



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

Vol 27 No 11 Issue 220

Founded 1965

December 1992

Transport and Traffic

Public transport services in the Leichhardt Municipality are provided and managed by the State Government but it is becoming more appropriate for local people, through their local council, to take some responsibility for local transport. Local knowledge gives them enough qualification to contribute to the planning process.

The State Transport system is obviously not functioning adequately because it allows the private motor car to dominate. The State Transit Authority is capable but it is commanded by the government to run its services on a commercial basis. Public transport is too expensive and restrictive and relies on the principal of "user pays". Apart from the commuter, there are other sections of the community who benefit from public transport.

There will be no one solution to the transport problems of the area. All modes of transport need to be considered, including feet, light rail, bicycles, ferries, buses and cars. What is needed is a grid system which will integrate the means of travelling within and beyond local precincts and the municipality. This involves large vehicles (trains and ferries) being met by smaller vehicles at interchange centres. Because of the centralised nature of the rail grid this approach assumes that the destination of the majority of commuters is the CBD, which is not the case. Why would so many drivers sit in long frustrating traffic queues on Victoria Road if they were going

to the city centre or they didn't need the use of their cars during the day?

An effective system is one which transports people to where they want to go within a reasonable time. To compete with the private vehicle public transport must be of high quality, its cost should be competitive and it must have frequent service. Some suggested standards are: 1. A commuter should be not more than 5 minutes' walk to the connection. 2. A person should be able to go from one place in the municipality to another within it in 30 minutes. 3. A person should be able to get to the CBD in 30 minutes. 4. A person should be able to get from any place in the municipality to an adjoining municipality within 45 minutes. 5. A person should not have to make more than two connections in the journey.

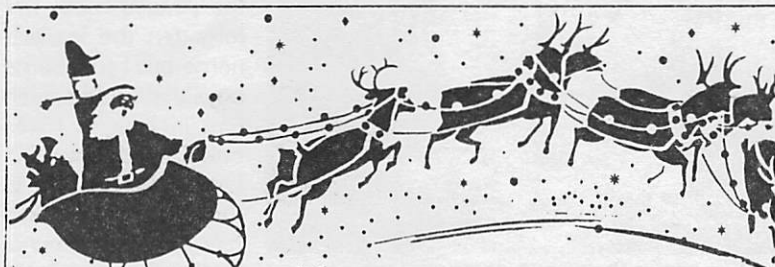
Some people advocate increased use of ferries in this locality surrounded by water. They point to the widespread use of ferries at the turn of the century but without allowing for the influence of the motor car. There will be insufficient parking spaces for private vehicles and shuttle buses would be needed to bring commuters to the wharves to meet the ferries. Smaller more efficient ferries are necessary.

On-street parking in the narrow streets of Balmain presents a major barrier to public transport and especially light rail. Would the authorities dare to introduce the Japanese policy of ownership of a garage as a proviso of registration of a private vehicle?

That Post Box

Recently a woman was observed striving to post a letter in the sparkling red letter box outside the Balmain Post Office. When told that the box was a heritage item and the slot was sealed, she expressed delight that history was being preserved. We can thank the Postmanager, Mr Ian Curry, for the restoration of this iron letter receiver, the only remaining example in the area. When it was located at the pedestrian crossing in Loyalty Square, David Ramsay drew attention to a large crack caused by corrosion and some help from a wayward car. Mr Curry was appreciative of the heritage and had it repaired by Australia Post and positioned in its new location.

Picture by courtesy of The Glebe



A Merry Xmas
and a
Happy New Year to All

**Annual
Subscriptions are
now due.**

**Please assist by sending
your contributions early.**

**Use the renewal form on
the wrapper.**

The Making of the Modern Magistracy

As we saw last month, Balmain Court House was formerly a Police Court but is now a Court of Petty Sessions presided over by a Stipendiary Magistrate who is a member of the NSW Public Service. This transition was part of a wider professionalisation of the magistracy in general, which we also saw happening with the police service.

