

the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

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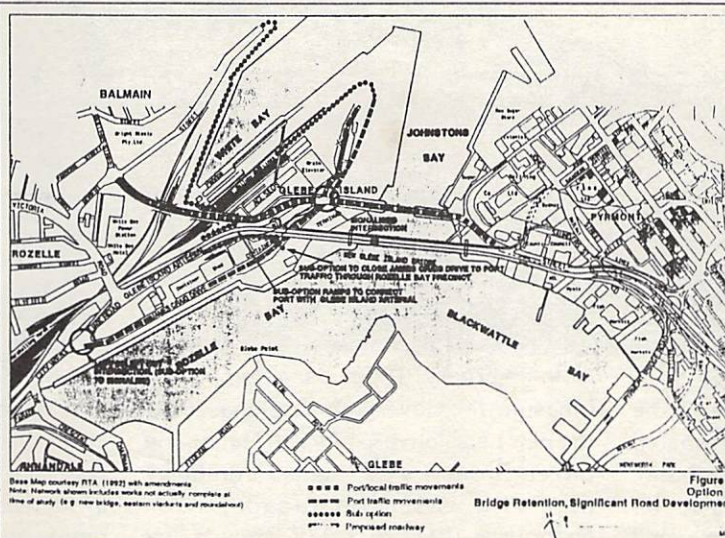
New Year, More of the Same

The Minister of Planning, Mr Robert Webster, continues to present problems for the Leichhardt Council and Peninsular residents. On Christmas Eve he rejected the Council's Local Environmental Plans for the former industrial sites and gazetted his REP.

His Department had earlier published the draft Regional Environmental Plan for the Bays Precinct which encompasses Glebe Island and the White, Rozelle and Blackwattle Bays. A preliminary view of this REP indicates that it ignores the Council's Fore-shore Protection Plan and makes the Minister the consenting authority for development. Most of the land is owned by the Maritime Services Board and is currently leased for port facilities until at least 2005. One wonders why there is such an emergency to bring

in the plan when there is little chance of development until next century.

advocate its removal. The Dept of Planning favours its retention as a potential asset for future port and local community access as well as protecting its heritage values. They propose to leave it in the open position until plans for Glebe Island land have been resolved. The RTA allocated \$2.4 million for its demolition and this will be secured in a trust fund for future maintenance and operations. The sketch shows possible road connections. The extension of Mullens Street across the railway is not favoured by the Council's Transport Policy Committee



What is of immediate concern is the imminent threat of demolition of the historic Glebe Island Bridge in 1997 when the new bridge has been completed. Both the MSB and the RTA have no requirement for the old bridge and

because of cost and the threat as a bypass of Victoria Road.

A workshop on the Bays Precinct will be held on Sunday 13 February from 10am to 3pm in the Annandale Neighbourhood Centre.

"Through The Eyes Of Thomas Pamphlett; Convict and Castaway"

This non-fiction book by Chris Pearce, examines the everyday lives of convict, Thomas Pamphlett, c1788-1838, and other ordinary people in such diverse places as Manchester, a convict ship, Sydney, a chain gang, Newcastle, the Hawkesbury area and Brisbane.

Pamphlett was convicted of stealing a horse and was sentenced to 14 years transportation, arriving in Sydney on the *Guildford* in 1812. In May 1814, Pamphlett and Abraham Brahan were convicted of stealing the glass and sashes from Birch Grove House. Pamphlett received 100 lashes and 12 months in a chain gang. After escaping

twice, he was sent to Newcastle penal colony, returning to Sydney several years later with a wife and three children.

In 1823 Pamphlett set sail from Sydney with three companions to obtain cedar from Wollongong. Blown off course, they suffered incredible hardships before landing in the Moreton Bay area. Thinking they were south of Sydney, they headed north, staying with several Aboriginal clans for extended periods. Finally they were rescued by John Oxley and showed him the Brisbane River.

