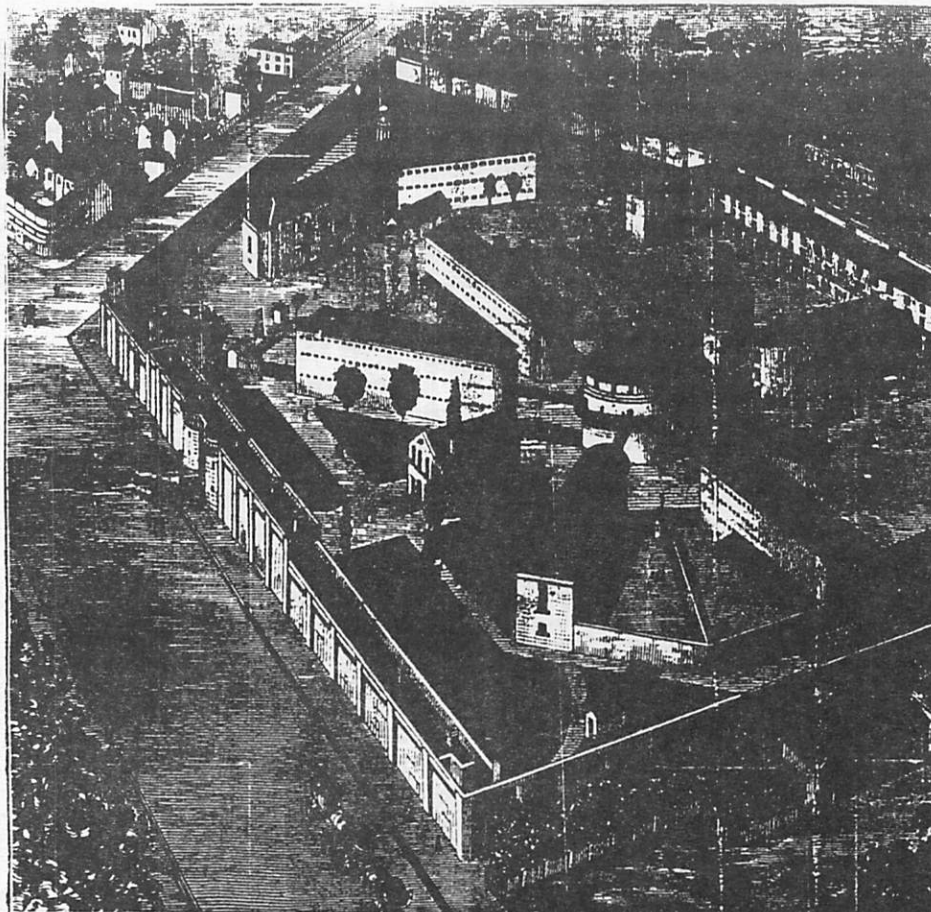
This and succeeding articles will examine what conditions were like inside the prison he would have been sent to. As was the case with the police force - and almost all other aspects of colonial life - New South Wales prisons and the philosophy behind them were based on British models.

Most of us are familiar with the pictures of squalor in 18th century prisons which were generally local and privately run. Although many people were in prison awaiting trial, imprisonment itself was rarely used as a punishment as most serious offences resulted in sentences of transportation or death.

In the late 18th century a movement for prison reform developed aimed not only at punishment but at saving the criminal's soul in the process. It was at this time that the ideal of "tough but fair" so recently recommended by the NSW Minister for Corrective Services was adopted. It was thought that the goal could be achieved through good buildings and a comprehensive strategy of punishment and reformation.

The first Sydney gaol was built of logs with a clay floor and thatched roof and contained 22 cells. It was destroyed by fire in 1799 and replaced with a stone building on the same site. Neither apparently contributed much to moral reform.

In 1839 Darlinghurst followed Britain by adopting the Philadelphia model developed in the United States, but in 1849 a Select Committee investigating disciplinary conditions at Darlinghurst concluded that the conditions were neither tough nor fair, failing not only in deterring potential criminals but also in reforming



offenders currently in custody. Turnkeys were found to be drunk and sleeping with female inmates and both the Principal Gaoler and the Visiting Magistrate used prisoners as slaves. The Principal Gaoler also made a tidy profit from the sale of prisoner made artifacts.