The 1895 Public Service Act ended politicians' control of government employment by making an independent Public Service Board responsible for the classification, discipline, promotion and - most importantly - recruitment of public servants, including magistrates. The same Act institutionalised "insider preference" which stated that no outsider could be appointed to a promotion position in the service unless there were no suitable internal candidate. Although this did end political appointments, it also meant that it was difficult for the Board to recruit practicing lawyers into the magistracy, with the obvious effect on the legal qualifications of the magistrates. However, the Act was amended in 1909 to state that an internal candidate must be just as capable as an outside candidate and governments pointed to the growing professionalism of the public service to justify the crowding out of the honorary justices of the peace who had once presided over many courts. From 1900 to 1975, nevertheless, no magistrate was appointed from outside the public service and the first woman was not appointed until 1970.

Politicians were not necessarily happy about the diminishing role of the justices of the peace. Appointment to the

Commission of the Peace was often considered a very useful political sweetener. But attempts to restore the powers of these justices were frustrated by the wartime politics when public service magistrates were drafted to preside over the federal government's Military Exemption Courts in 1916: the debate over conscription made the unbiased nature of such a court essential. The same factors applied during the general strike of 1917.

After 1916 people arrested for drunkenness could forfeit a small deposit (technically their bail) in lieu of appearing in court which reduced the number of drink-related cases by a third. It was thus possible for the kind of case dealt with by Petty Sessions to be extended to relieve pressure on higher courts. This was confirmed by the Crimes (Amendment) Act of 1924 which extended the jurisdiction of the Courts of Petty Session and the amount of fines they could impose.

At the same time, however, another problem was emerging which affected the independence of the magistracy, namely the growing demand that their sentencing practices should be adjusted to fit the needs of other departments, especially the prisons. Frederick Neitenstein, the Comptroller General of Prisons whom we met in previous articles, was particularly critical. He argued that not only did the magistrates not take into account the history and circumstances of the offender, there was also no provision for the payment of fines by instalment. As a result, he said, fine default accounted for 57 percent of all prison admissions in 1897.

A similar battle developed over an act which allowed for the imprisonment of an inebriate who had been convicted three times in one year. Neitenstein asked that magistrates adjust their sentences to the fact that only 20 inebriates could be

accommodated in the special facilities he was setting up for them as an experiment in corrective imprisonment. The magistrates, not surprisingly, resisted the implication that their decisions should be tailored to the problem of prison overcrowding.

The first magistrates therefore were determined to set a course for the magistracy which would give it administrative as well as political independence. On the other hand, the fact that they were public servants under bureaucratic control, provided an ambiguous legacy in the eyes of public. Critics claimed they were imbued with a "Public Service order-and-obey mentality" which affected their judicial independence, a criticism that the success of the Petty sessions Officers' Association in blocking outside recruitment did nothing to deflect.

Hilary Golder comments in her conclusion that the issues raised by these and other criticisms "were not really explored until after the Second World War. The increasing complexity of cases coming before the lower courts, together with the appointment of younger, legally-qualified men to the bench, placed the issue of structural independence on the magisterial agenda."

This series of articles has been taken from the December 1991 Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society which in turn was based on a series of public lectures entitled "In Pursuit of Incurable Rogues" which covered aspects of crime and punishment between about 1830 and 1930. The editor would welcome contributions from readers which would extend our knowledge to the present time and/or comment on any of the issues raised in the articles.

Debby Nicholls

The Good Old Days

by Jack Murray

I came to live in Balmain from Victoria when I was 12 years' old. I am now 84 years' old. My family lived in Glenalva House, Stephen Street near the ferry wharf. My father was a boilermaker.