The book is in A4 size, 188 pages, 103 illustrations and a cross classified index of more than 2500 entries. Special price to members is \$24.95 includes postage from Chris Pearce, 81 Waverley Street, Annerley 4103. Copy can be viewed by contacting 818 4954.

Dawn Fraser Pool

A special inspection took place on Friday 14 January with M/s Alex Marsden and Mr Ken Charlton from the Australian Heritage Commission to assess the significance of the Dawn Fraser Pool for inclusion in the Register of the National Estate at their February meeting. This was an important visual inspection of the restoration efforts of Leichhardt Council's and Friends of the Pool. The Commission is very supportive of work in accordance with the Conservation Plan after renewal of the sub-structures.

Denis McManus and members of the NSW Dept of Planning, Heritage Branch, together with Professor Beck from Melbourne University Dept of Architecture, offered many valuable comments and suggestions on the heritage value of the pool.

Corrugated Iron

The manufacture of corrugated iron coincided with the growth of the British Empire and portable dwellings met temporary need where builders and building materials were often scarce.

When the First Fleet sailed into Port Jackson in 1788 they carried with them tools, tents and one prefabricated canvas and timber structure, the latter became Governor Phillips house. If corrugated iron had been available at the time they might have carried portable iron buildings.

Corrugated iron was patented in London in 1829 by civil engineer, Henry Palmer, who soon after, sold the patent to carpenter, Richard Walker. Walker perceived its potential for portable housing, the first shipment making its appearance in the colony in the 1830s and has been part of our building vocabulary ever since.

Before the invention in 1844 of the machine for curving iron, corrugated iron could only be shaped by hand, allowing only shallow curves to be formed. Curved corrugated iron could then be used for verandahs, roofs and water tanks. Curved iron was ideal for use as a verandah, being self-supporting over its width and requiring only end supports and it allowed for new shapes: bull-nosed or bell-cast or double curved roofs.

The gold rushes in California in 1849 and Australia in 1851, created the need for a large number of the portable buildings. During the 1850s, a Bristol firm Samuel Hemmings provided three churches for the first Bishop of Melbourne, the Rt Rev Charles Perry and sent "a vast number of houses to the gold regions" in Victoria, as well as groups of shops, hotels and villas, including one for Carolyn Chisholm.



In February 1856, as a temporary measure, the Government purchased for the new Legislative Council in Macquarie Street, Sydney, a corrugated iron building, with cast iron facade, from Melbourne. It cost 1,835 pounds, including freight to Sydney and was erected at the southern end of the Rum Hospital building. It is believed to have been one of the afore-mentioned churches to be erected on the goldfields. Much of this original building remains today in Parliament House as the

Legislative Council Chamber. The timber packing cases were used in the lining of the Council Chambers and adjacent buildings and a section of the packing case lining, can still be viewed in the Chamber.

Corrugated iron enabled settlers to become mobile over the continent, with the traditional use for houses, roofs, sheds, barns, stables and water tanks. A recognisable style developed which was

distinct from urban architecture. In 1916, Lieutenant Colonel Peter Norman Nissen, a Canadian mining engineer, designed a portable shelter: a semi-circular corrugated iron roof on a lightweight structural frame. Nissen huts were the first homes for thousands of immigrants arriving in Australia after World War 11.

In 1921, the Bristol firm Lysaght's Galvanising Iron Pty Ltd, began production in Newcastle, New South Wales

and by 1939 Australia was self-sufficient and exporting galvanised, corrugated steel back to Britain. Recently in Australia, corrugated iron is being used in increasingly interesting ways for all types of buildings including housing. Every street in Balmain and Rozelle has examples of the use of this versatile material. The example is in North St.

Source: "Iron" by Anne Warr, Heritage Architect, State Projects.

Kath Hamey.

