

the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

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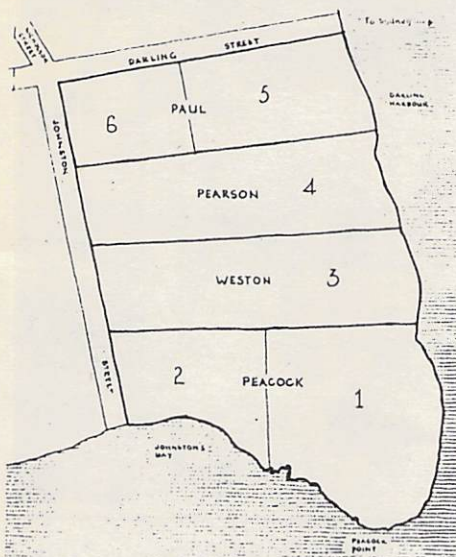
George Weston and "Horsley"

The research into the origins of the street names of Balmain and Rozelle is being continued by the History Committee on the work carried out by Dr Peter Reynolds and former members of the association. Some interesting personalities have emerged as land owners in those early years. Weston Street near the Darling Street Wharf, is named after George Edward Weston, who, in the first land sale in October 1836, purchased Lot 3, an area of two and a half acres. The cost per acre was £60. Captain James

Governor King. Col. Johnston did not live at King's Gift, preferring to stay at his property *Annandale*, the land later to become the Sydney suburb Annandale.

Upon Johnston's death in 1823, Blanche inherited King's Gift and on the return of the Westons to Sydney in 1831, they moved to the property, where they lived in a large marquee tended by many Indian servants, until the house was completed in 1833-34. George Weston named the house *Horsley*, (pictured) after his birthplace in Surrey, England.

son, Edward Henry. Because Weston died intestate, it was not until 1861 that lot 3 was subdivided into twelve lots, although an access road from Darling Street, Weston Street, had been cut through lots 4 & 5 in 1841 to Weston's lot 3. Blanche Weston lived at "Horsley" for 70 years to the age of 98 years when it was said that she had become the oldest Australian born person in the country. The early Westons are buried in a vault at the old St Batholomew Church, Prospect Hill.



PART OF GILCHRIST'S SUBDIVISION: 1836
Lot numbers shown are from Surveyor Armstrong's plan
(catalogued under P L Bemi, Mitchell Library)

Pearson bid in his own name for Weston, to save his friend the long trip to Sydney from his home, *Horsley*, near Liverpool.

Lieutenant Weston of the East India Company's Bengal Army came to Sydney in 1829. After a short time, he proposed marriage to Blanche Johnston, second daughter of Colonel George Johnston of *Annandale*, for whom Johnstons Bay and Johnston Street, Balmain, are named. The couple were married in May 1829, at St James Church, Sydney and George took his bride to India for two years where three children were born, one dying in infancy. In 1806, Colonel Johnston had received a 2000 acre grant near Liverpool, from



This name replaced King's Gift and the area became known as Horsley Park. The house is still standing and was built by convicts from bricks made on the estate and faced with plaster. The design was similar to bungalows in India, containing seventeen rooms, has a spacious stone-flagged verandah with Doric columns and shutters with folding case-ments between. There are round arched bays at each end. All internal fittings are of imported Indian teak and the Eastern influence was enhanced by punkahs hanging from the ceilings of the grand dining hall.

George Weston also received a grant of land at Yarralumla Plains. When he died in 1856, his Balmain land passed jointly to his widow and eldest surviving

After Blanche Weston's death in 1904, the property later became the home of Mrs J C Perry, a descendant of the original guarantee Colonel Johnston. The estate had its own school. A building was donated to the Education Department by Mrs Perry, to establish a school for the children residing on the Horsley Estate. The Estate formerly included extensive vineyards, attended by convict labour. George and Blanche Weston had nine children. Son Edward Henry married his cousin Emily Johnston and settled at Albion Park on 1500 acres called Macquarie's Gift.