I attended Pigeon Ground School and my teacher was Mr Myers. He was a good teacher but could use the cane if we had our hands on the desk. He would go whack but we kept our minds on our lessons. I left school when I was 13 years' old and went to work for a while at George Hudson in Glebe then at the Strand Drapery in Darling St. Mr Solomon was the owner and paid me 10s a week. I gave my mother 9s and was content with my shilling pocket money.

In those days the mobs [local gangs] used to go looking for fights. There were



The Amusu Theatre as it is today

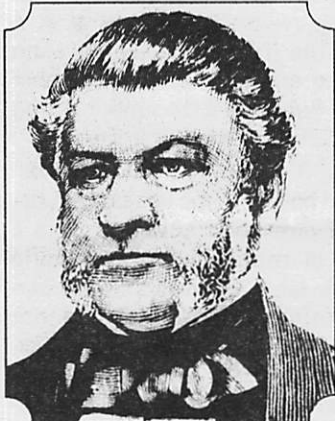
mobs from the Amusu Theatre, Stephen St and East Balmain so I grew up to learn to fight. When I was 18 years' old I fought as a professional as we did not have much money. Later when I lived in Lawson St I

can remember fighting for an hour on the paddock at the end of the street. At the sing-a-longs in the Amusu Theatre one side was taken up by the Amusu mob. I've forgotten the leader's name but I told some boys that I had beaten him in a fight. I was only 14 and he was 20. Later I fought him in the ring and knocked him out in one round.

In the dressing room he said that I had hit him hard. I said, "Not as hard as you hit me at the theatre years ago." He told me he lived at Curl Curl and he fought to get money for his 6 children. I was sorry for him. (cont next page)

John Hosking

As the year of 1992 draws to a close, the City of Sydney has been celebrating its sesquicentenary. The act incorporating Sydney was passed on 20 July, 1842. The city was divided into six wards with every "male person" over 21 years who occupied a house, warehouse, counting house or shop worth £25 and who lived within seven miles of the city, eligible to vote. This included Balmain residents. The city was bounded by Woolloomooloo, Surry Hills, Redfern and Darlinghurst. Gum trees grew in the city



The first Lord Mayor — Alderman John Hosking.

itself. Bullock teams were often seen in George Street.

There were 165 gas lamps in the city made up of 14 government lights, 11 corporation lights, 106 hotel lights and 34 private lights. Beef sold for one penny per pound and mutton three pence per pound.

On 21 December, 1842, the Right Worshipful John Hosking, first Mayor of Sydney, gave a dinner to members of the Corporation and the elite of the citizens at Mr Sparks' Royal Hotel. The total number seated for the dinner was 349. The principal articles provided were 70 tureens of soup, 56 turkeys, 50 geese, 60 couple of

boiled and roasted fowl, 36 hams, 50 tongues, 70 joints of butcher's meat, 100 dishes of vegetables, 400 aside dishes, 1200 dishes of confectionary including 800 dishes of desert.

John Hosking was born in London in 1806 and was the third son of John Hosking and Ann Elizabeth Mann. The Hosking family arrived in Sydney in 1809 following an invitation from the Rev Samuel Marsden to John Hosking snr to take charge of the Orphan School. By 1825, John Hosking jnr was a merchant. His fortunes improved with his marriage in 1829 to Martha Foxlowe, daughter of

partner, John Henry Hughes. When the firm could not meet its commitments, insolvency was the only course available. The firm owed more than £155,000 to the Bank of Australia which led to the collapse of the Bank. By September 1843, Hosking's estate was sequestered and by November he was forced to resign as Mayor. He then retired from public life.

John Hosking died at Penrith in 1882.

Kath Hamey

City West

The City West Bays Precinct Committee had its first meeting on 25 November and Val Hamey represented the Balmain Association. The area under study consists of White Bay, Rozelle Marshalling Yards, Glebe Island, Rozelle and Blackwattle Bays. The MSB No 2 Depot is to be included but the Unilever site has been excluded.