As has happened since, improvement did not follow hard upon the heels of the Select Committee Report. In 1861 another Select Committee, this one on prisons in Sydney and Cumberland, found that prisoners' accommodation, discipline, cleanliness and behaviour were depraved, brutalising and deplorable. The Committee recommended the establishment of a "great central prison" with cellular dormitories, reformatory treatment and profitable employment of prisoners' labour. It was proposed that NSW emulate English prison reform such as that which

had taken place at Pentonville. It may seem surprising today that Pentonville was ever an example of what should be happening in prisons, but in fact in the first few years after its construction in 1842 it was considered an excellent first step in the process of punishment and reformation of prisoners.

The so-called separate system - the rigorous separation and isolation of prisoners, the enforcement of complete silence and religious instruction - was then universally acknowledged" as the ideal. It was introduced to Port Arthur prison in Tasmania after 1850 and in 1866 Berrima Gaol was transformed into a Pentonville style "Model Prison". The way in which this took place will be examined in a subsequent article.

Debby Nicholls

Pictured: Early engraving of Darlinghurst Gaol

POLICE GAZETTE

Monday 9 May 1859

A warrant has been issued for the apprehension of Robert Smith, carpenter, charged with stealing an iron cramp from a new house in course of erection at Balmain, the property of one James McDonald, contractor of the same place; Smith is about 32 years of age, 5 feet 7 inches high, black hair and whiskers, dark eyes, fresh complexion, and stout made, wore, when last seen, a light coloured coat,

white moleskin trousers, light vest, and drab California; supposed to be working at his trade about Sydney.

Editor's Note:

James McDonald (1814-1902) earned the title of the architect of Balmain. In forty five years working as an architect, all but one of his known works were executed within walking distance of his residence at 10 Thames St. which has been, for some years, the manager's home for the Salvation Army Hostel opposite. There is a threat of demolition to make way for apartments.

Thursday 12 May 1859

Stolen from a box in the berth of Frederick Gandy, on Board the *European*, lying in Waterview Bay, Balmain, on the 7th instant, a £5 and two £1 notes. A man named Charles Thorn is suspected; he was at work on board at the time and had access to the berth, he is about 5 feet 8 inches high, light hair, red whiskers meeting under the chin, thin pale face; wore a blue jumper, Panama hat, and dirty moleskin trousers.

He is supposed to have gone to the North Shore.

Balmain Personality

Theodore James Jaques (1823-93)

The Jaques family arrived in Sydney in July 1830 on the *Roslyn Castle* when Theodore was seven years old. He had been born on 6 October 1823 at Rochester, England, to William Jaques, surveyor, and Jane (nee Hill).

Theodore was educated at the Sydney College under his brother-in-law, W Cape. In 1839 he became a junior clerk in the Supreme Court Registry Office. He applied for admission as a solicitor by virtue of his Registry Office service. In December 1856 he passed an examination that accepted

him as a solicitor but did not practise for many years. By 1852 he had become a commissioner for affidavits and in 1857 he was made Deputy Registrar General to take charge of the Deeds Branch. Because it did not record marriage settlements and trusts, he opposed the introduction of the Torrens Titles system in the early 1860s. Jaques was appointed Registrar General in 1864, a magistrate in 1865 and chairman of the Land Titles' Commission. He advocated, in 1867, the transfer to his department of all records of births, marriages and deaths particularly those held by the Anglican registrar, H K Jones.

Jaques bought *Hillside House* in Paul Street, Balmain East in 1864 from Ewen

Cameron Wallace and renamed it *Eastcliff*. Previously he had lived in Adolphus St. (1857) and Little Darling St. (1863).

His involvement in community affairs started with the Balmain Volunteer Infantry in September 1860 and he was promoted to captain in December of that year, major in 1868 and lieutenant-colonel in 1885.

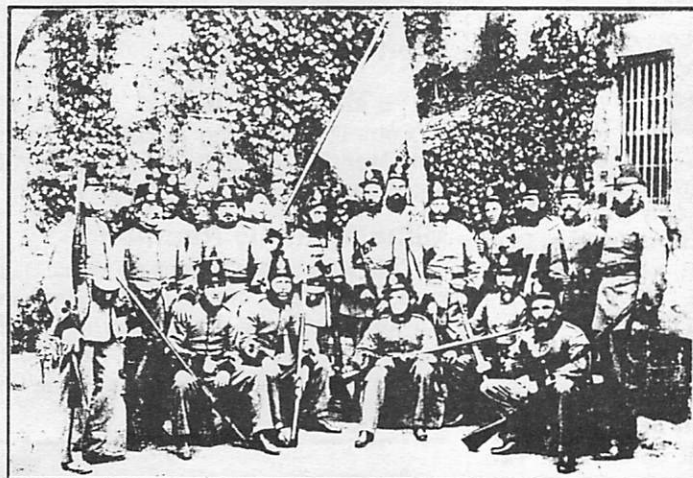
For many years he was the president of the Royal Rifle Association of NSW, secretary of the Balmain Mechanics School of Arts and registrar of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney (1876-9). He represented the Balmain St Mary's Anglican Church on six synods.

