



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

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Movement on the Five Sites

At last! A step forward on the rezoning of the 5 sites. Following five consultative meetings of the applicants, Councillors and residents, Council will be shortly exhibit the Draft Local Environment Plan for the old Unilever site for public comment. The new environmentally sensitive plan should create the urban village of White Bay. The buildings, their uses and their size will have a diversity and density to match the existing character of the Balmain Peninsula.

A small group of retail shops will surround the community recreational facilities in the restored Historical buildings. A diversity of accommodation in the form of semi-shared units, serviced apartments, shared houses, hostel and housing for the aged, students and disabled as well as the conventional 1, 2 & 3 bedroom town houses will maintain Balmain's socio-economic diversity.

Shopfront commercial offices and the option of working from home are encouraged. All buildings will of energy efficient design and incorporate energy saving appliances. It

is anticipated that the landscaping will be designed to assist in the thermal control of the buildings. The storm water run-off will be retained and filtered before it enters the harbour. Pedestrians and cyclists will be provided with safe and easy access through the site. Improvements will be made to the Victoria Road and Robert Street intersection will be upgraded with a bus-only lane planned. Light Rail or Trolley Bus service using the old Glebe Island Bridge is envisaged, as is a ferry wharf and foreshore park in front of the site.

Section 22 Committee

There have also been 5 meetings about the Monsanto, Balmain Power Station and Caltex sites, with the Department of Planning and Government instrumentalities on the section 22 committee. An on-site meeting at Caltex looked at the extent of the proposed foreshore park, the type and spacing of existing houses in Wharf Rd, the views out and the view from the water. It was expressed at the meeting that the proposed 7 storey

tower on the ridge was out of keeping with the character of the area. If it is necessary to maintain the number of people to get 32% of the site open space then they could be accommodated in less exclusive water-front warehouse type buildings on the southern side of the site. These buildings would reflect the size and scale of other buildings around Mort's Bay with a mixture of uses such as studio apartments, offices, & kiosks, giving a greater range of affordability and a more active use of the site for all.

The dilemma is should we accept this sort of compromise, or do we maintain the stand of no rezoning until the funds for 100% open space are available. This course of action will almost certainly result in the State Government again taking away the planning powers and we will be back in court to recover them. Council is keen to hear what the feeling of the community is on this most important issue.

Ald Nick Masterman

Transport Management

The principle transport goals should be the elimination of heavy traffic volumes on residential streets. The root problem is the high level of car dependence.

Planned and orderly transition to a low car dependence would be preferable in terms of the preservation of lifestyle options. Various approaches to the road traffic problem are presently being studied by the Leichhardt Council's Transport & Traffic Committee. These include light rail, minibus and dial-a-ride services, cycleways and pedestrian provisions.

The City West plan to convert the goods railway in Pyrmont to light rail has a private company operating the service as far as the Fish Markets even though the line continues through Lilyfield, Leichhardt, Dulwich Hill to Sydenham. The railway is electrified from Rozelle to Sydenham. The relative cost of a tramcar, compared to a bus, has risen considerably over last fifty years. The cost of a new Mercedes minibus is \$100,000 or a large bus \$200,000, while quotations for a tramcar exceed \$1.5 million. Dual powered (600V electric & diesel) buses are now available that

can travel on road as well as track or O-Bahn. These are more versatile as they can leave the track to service communities away from the railway with no loss of time or need for the commuters to change vehicles. They are quieter than trams and the capital cost and visual pollution of overhead cables in urban streets is avoided. Another feature is the low floor with stepless entry of benefit to the aged and disabled. An O-Bahn bus service is operating successfully in Adelaide and the

costs amounted to 60% of that required for a light rail system.

For many years Balmain residents have campaigned for minibuses for the narrow streets of the Peninsula. Mercedes-Benz have a 22 passenger bus which is less than 2 meters wide. The front wheel drive allows a floor only 380mm above the road - just a little above curb height. This vehicle would be ideal for off-peak service as well as for a shuttle bus connecting to ferries.



The city of Essen has met the increasing challenge individual transport poses to public transport. The first track-guided bus operation commenced in 1980. Since 1988, these buses have shared the city tram tunnel to avoid city centre traffic chaos. Passengers enjoy a smooth trip to the city without interruptions, past congestions.

Maybanke Anderson 1845-1927.