Sources: Leichhardt Historical Journal No11. Colonial Heritage, F & J Lowry. A History of Fairfield, V George.

Bonnie Davidson

Light Rail Innovations

The opening paragraph of the NSW Integrated Transport Policy complains of the failure of planners to integrate transport considerations into urban development that has resulted in ad-hoc and fragmented transport investment. "There is recognition in all sectors of government and in business and general communities that the transport modes need to be planned and operated in a more comprehensive and coherent manner and that transport needs to be an integral part of land use and economic planning, rather than an after-thought." The Light Rail proposal for Ultimo/Pymont fails on the first principles by repeating the errors of yesterday and completely negates the challenge to establish a new era in public transport.

The community wants viable public transport to counter the dependence on the motor car. We are running out of ways to control traffic congestion. The challenge is to produce more balanced and relevant urban transport. Commuters are becoming increasingly sensitive to the quality of service, especially for connections and waiting times. The new larger buses are not the preferred equipment if there will be long periods between each service.

The consultants for the Transport Department have advocated outdated rolling stock that will require ridiculous high-block loading platforms. Current European practice favours low-floor vehicles that enable disabled people in wheel-chairs to board without assistance.

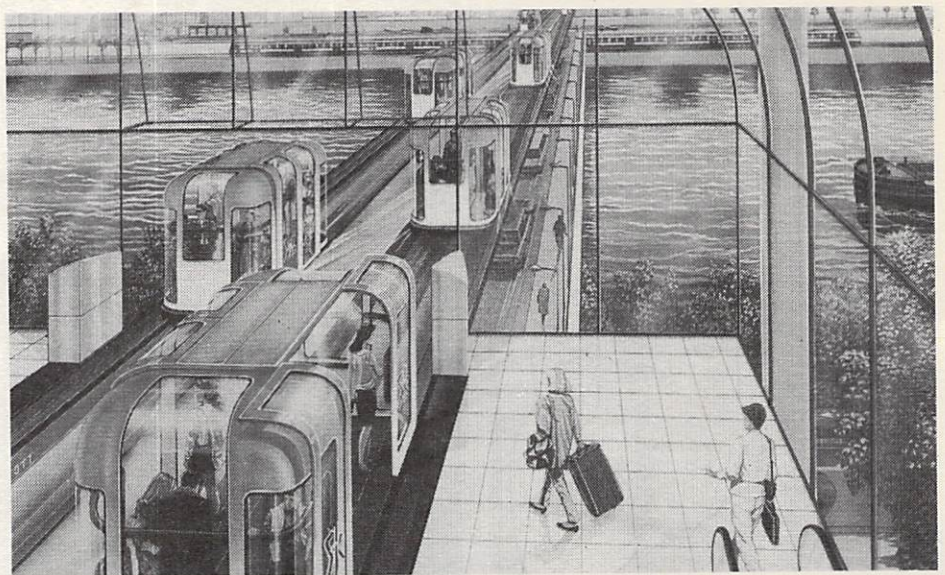
A standard technology is needed to allow further expansions of the light rail into the CBD. Leichhardt Council is pressing for the extension of the line to Leichhardt Town. The Department admits that only the proposed Casino will make the service viable.

This short line from Central to Pymont is ideal for a more innovative concept with advanced standards of convenience. A continuous passenger service in small automatic vehicles spaced less than a minute apart would be a revolution. The SK continuous passenger service is a reality now! It has transported millions of passengers in Paris-Nord since 1985 without a single reported injury. The system has been tried at Expo 86 in Vancouver and in the French city of Marne-la-Vallee as well as in Yokohama.

A series of cars (a maximum of 30 passengers) is pulled by a cable which

continuously circulates at 30kph. Waiting is eliminated. The cars detach from the main cable but do not come to a complete stop. They are propelled by a slower cable along the boarding area at a very low speed (less than 30cm per second or three times slower than a moving sidewalk) for passengers to exit or board. The SK4000 can carry 2,000 passengers per hour in each direction for distances up to 6 kilometres. The minimum headway between vehicles is 17 seconds. For lower capacity needs, the SK2000 is designed for short distances in urban areas.