Obituary

Nickolas Masterman 1948-1994

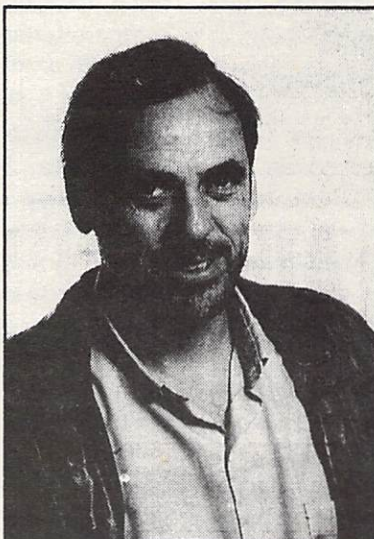
The sudden death of pioneering environmentalist Nick Masterman of asbestos-related lung cancer, mesothelioma, was a profound shock to the Balmain community. The cancer was only diagnosed last October but, while being treated in Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, he suffered a stroke and he died suddenly on January 2. Nick is believed to have contracted mesothelioma during his shipwright apprenticeship at Cockatoo Island dockyard in 1965-70.

A Memorial Service was held on Friday 7 January at the Campbell Street Presbyterian Church and it was attended by over 500 mourners. After the ceremony a ferry trip went via the *Ena* berthed in Berry's Bay to Elkhington Park where mourners disembarked to attend

a wake at Nick's second office - the Riverview Hotel.

We extend deepest sympathy to Cybele, his daughter, and Christine O'Brien, his partner, as well as other family members. Nick was a member of the Balmain Association, carrying on the tradition established by his mother, Sybil, who was responsible for initiating the project to save the Watch House in the 1960s.

Nick went on to naval architecture and won a Rotary scholarship to Japan. When he started his Birchgrove business he made clinker-built wooden boats. In



1986 Nick completed the \$2 million restoration of the steam yacht *Ena* in which he sailed to Perth for the America's Cup in 1988.

After receiving a special mention for his entry in the Balmain Trust Design Competition, he was elected to Leichhardt Council in 1990.

Mayor Larry Hand said, "Nick Masterman hit the council like a hurricane. He threw him-

self, with tremendous energy, into every issue". He was particularly interested in urban development, the environment and transport policy.

Sydney's Future

The Metropolitan Strategy Discussion Paper *Sydney's Future* unfortunately assumes that Sydney will continue to sprawl. It recognises the environmental limits to growth. What is missing is a strategy to direct growth and people away from Sydney. A plan to turn Sydney into a more compact city is too vague and would go the way of previous plans because of the lack of commitment of the NSW Government, the Minister and the directors of the Department of Planning.

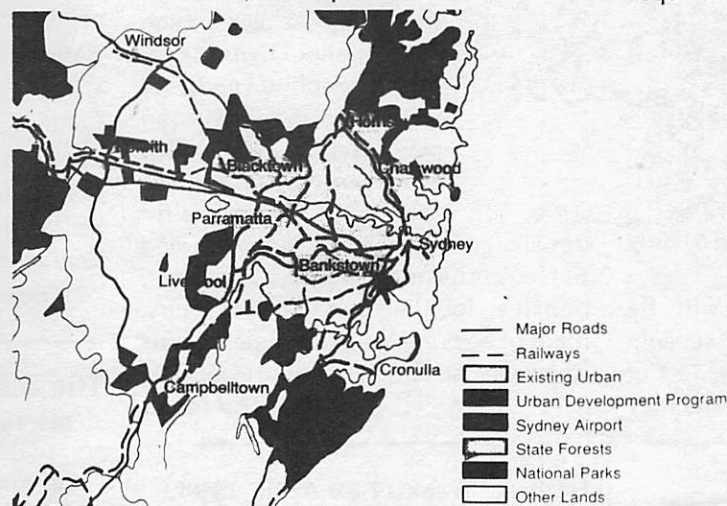
The Cumberland Plan in 1948 assumed that inner suburbs would be demolished to remove urban decay. It underestimated the growth of car ownership and population. The tramway system was not supported. Growth was recommended to follow the existing railway a policy that has been successful in Toronto, Canada. A study of the map of Sydney will show how little development is clustered around railway stations in the west.