Caroline Chisholm was influential in the decision of the Selfe Family to come to Australia. Henry, Bessie and children, Norman, Henry and Maybanke, arrived on the Bangalore on the 13th January 1855.

The family spent their first years in Entally House, Mary Reibey's former house in Macquarie Place, Sydney, then moved to the Rocks area. Maybanke, born 16/2/1845 in Surry, England had received her unusual name from her great, great grandfather's surname. Maybanke's education had begun in England where she attended a day school, but little is known of her time at the Rocks except that it is known that she had a love of reading. She received no tertiary education or training but was guided by common sense and an indomitable will.

The move from the Rocks to Balmain in 1870 came, when her brother, Norman Selfe, purchased some land and built twin terraces, now 21 & 23 Wharf Road, Birchgrove, still standing but much changed today. Normanton was lived in by Norman and his

widowed mother, while next door Maybanke accommodated brother Henry. Maybanke and her husband Edmund Wolstenholme, timber merchant of Maitland, whom she had married on 3/9/1867. Norman Selfe married John Booth's daughter Emily Ann, in 1872. Norman had been campaigning for better technical education in NSW from as early as 1865 when he taught the first class in mechanical drawing at the Mechanics School of Arts in Pitt Street, Sydney.

In 11 years of marriage to Edmund, Maybanke had seven children of whom only three lived longer than five years, Edward, Harry and Arthur, who drowned in early adulthood. The marriage was strained because of Edmund's alcoholism.

With Norman Selfe's financial assistance, Maybanke, in 1879, moved to a substantial house, once more named Maybanke, on the corner of Wardell Road and Frazer Street, Marrickville (Now Salvation Army accommodation).

By 1885 the marriage was over. At first Maybanke ran a boarding house to support her family, then, in July 1882, began her long association with education, when she opened a school for young ladies. By 1890 Maybanke College had enrolled pupils from kindergarten to matriculation level, preparing them "for all the University of Sydney public examinations".

From 1880 to 1927, Maybanke was an active participant in many movements and events that shaped the democratic institutions of modern Australia. Law reform, women's suffrage, the growth of a free education system with professional teacher training, Federation and the war time campaigns against venereal diseases that contributed to the establishment of public health and family planning. The Australasian Home Reading Union was formed in 1892 with Mrs Wolstenholme as General Secretary. Readers formed groups to discuss articles, to exchange books and present papers. Reading lists were published in the Australasian Home Reader. Maybanke was a regular contributor.

These were busy years for Maybanke; earning a living, petitioning for a divorce, serving as president of the Suffrage League. In 1894 she established her own newspaper, the Womens Voice and in it she wrote frankly of matters of marriage, sex, divorce and the lack of property rights. In July 1895, the Kindergarten Union of NSW was instigated to provide Free Kindergartens wherever possible in poor neighbours. The first one was in Woolloomooloo in 1896. Maybanke was on the committee and acted as the first president till Lady Hampden arrived.

From 1895 to her death in 1927 she laboured for the children of the poor to give them practical help in setting up new centres in cities as far as Adelaide and Brisbane. Australia's first playground opened in 1915 after a powerful pamphlet "Play and Playgrounds" published by Maybanke. She lived with her friend, Maude Fox of Eversley & Rose Street, Birchgrove, for a time before her marriage to Professor Francis Anderson on 2nd March 1899 at St Andrew's Congregational Church, Balmain. The Church was very advanced in its attitudes, as it not only permitted female ordination, but it also married divorcees.

The Workers Education Association Of NSW (WEA) was formed in 1913 with both Francis and Maybanke contributing their experience as speaker at the conferences. The WEA pamphlet no. 1 was Maybanke's "The Root of the Matter".

Maybanke gave 40 years of service as headmistress, philanthropist, professor's wife, speaker, donor, hostess, founder and patron of numerous associations.

Source: "Maybanke Anderson" by Jan Roberts. Published by Hale & Iremonger.

A Free Kindergarten was set up at 143 Beattie Street, corner Lawson Street, in the former Mertonville Hotel in 1913 with Miss Swinbourne, Teacher. 1914 Miss Brown. 1915-1916 Miss P King. The Balmain Phoenix Kindergarten at 36 Evans Street, Rozelle, opened in 1916 and continues today.