The SK system can serve as a feeder for other transport services. It could replace the buses between Loyalty Square and Darling Street Wharf to give an improved service. Commuters would be encouraged to use ferries and the demand for parking at the wharf would be eased considerably.



Peninsula Access

The new Glebe Island Bridge is scheduled to open for west-bound traffic in 1996 and for east-bound a year later. Originally the design was for 6 lanes to be operated in peak hours in a tidal flow mode of 4 and 2 lanes. The RTA is now considering fitting 7 lanes allowing a transit or dedicated bus lane. In the morning peak at present there is a 5 kilometre queue back from the existing bridge. 82,000 vehicles cross the Iron Cove bridge each day (both directions).

Both the RTA and the MSB propose to demolish the old Glebe Island bridge and \$2.5 million has been allocated. However, there is wide-spread support for its retention and the Dept of Planning is presenting a proposal to NSW Cabinet

to place the bridge in a standby position where it will remain open until its continued use is feasible. The yearly maintenance cost is \$500,000. This strategy will protect the bridge until a decision can be made when firm land use of the local port land has been established.

The Balmain Association is pressing for the separation of port and local traffic. At the last meeting of the Leichhardt Council Transport Policy Committee, the Traffic Engineer, Trevor Jennings, agreed to discuss with Connaught the limitation of trucks exiting White Bay Terminal during the morning peak. He will also request to the RTA to implement a bus or transit lane in Mullens Street starting from near Mansfield Street and continuing through Roberts Street into

Victoria Road as far as the entry of the underpass from the West Link. The inside lane is not popular with car drivers as it is necessary to blend into the traffic flow at the White Bay Hotel.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

The Management Committee wishes you and your family a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

You are invited to our informal Christmas occasion in the recently landscaped garden of the Watch House on Saturday 18 December from 4 to 6pm. All welcome.



Heritage Aspects of the Peninsula Power Stations.

On Monday, 25 October, members of the Heritage Committee of the Leichhardt Municipal Council, were conducted on an inspection of the White Bay Power Station by historian Sue McIntyre from Pacific Power, formerly the Electricity Commission Of New South Wales. Photo shows members dressing in protective overalls, breathing equipment and hard hats.

In August 1988 the consultants, Masterplan, were appointed to carry out a study of the ECNSW power stations at White Bay and Balmain. Masterplan commissioned the two firms, Don Godden and Associates Pty Ltd and Heritage Consultants, to undertake an assessment of the heritage significance of the two Power Stations and prepare a conservation policy for them. The result of the study was published in 1989 and called, "The Significance of White Bay and Balmain Power Stations to Sydney's Industrial Heritage". A further heritage evaluation was commissioned from Tropman & Tropman in 1992 and Pacific Power are now proceeding to carry out their own assessment inhouse of the relative merits of the decommissioned stations to assist in the decision process. Early reference to the Power Stations was to a Power House.

The Balmain Power Station

The Electric Light and Power Supply Corporation supplied electricity to Balmain and neighbouring municipalities from 1909 until 1956. The Balmain Council were directed by the Public Health Department to find an alternative to dumping garbage in open tips. In 1903 the Council invited tenders for a combined garbage destructor and power house "so that the waste heat could be used to advantage". At the official opening on 30 September, 1909, public electric lighting became available throughout Balmain. The ELPSC had the advantage of a dense and compact area

of supply, with a high industrial load that included Mort's Dock, several ship-building firms and Sydney Harbour Collieries.

The ECNSW took over the site in January, 1957, and continued in maximum extent until 1970, when the old low-pressure plant was decommissioned. The last recorded output from the high pressure station was in 1973 and its turbines were finally closed in 1976. The first buildings were constructed, close to

of continuous generation within the one building, compared with 64 years at Ultimo and 60 years at Balmain. Although the Pyrmont site was in service longer, from 1904 to 1983, the original power station building was completely superseded. The NSW Railway Commission was one of the pioneers of electricity generation in Sydney.