Jaques retired on 15 December 1870 because of ill-health but continued to practise as a solicitor. In 1873 he was appointed Commissioner for Affidavits for Victoria in NSW. He went into partnership in 1874 with his nephew, Alfred E Jaques, who, in 1878, joined Stephen & Stephen to establish the legal firm Stephen, Jaques & Stephen. Theodore Jaques continued to practise alone.

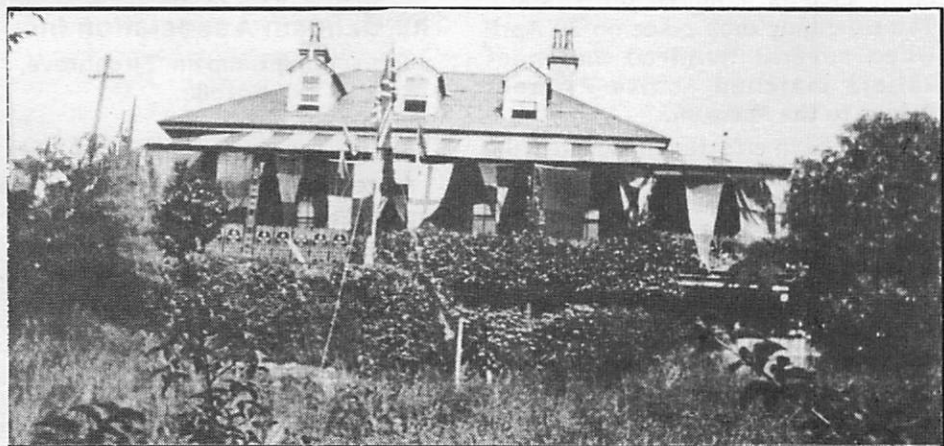
Jacques and Theodore Streets were named after him although the former has an added 'c' in the spelling. Theodore died of pernicious anaemia on 23 July 1893 and was buried in the Balmain Cemetery (now Pioneer Park, Leichhardt). He was predeceased by his wife, Mary Ann (nee Cook, died 4 December 1858) and left a son and daughter. Jaques left an estate of £13,826 but no will.

His daughter Laura Emma married George Bagot Stack, a clerk in civil service, at St Mary's Church on 5 January 1881. George was a son of the Rev William Stack who was minister of St Marys from 1855 to 1871 (tragically killed in a coach accident near Walgett while travelling to see his dying son).

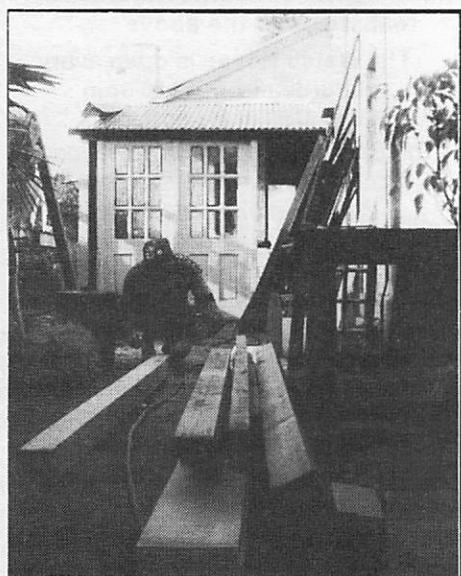
Researched by Bonnie Davidson.
Sources: ADB Vol 1 No 4, M Rutledge, Leichhardt Historical Journal No 11, Peter Reynolds.



Above: Theodore J Jaques
Left: Balmain Volunteer Rifles formed in 1860 to resist French expansion.



Left: Jaques' house *Eastcliff*



Further pictures of the Watch House restoration.
Far left: Ian Smale working on the Kitchen.
Left: Kel and Jason Munyard repointing cell walls.

AGL Site

Many residents disagree with the Council's decision to buy the AGL site in The Crescent, Annandale for nearly \$2 million. They claim a misuse of the Sect 94 Open space contributions stipulating that they must be used in the locality from which they were obtained.

The purchase is of doubtful value particularly as it is bounded by a busy road. Areas away from the waterfront have a greater need of parkland. Projects such as the additions to Birchgrove Oval and Long Nose Point will be held up for many years.