Kath Hamey

Open Space Strategy

Leichhardt Council's Open Space Strategy assumes that additional development will cause an increase in demand for open space and recreation and that this will be best satisfied through the provision of a diversity of opportunities based upon a system of local, district and regional facilities, principally by improving linkages between existing parks and identifying acquisition sites with strategic benefits.

The plan proposes a 10 year time frame in which the cost of over \$13.5 million is obtained from Sect 94 contributions from developers. The Planning Officers attribute a projected population increase of 4,030 persons, in the period, to land development.

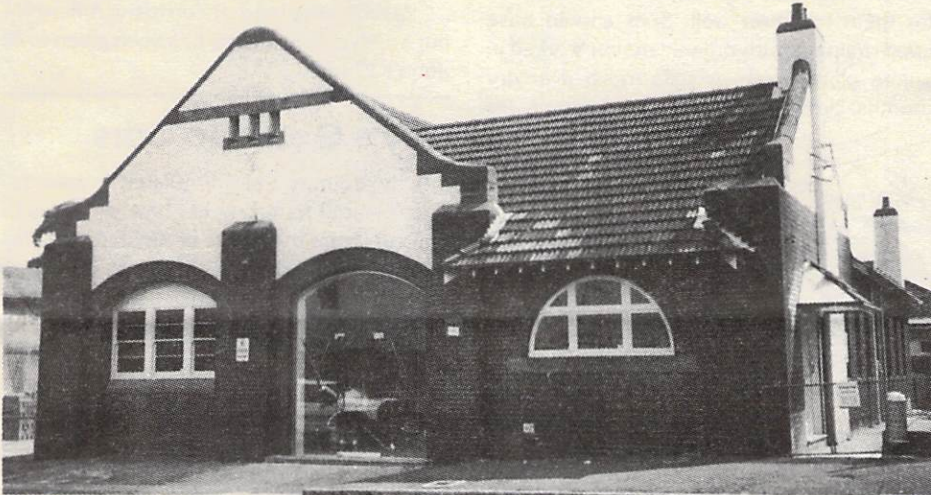
Following public exhibition of the plan, a Workshop was held on 21 May to discuss the document prepared by the Planning Department. There was some criticism of the strategy. Hall Greenland proposed an activist campaign to get the State Government to respond to the demands of regional space. Admittedly, the projected population increase does not include the nearly 2,000 expected from the five Peninsula sites (the open space from these will be in land not funds) but it would be foolish to argue that there should be no further development in the municipality. It is stretching credulity to expect a financially strapped State Government to give up revenue producing sites. The Ballast Point Park Committee is struggling to have their project recognised.

The Barcham promoted Main Street program for the Darling Street shopping area is not included in the costing. The planners estimate this at \$1 million but they have not suggested where the finances will be obtained. Some help may come from the Government Main Street program.

Our representative on the Trees & Open Space Committee, Bob Nicholls, reports that the group had an inspection of all of the proposed linkages and acquisitions on Saturday 15 May. They propose to discuss the strategy on 3 June. The Town Plan Committee will respond to the plan at their meeting on 7 June. Council will consider both of their responses on 29 June in order to seek to adopt a Strategy and Contributions Plan by 1 July.

Rozelle Fire Station No 49

The old Rozelle Fire Station at 749 Darling Street, between Oxford and Park Streets, is undergoing a transformation to an exhibition space and office space. The new owners have addressed the station's heritage aspect with little exterior change. We welcome the sympathetic recycling of the building.



Fire protection services in NSW last century, have a history of bitter rivalry, which on occasion ended in fights and even hose slashing tactics were the results of each brigade wishing to be recognised as the most efficient. To compound the difficulties, fire-fighters had to put up with poor water supply and the equipment consisted of buckets, manual pumps and hand drawn carts.

The first organised fire protection services were formed by insurance companies in the late 1830's. By the 1850s the brigades were financed from the insurance companies annual subscriptions and the firemen were paid for their service. The brigade was instructed to attend only those fires covered by the subscribing company that were identified by plaques attached to the outside

front wall of the properties. If the brigade attended a call to fight a fire and the building was not covered by the insurance company, no action was taken. The insurance plaques became collectors' items and could be seen on many Sydney buildings up to the 1960s.