The 1968 Sydney Region Outline Plan failed to predict the decline in manufacturing and allowed dormitory suburbs to develop without jobs or services. It underestimated the growth of mobility from the boom in car ownership with a consequent decline in the city centre.

The Metropolitan Strategy emphasised medium-density housing to halt the population decline of the inner suburbs. Community resistance to urban consolidation was partly due to the in-

flexible manner in which the Planning Minister pursued the implementation. Public transport was allowed to decline by ignoring links that would counter the effects of the sprawl.

State Governments' disregard of the strategies has been a major reason for their failure. The laissez-faire approach of the current Planning Minister, Mr Webster, indicates a continuing disregard of planning principles designed to achieve environmentally responsible, human-scale development. Already, in Pymont, developers are proposing buildings that are plainly against the guidelines set by the City-West Strategy. Public pressure has forced the Minister to establish an advisory committee of residents, developers and architects.



The Rouse Hill project is proceeding despite environmentalists' concerns of the effects on the Hawkesbury River and pollution from a massive burgeoning in car usage and the deficiency of public transport corridors. Why has this development been located away from the Richmond rail line? It would of interest to determine who are the major property

owners? The South Creek development is definitely promoted by one landowner.

The State Government should abandon the subsidising of infrastructure costs for large sites situated away from the rail corridor. Graded pricing of these services should support the implementation of the urban strategy and preserve equity. The size of the lot and distance from rail or transport corridor should be factors in the pricing policies. Those who can afford a larger site than 450 sq metres should be prepared to pay more.

The discussion paper, *Sydney's Future*, is full of motherhood statements that echo the principles that environmentalists and planners have long since recognised and adopted. What is required is the determination to implement the correct strategies and to counter self-interest groups such as BOMA (Building Owners & Managers Association) who are only interested in the return on investment. The easy access of developers to the Minister and the Director of Planning is against the public interest. The paper rightly recognises the importance to the strategy of an integrated landuse/transport plan. The Integrated Transport Strategy paper was issued at the same time.

Unfortunately it will be undermined by a separate strategy for roads.

In order that bus services may compete more effectively, local government should be represented on management boards which need greater autonomy. This may help the introduction of mini-buses as Westbus has done in Penrith to offer more frequent trips.

They Were There.

The Balmain Fire Station, Darling Street, blazed there way into their centenary year. During the recent bushfires, inner west fire stations formed part of a special taskforce which supplemented bushfire brigades. Officers from both Balmain and Glebe attended the fires at Jannali and Como, where the fires destroyed 87 houses and buildings.

Balmain fire fighter Garry Overall said the fires were the worst he had fought in his nine years on the job. Mr Overall worked 18 hours on Saturday 8th January, even though it was his rostered

day off and was at Jannali when fireballs tore through the suburb. "It was hectic," he said. "Houses were alight everywhere. We were protecting a group of about 15 homes, gradually the fire worked its way up to them. It was very hot and heavy, but it saved the houses." Other fire-fighters from the Balmain Station were: A Johnson, G Campbell, D Seaton, P Treacy, J Swasbrick, M Wright, M Carter, A Mason, B Cook and P Dryburgh. Our heartfelt thanks go to all the bushfire heroes. Source: Bede Carmody, Glebe and Western Weekly, 12/1/1994.

Kath Hamey.



In Your Garden

February Gardening

For people living in units and town-houses, making green oases from little spaces may mean that a courtyard or balcony is the only private outdoor area available. Courtyards can be transformed into pretty green extensions of the living space - an outdoor room. These spaces can be intimate with lattice smothered with perfumed vines. One difficulty facing balcony gardeners is exposure to prevailing winds. Even in cool shaded areas, wind will quickly dry out pots and baskets. Some form of protection will be necessary. For balconies, this could be a reinforced glass screen which allowed in the sunlight, giving protection without obscuring views. For courtyards, a panel or two of lattice supporting a hardy climber will stop draughts.