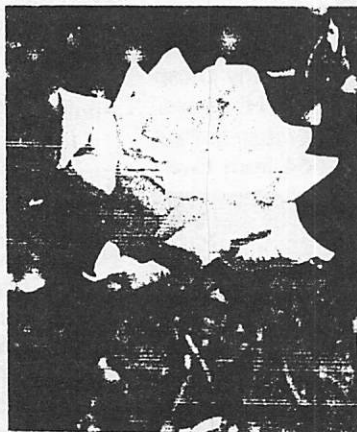
In Your Garden

Jobs for July

Attend to the most of the winter pruning this month. You will need to prune deciduous fruiting plants, lagerstroemia, roses, deciduous hibiscus, fuchsias and hydrangeas.

Prune roses to maintain an open centre.

Remove weak, damaged or dead stems and shorten growths by about two-thirds, cutting just above an upward pointing bud. Fuchsias need a hard prune, cutting back to within two or three nodes on each limb. Do not cut the hydrangeas' stems that haven't flowered. Shorten those that did to within two or three buds from the base. Other deciduous plants may be sprayed with a dormant or winter oil to kill the eggs of



scale, mites or aphids. Do not use winter oil plants with leaves.

A few herbaceous perennials or bulbous type plants to repot or plant out this month are; libiums, galtonia, candicans, cannas, calla lily, astilbe, peony, lily-of-the-valley, clivia hosta lily, dicenta, nerines and sprekelia.

Roses and other deciduous shrubs can be planted now. When daphnes come into bloom pick all you want as that light trim

is beneficial to the plant. Even though it is winter there will be other plants flowering, including camellias, proteas and hakea sericea.

Lots of the schlumbergera or zygocactus flower about this time, making a lovely show in hanging baskets. They need good light but only filtered sun.

Bonnie Davidson

Views can be Saved

A town planner, Mr Rennard, giving evidence for the Council in the Land & Environment Court criticised the Hazama/McMahon Holdings plan as a very poor use of the Howard Smith site in Birchgrove which denied local residents their long established views of Parramatta River and Hunters Hill.

It was inadequate in landscaped areas as well. The excavated site was proposed to have one metre of fill below Birchgrove Road and an inconceivable seven metres of fill below Gow Street which could accommodate three floors of residences. Future residents of units within the complex would look out on other units. Mr Rennard said that it was possible to move the dwellings overshadowing Birchgrove Road to the waterfront as well as retain views from houses in Gow and Water Streets. Justice Talbot refused to accept the credibility of another plan of the developer's architects which proposed 100 dwellings and preserved residents views. Responding, Mr Rennard also rejected this plan for its poor use of the site. Judgement is expected at the end of July.

Guardians of Balmain Hospital

If Balmain Hospital is to survive as an acute health care facility we need the community's help.

Become a member of the Guardians of Balmain Hospital and actively support the hospital. Meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month at the Balmain Leagues Club, Victoria Rd. Contact D Donnelly or C Batey. Ph 810 8211.

Seafarers' Memorial

The National Maritime Museum has a new memorial dedicated to the sacrifices, particularly in World War II, made by seafarers. It consists of two large anchors mounted on a plinth. The ceremony took place on 30 April when several hundred merchant sailors marched across Pyrmont Bridge to the Museum.

The Seamen's Union donated the anchors, one 6.5 metres and the other 5.8 metres long, which were from the *Vernon*, a sailing ship that was moored off Cockatoo Island from 1870 to 1891. It was then named the *Sobraon* and served as a reformatory ship in the rehabilitation of wayward and orphaned children.

What's On

- **Exhibition at the Watch House Photographs & Religious Art Ross Farrell. 25 July-2 August.**
- **Dinner at Parliament House Monday 27 July at 6.30pm Balmain Development Trust Fundraising \$100 per person. Contact Jean McCallum 810 7836 or Helen Styles 235 1236**

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**Notice to Members
The 26th Annual
General Meeting of
the Balmain
Association will be
held on Wednesday
5 August at 7.30pm
at the Watch House
179 Darling St**

Noticeboard

Save Ballast Point

Committee Meeting at Balmain Town Hall Monday 20 July at 7.30pm. All welcome.

Milham Family Reunion

The Milham Family Reunion Picnic Day is on Sunday 25 October 1992 at 10am in Montague Park, Drummoyne. The associated families are Milham, Ford, Pont and Hansen. Contact Mrs Paula Hume Ph 949 4454.

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 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.
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.

Annual Subscriptions:

Household \$16, Pensioners & Students \$7, Organisation \$21.