There were many moves to introduce government legislation to reform the fire brigades' system. Factional interests held up the passing of the first Fire Brigades Act until

1884 that established the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. The Act brought some semblance of order to the functions of the city and suburban fire service. The volunteer fire companies received an annual subsidy, although their members' services continued to be unpaid up to 1902. In 1909, a new Fire Brigades Act established the State wide authority of the NSW Board of Fire Commissioners. The system of fire protection to day is based on the 1909 Act and subsequent amendments.

Rozelle or Balmain West till 1897, had a volunteer fire brigade at 584 Darling Street from 1887 to 1895. The area of the Rozelle Fire Station was purchased from the Gilchrist Estate in 1874 by William Paling and John Henry Starling. It would appear that no development was made prior to the fire

station. On 4th January, 1907 the site was chosen by the Minister of Public Works at a cost of £1200. W J Henley of Drummoyne quoted £1785 to build and to complete in 23 weeks. When the keys were officially handed over on 1st October 1909 the brigade consisted of 4 permanent and 4 partially paid volunteers. The first engine was horse drawn and water was pumped to the fire by hand.

The correspondence books viewed at the NSW Fire Brigade Headquarters 219 Elizabeth St, Sydney, dealt with reporting of fires in the district, repairs and extensions to the building. One particular fire was at Hylands Shoes in 1936. Mr Athol Reginald Hyland was charged with arson!

From 1918 until 1923, when a motor engine was installed, there was much concern over the rising prices of horse shoeing. The cost was 10 shillings per set with removals at 6 shillings. Horse "Sharpley" was reported lame. The Brigade applied to spell him on a grassed area with extra feed, carrots, etc. Fireman F Hush was the horse carriage driver.

The Station closed on 2nd January 1945 but was used as Bush Fire Station No 99 and later as a workshop until 1956. In 1953, the Balmain Brigade used the building while the Balmain building was upgraded. 1967 a "Fire Sale" of scrap metal and fittings. 300 feet of copper tubing was reported stolen.

Station Officers: 1910-1916, Augustus J Gerard. Mr Gerard died from burns received while fighting a fire at Elliott Bros. 1918-1924, George W Turner. 1925-1927, Thomas Amor. 1926, W J Bartie. 1929, Walter Warland. 1930-1933, H Bullock. 1934, W Hall. 1935, W Bartle. 1936, J Shuttleworth. 1939, H Douglas. 1940, E Wilson. 1941, H Lewis. 1942, W Annsell. 1943, J Brunty. 1944, E Fisher. 1945, K Savage.

Source: NSW Fire Brigade Headquarters Archives.

Kath Hamey.

Prisoner Abducted

The semi-clad body of a man was abducted from the Watch House by two women on Monday 24 May. The daring exploit was carried out in broad daylight, the body being placed in the back of a car and driven off in the direction of the City. The women had apparently decided to give themselves up as they were sighted 30 minutes later in Albert Street carrying the body into the Justice & Police Museum under the direction of a young woman who was not, however, in uniform. Shortly afterwards the women reappeared and drove off.

The reason for the abduction can now be publicly announced. The body was that of the mannequin that has been seen from time to time in the back left cell of the Watch House, clad in workman's clothing, leaning somewhat drunkenly against the cell wall. Some years before it had been apprehended and

loaned to the Balmain Association for display in the inner left hand cell. When art exhibitions became a regular part of Watch House activities, it was relegated to the back cell.

Now, thanks to years of fund raising and research efforts, the History Committee has been able to re-establish the long neglected permanent history display in the back cell. Montague Design, a Balmain firm, has been engaged to implement the design based on large scale murals produced from photographs in the history archives. These will create a background for smaller display panels of photographs, illustrations and text that will display the history of Balmain, its architecture, industry and residents. In order for the work to be carried out, the back cell has been emptied of items accumulated over many years, much of which has been moved to the upstairs history store room. That, too, has undergone a considerable house cleaning and several members of the Association

are still noticing the after effects of carrying bookcases and display cases up the rather steep stairs and unloading the boxes of Association books on to shelves.

In the process we have also found a number of items that can no longer be accommodated in the Watch House but which might be of interest/value to the public. We will have a table at the Balmain Markets on Saturday 12 June to sell old books, as well as some miscellaneous items. In addition, we are putting on the market three Bentwood chairs that have been in the Association's possession for some years. They are in excellent condition as they have been recaned and repaired. Also available are a painted timber bookcase, 122cm high 91cm wide 30cm deep and an ancient Smith Premier typewriter, Contact 818 4954 with your offer. We hope to open the History Room officially in September.