The choice of plants will be determined by the amount of sunlight available. This may vary with aspect or the direction the balcony faces and may

also be affected by neighbouring buildings. The ideal aspect is an easterly one which receives gentle morning sun and is protected from the fierce afternoon heat.

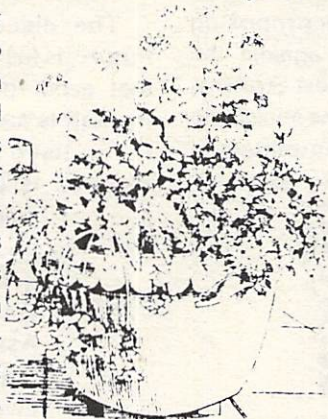
Climbers for courtyard and balconies. Orange Trumpet vine has lovely coral flowers through winter months. Chinese Star Jasmine produces its sweetly scented white starry flowers in spring, a good one for shaded balconies. Potato Creeper (*Solarium Jasminoides*) flowers nearly all the year round with lovely white

lacey blossoms. Happy Wanderer *Handbergia* has deep violet flowers in winter.

Perfect plants for pots. You can choose from a wide range of plants such as camellia, hydrangea, azalea, daphne, gardenia and fuschia. Perfumed plants should be included where possible. Balconies provide the ideal place for

troughs and window boxes overflowing with colourful annuals such as petunias, pansies, lobelia, dwarf sweet peas, marigolds, primulas and ivy geraniums which cascade brightly over the railings.

Bonnie Davidson



Sesquicentennial Celebrations.

A series of celebrations will be held this year to mark the 150th year of the recently restored *Clontarf Cottage*, 4 Wallace Street, Balmain. During Heritage Week, 1994, the Committee will hold a photographic exhibition of *Clontarf Cottage and its Environments*. Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th April, 11am-4pm. Free entry.

Congratulations also for the following buildings in their 150th year.

10 Darling Street. Originally the *Dolphin Hotel* later the *Shipwright's Arms*.

18 William Street. Home of ship builder Henry Gardner.

Nos 6 to 12 Little Edward Street.

11 Pearson Street. Captain Pearson's house later called *Eastcliffe* by Major T J Jaques.

33 Duke Street. *Blantyre*.

3 Cooper Street. A little shipwright's cottage.

141/143 Darling Street, *Alma Villa*, Cnr Waterview & Alexander Streets.

33 Campbell Street, *Gothic Cottage*.

Heritage Week 17-24 April, 1994.

To celebrate 140 years of the Watch House we present the History Murals. 11am-4pm. 16, 17, 23, 24 April.

Art Exhibition by Open Bite in conjunction. Free Entry.

During Heritage Week many Darling Street shops will display a map, photograph or painting of Balmain.

Balmain Branch Library. Panorama views of Balmain. Now and Then, 1909.

What's On

Exhibitions at the Watch House

- Julie Chamberlin - Feb 5-13
- Elaine Norling - Feb 19-27
- Anne Sheridan - Mar 3-13
- Womens' Art Collective
- Paul DeMoulin - Mar 19-27
- Prints & Watercolours
- Open Byte - April 16-24
- Printmakers

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Weather Signs

Despite all the modern scientific equipment, it seems that weather forecasting is still hit and miss, so we often fall back on some of the tried and tested signs.

Here are some traditional Australian weather lore: Red sky in the morning, shepherd's or sailor's warning, red sky at night, their delight. A bright yellow sky at sunset, presages wind: pale yellow, wet. When fish swim near the surface, expect rain. Clouds that sail contrary to the wind, herald rain. When stars begin to huddle, the earth will soon become a puddle. A sunflower raises its head, indicates rain. Flowers open with greater freedom in anticipation of fine weather.

Balmain Jazz & Blues Festival

March 25, 26 & 27 in Mort Bay Park
Contact 219 2045.

Phantom of the Pool Masked Ball

In aid of the Dawn Fraser Pool Restoration Fund. Saturday 5 March.
Contact 810 8785.

Friends of Dawn Fraser Pool.

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.