The MSB recently released their Port Strategy which indicates that their land use extends into the next decade and cannot be available in the short term. A planning study will be carried out by Lester Firth Associates to examine 6 key issues: land use, urban form, heritage, open space, pedestrian/cycle network and transport/traffic. There will also be a social impact study by Brian Elton & Associates, a traffic and transport review by Colston Budd Hunt & Twiney and a feasibility study of the retention of the Glebe Island Bridge by Connell Wagner.

Val Hamey indicated that the Association had the immediate short term aim of removing port traffic from Peninsula streets. An extension of Mullens Street on to Glebe Island to connect with the City West Link is obviously not a priority of the RTA action is needed to ban large vehicles from using Mullens Street.



George St, Sydney, as it was back in 1842. The view looks north from the Town Hall.

Samuel Terry, as this gave him entry to the inner circle of the Sydney entrepreneurs.

At the auction of the first subdivided lots at Balmain East in 1836, Hosking purchased a 5 acre block bordered by Johnston, Darling and Union streets. In 1841, he commissioned surveyor John Armstrong to create a subdivision that would appeal to a variety of buyers. Union and Hosking Streets were formed.

In November 1842, Hosking was elected for the Bourke Ward in the first Sydney Municipal election and was subsequently chosen as Mayor. However, all was not well financially with his business

(cont) I was out of work in the 1929 Timber strike at the start of the Great Depression. We got handouts from Mrs Quick, a very kind lady who lived in Evans Street and helped a lot of people with food.

I enjoyed swimming in the Balmain Baths and later I played Rugby League with the unemployed. We used a lorry with stools on the load top. The older men would take a keg of beer to the country areas such as Picton. Jimmy Duckworth, who lived in Elliott St, played for Balmain and he was also good swimmer. We trained at Birchgrove Oval at night with a white football. I went dancing on a Friday night at Prescott's Hall as well as dancing lessons at Mr Cooper's near Birchgrove Oval.

As a kid I worked for a milkman who would sing out "Here's your cheap milk man. If you haven't got a jug the jerry will

do!" He would fill the jugs or billies from the milk containers on the back of his horse driven cart. I got 2/6 for my work. Later I worked at the log mill of Bell & Frazer in Terry St and also at the timber mill in Elliott St near the wharf. I was a boilerman and engine driver and my wage was £2/19/-.

Rent was 10/- a week. My mother bought the house in Lawson St for £300. She had sold her house in Tottenham, Melbourne. We later lived at Ryde where Mum bought a house for £500 with a deposit of £300. We lost our home during the depression because we could not pay £1 rent. When people could not pay the rent they would make a moonlight flick. We had to go by tram to a place at Sanders Corner that gave out food. It was run by the government, I think. Back in those days in Balmain we had bread and dripping with

pepper and salt seasoning and it was good. Boys and men would pick up cigarette butts and take out the tobacco to make fags. I remember scaling the the trams in Balmain and dropping off backwards. We thought it was great fun. Later I had a motor bike and would go after rabbits at Picton and sell them for 2/- each to young Byers the butcher's son for his greyhounds. I loved fishing for leather jacket from the wharf and prawning at Drummoyne near the Sailing Club. With a net with a stick on each end and a pocket in the middle we would get nearly a kerosene tinful of prawns and cook them in salt water on the beach.

I have beautiful memories of my young days in Balmain. Through all of the hard times I have done well to live to the age of 84 and am still healthy.

In Your Garden

Timely Tasks

Here is a roundup of timely tasks. Prune climbers after flowering. Take hydrangea cuttings now from non-flowering growth. Check camellia for scale and use white oil for control. Sow seed of primula malacoides and p. abconica to make excellent winter/spring pot plants. Keep dead-heading roses to extend their flowering period. Jet hose aphids off new buds.

Climbing roses which have finished flowering should be pruned now. Take lateral branches back to two or three strong eyes. Old canes and dead wood should be cut out



Climbing Rose
Climbing Goldilocks

from the base. Plant out green plants (struck cuttings of dahlia). Leaves as well as roots need watering. Spray heat sensitive shrubs and trees with a fine mist early morning or late evening when the day is hot and windy.