Debby Nicholls

In Your Garden

Choosing and Planting Roses

Roses are suitable for a range of garden situations. The most popular are the hybrid tea roses with perfectly shaped flowers ideal for picking and which may be grown in beds or borders. However, for a good supply of colourful long-lasting blooms you should select floribunda roses. Although individual flowers are smaller than the hybrid teas they give massed colour effects.



For brightening up a dull wall or fence use can be made of the climbing roses. They are not self-supporting and therefore must be attached in some way. Trained on wires, climbers can be useful for screening. Miniature roses are fast increasing in popularity and are ideal for pots, baskets or low edgings along paths.

Roses love sunny and open positions and five to six hours of sun each day are required for them to flower well. Soils should have good drainage with organic matter worked in before planting. Keep soils moist over dry months. Never plant roses where other roses have been grown as they are such heavy feeders that they thoroughly exhaust the soil and this can lead to a condition called "rose sick". Newly planted roses don't like strong fertilisers around their roots. Best time to feed roses is August and February.

Bonnie Davidson

Fenwick Development

Leonie McDonald of East Balmain has organised a petition of 767 residents requesting Leichhardt Council and the Minister for Planning, Mr R Webster, to try and prevent the development of 8 townhouses on the Fenwick site in Weston St.

This small parcel of land, owned by Brambles, is where Fenwick & Co have operated a tugboat service for years. It would be a valuable acquisition to the Illoura Reserve. Mr Webster claims that the land is not of regional significance even though it is at the entrance to the Reserve where families from all parts of Sydney come to enjoy harbour celebrations. It has a commanding view of Millers Point and Darling Harbour.

The site is valued at \$2.5 million which is out of reach of the Council finances. Council planners say that the developers would be required to assign the foreshore to the Council as a sect 94 contribution to provide a link from the ferry wharf to Illoura Reserve. The original stone building of Bell's Shipyard (c1838) is a heritage item and would have to be preserved.

Snapper Island Picnic

Clontarf Cottage Committee invites you to visit Snapper Island on Sunday 20 June. BBQ facilities are available including tea and coffee. The Maritime Museum will be open. Ferry departs Elliott Street Wharf 10.30am promptly and returns 3pm. Adults \$10 Concessions \$8 Children \$5. Booking essential. Tel 818 4954.

Notice to Members

The 27th Annual General Meeting of the Balmain Association Inc will be held on Wednesday 4 August at 7.30pm in the Watch House 179 Darling Street.

Save Our Hospital

More than 1,000 people rallied outside Parliament House on Tuesday 11 May to protest against the State Government's proposal to slash the range of services at Balmain Hospital. Rally organiser, Sandra Nori MP, said she was heartened by the great turnout. Support came from all sections of the community as well as from neighbouring suburbs.

What's On

Exhibitions at the Watch House

- Tom Mravcic - Jun 12-14
- Carmen Hogue - Jul 3-7
- Margarita Bogeholz - Jul 17-25
- Julie Chamberlain - Jul 31- Aug 1
- Nadia Milat - Aug 7-8
- Robin Elphick - Aug 13-15
- Bonnie Tosswill - Aug 21-29
- Balmain Art Show
Leonard Markevitch - Sep 4-12
- History Room - Sep 18-19
- Klin Sullivan - Sep 25-26

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Parish Records

The History Committee's ongoing commitment to the preservation of church registers has now included St John's Church, Birchgrove. We thank the church wardens, Parish Council and the Rev Tony Humphries for allowing the copying of the Parish Baptismal up to 1957 and marriage records to 1963.

Pascoe's copied them on to microfiche for our archives and a copy has been given to St John's Church.

City's Goal: No Cars

The country that formulated "woonerfs" (shared traffic zones) now proposes to ban cars from the centre of Amsterdam. Wall to wall traffic, noise and fumes in the stove-pipe streets and stiff gridlocks on the canal bridges have brought on the decision. The present image of the automobile there is approximately that of a leech on the body of the community.

A step-by-step plan aims to make life as unpleasant as possible for motorists who insist on nudging their way around the city's inner ring of canals. Cars will be squeezed off the streets by wider footpaths and new bicycle lanes, while parking spaces will be cut back sharply. The city held a referendum last year in which almost 53% of the voters backed a plan for a mostly car-free centre.

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.

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