After the completion of Ultimo power house in 1899, tramway usage increased rapidly and the construction of a new, electric City railway, it was essential to establish more power generation. The first phase began at White Bay in June 1912 but it was not until May, 1917 that it became fully operational. The building was extended in the second phase 1923-1928. Work began on the third phase of development in 1945-1948.

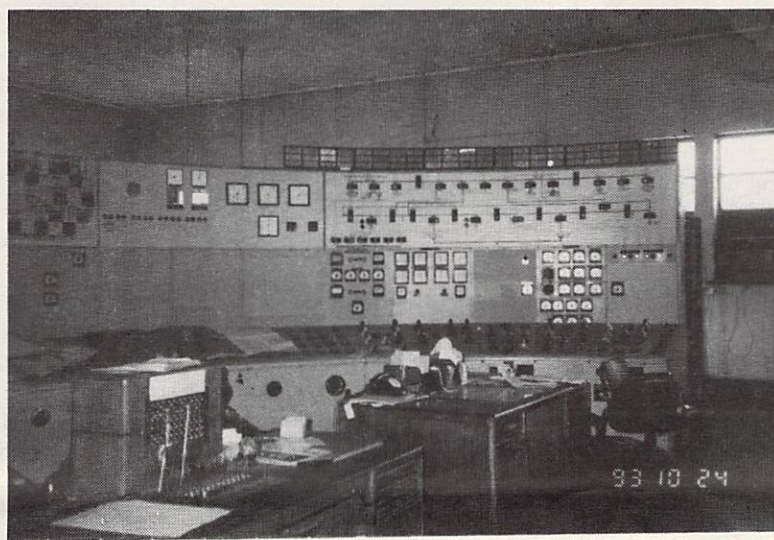
On January 1, 1953, the White Bay Power Station was transferred to the ECNSW along with all other rail power stations. Some sections were used only in emergencies after 1958, while other units were decommissioned in 1975 and 1984. The control room remains in service to distribute power to Leichhardt and Five Dock.

The heritage argument for retention of the White Bay Power Station as a repository of power generation artefacts and history is strong, in concert with compatible adaptive re-use. The only use at this time could be as a re-

pository for the Power House Museum which currently pays \$1 million per annum for storage in Castle Hill.

An excerpt from "Gourlie" Corner, Growing up in Balmain" by Wal Gourlie: "It cost a penny to go to the baths but a good alternative was the canal that White Bay Power House used to pump in salt water for cooling. Upon its return to the bay the water was warm. The canal was fenced in with palings and barb wire but that did not deter the boys. Many a quick "skinny dip" was enjoyed by the boys with one keeping "nit" in case girls came on the scene".

Kath Hamey



the waterfront to the east of Margaret Street, adjoining Elliott's Chemical Works (the now defunct Monsanto site). Before the station's closure, it had been extended to Victoria Road. While the conservation attributes of the site do not preclude substantial redevelopment and re-use, it would be desirable to retain features which assist in explaining the past. This may include use of the Switch House as an interpretive facility and possibly the Pump House in association with foreshore open space.

White Bay Power Station

White Bay was the longest serving power station in Sydney. It had 70 years

In Your Garden

The Long, Hot Summer

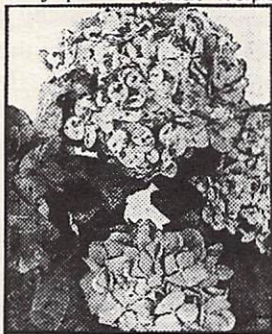
Summer would not be summer without the magnificent heads of hydrangea dominating the shady parts of our gardens, with varying shades of pink and blue and the occasional rare white blooms. A house in Mort Street has its front garden full of the white hydrangea which looks wonderful.