Prepare your garden for the hot months by spreading a layer of mulch over garden beds to keep roots cool and to conserve moisture. You can use a mixture of decomposed leaf litter, compost, decayed animal manure, peat moss and straw. Mulching helps reduce weeds. If you go on holiday at Christmas time, have a neighbour or friend water your garden at least once a week, more if possible if you have a lot of plants in pots as they dry out so quickly in the heat.

Bonnie Davidson

POLICE GAZETTE

Police Blotter

17 January 1883

Stolen, on the 8th instant, from the premises of James Reynolds, Darling Street, Balmain, a saddle and bridle; Value £2. Identifiable.

7 May 1884

Lost, from the Balmain Town Hall, the property of the Municipal Council, a No 5 theodolite, all recent improvements, maker "A. Tornaghi, George Street, Sydney", in leather sling case. This instrument is supposed to have been pledged in Sydney some months ago by Louis B Blackwell, lately surveyor and engineer to the Balmain Council.

14 July 1897

Stolen, between the hours of 5 and 11 pm the 11th instant, from No 6, Elliott Street, Balmain, the property of John Hardaker, a bicycle, No 9,651, "A. Hill & Co., Coventry and London," makers, Stilt's puncture-proof tyres. Value, £8.

21 January 1903

A warrant has been issued by the Balmain Bench for the arrest of James Randall Harkness, charged with wife desertion. He is about 26 years of age, 5 feet 9 or 10 inches high, thin build, fair hair and complexion, small fair moustache, otherwise clean shaven; a horse-trainer, now said to be travelling to country race meetings with a bay galloway named Bill Dean, and to be racing it under another name; he was last heard of at Bowra in the Nambucca District. Complainant, Lucy Ann Harkness, 15 Rosebery Street, Balmain.

Brown's 55 Years

George Brown takes an active roll in his hardware firm as well as the local community and has been one of the Association's most consistent supporters. With his son Gordon he operates Brown's Hardware and we congratulate them on their 55th anniversary. With his father, who was a local builder, and two brothers, Robert and Sydney, George began trading in Darling Street, Rozelle with an investment of £75 each in one of the three adjoining properties they had bought for £1150.

Gordon, after completion of a shipwright's course at Garden Island, joined the business in 1956. He initiated the reconstruction of the original shop to give more room for better presentation of the general hardware items. The building in Beattie Street offers plumbing services to builders, tradesmen and handymen.

What's On

- Exhibition at the Watch House
Ann Carney — The Burlong Group — Nov 28 - Dec 6
Hyunmi Lee — Dec 12-20
- "Face of Time" presented by Incurzions, group of 12 Artists
Paintings, Prints & Drawings
Jan 29 - Feb 7.

Printed on recycled paper
© Not to be reproduced without
authorisation

Christmas Gifts

The Balmain Association has a number of books ideal for Christmas gifts.

Around Balmain \$7
Called to the Bar \$13
Gourlie's Corner \$10

Add \$2 postage

The Balmain Association Inc
PO Box 57 Balmain 2041.

Restoring Old Houses

Ian Evans will provide practical advice on solving restoration problems at a seminar in the Turner Hall, Mary Ann Street, Ultimo on Saturday 12 December repeated on Sunday 13 December during the times 12.30 - 5.00pm each day.

Entitled "A Roof Over Our Heads: Restoring old houses in the Recession", the seminar will give good advice to save a great deal of money when arranging building work. Ian is Australia's best known heritage author. Other speakers are Michael McCowage, restoration specialist, Stephen Chard, expert in flooring and joinery finishes and Aliya Porter, an authority on wall finishing with blinds, curtains and wallpapers.

Admission \$35 or \$60 for two.

Afternoon tea provided. Bookings and information: 747 6751.

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

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/fax 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.