The flowers reach their peak at Christmas but remain on the bushes into March and even April, their colours becoming muted with age. Hydrangeas colour in response to the soils they grow in. Pink blooms indicate limey soil, blue shows acid soil. If you want to be sure of a blue blooms on your hydrangeas it is necessary to apply sulphate of aluminium (blueing tonic) to the soil in October and November. If pink or red blooms are required add lime now and again in mid-winter. The amount you add will depend on how limey your soil is. Start with a good handful and add more if necessary.

These indicators are helpful when you want to plant acid-loving plants like camellias and azaleas. The soil will suit these if the hydrangeas flower blue but

you will need to acidify it if the blooms are pink.

Summer heat makes gardening difficult unless you prepare for it. First mulch everything, as that insulates roots from the heat and conserves moisture as well as helping flora to multiply. In turn, that helps plants to feed themselves.



Hydrangeas

Next, gradually get your plants used to less water, both to save water and to make your plants healthier. Soil dries out quickly and cracks under direct sunlight, so in unmulched soils frequent heavy watering is needed to maintain plants. On the other hand, mulching prevents drying out and promotes better root systems capable of going deeper for moisture and the nutrients they need. The best care is to mulch and then give long, slow soakings a couple of times each week.

Bonnie Davidson

Christmas Gifts

Around Balmain	\$7.00
Called to the Bar	\$13.00
Gourlie's Corner	\$10.00

Leichhardt Historical Journal
Reissues of Nos 2 to 17 \$10 to \$15
No 18 published early 1994

All on sale at the Watch House or
posted. Ph 810 5185 or 818 4954

Where is Banjo Buried?

Andrew Barton Paterson died on Wednesday 5 February 1941 in a Darling Point private hospital. His remains were cremated at Northern Suburbs Crematorium on the next day and his ashes placed in Niche 61 ZA.

He was born on 17 February 1864 in Narambla, near Orange. In the 1870s he lived with his grandmother, Mrs Emily Barton, at her stone house in Punt Road, Gladesville. The house was concealed by an industrial complex until a few years ago. When the complex was demolished, plans were announced for a housing development. A citizens' group successfully campaigned against the development and the old house was saved and is now surrounded by a public park.

He took the nickname from his father's racehorse *The Banjo* when he began writing for *The Bulletin* in the late 1880s.

Balmain Sinfonia

On Sunday 5 December at 3pm in the Auditorium of the Balmain High School Gary Stavrou will conduct the orchestra in performances of works by Borodin and Dvorak. Georg Pedersen will perform Dvorak's Cello Concerto. Tickets \$10 (\$6 concn). Ph 810 5080.

What's On

Exhibitions at the Watch House

- Imma Thiel - Dec 4-12
- Janet Scott - Dec 15-21
- Carrie Webster - Jan 22-30
- Julie Chamberlin - Feb 5-13
- Elaine Norling - Feb 19-27
- Anne Sheridan - Mar 3-13
- Paul Dumolin - Mar 19-27
- Open Byte - April 16-24

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Help

The History Committee would appreciate your assistance to locate a map of the plots of the old Balmain Cemetery, now Pioneer Park, Norton Street, Leichhardt. Index of the Burial Register is available on micro fiche, at Leichhardt Library. There were approximately 10,500 burials from 1868 to the closure in 1912, although the area was not dedicated as a park until 1941.

The Committee is also seeking the death date of former members of the Balmain Council: Grace Margaret Laver, William Gilmour Middleton, Albert Richard Maher, James "Jack" Trainor, Samuel Hunter, Francis Baptiste Gould, George Mullins and Charles Mossman. The date is required to complete a short biography of some 600 local elected representatives, to be compiled by Mr Max Solling, Glebe Historical Society. Please contact 818 4954.

Craft Exhibition

Saturday 4 December from 9am-4pm
at Clontarf Cottage, Wallace St Balmain.
Needlework, pots & preserves, dolls, etc.

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.