



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

Vol 31 No 1 Issue 239

Founded November 1965

February 1996

New Transport Initiatives For Leichhardt

At a Leichhardt Council Town Plan Committee Meeting in December last a report entitled "Getting Around: A Transport Plan For All" was presented by consultants, G Glazebrook and Associates. The report dealt with the need to improve public transport in order to counter car dependency and the resulting air pollution, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, congestion, noise, loss of amenity and transport disadvantage for those without cars.

Nearly a quarter of Leichhardt residents who are employed, work in the municipality, just over a quarter in the city of Sydney, with a further 13% in South Sydney and 11% in North Sydney. Thus many travel relatively short distances to work. While nearly 70% of those working in the CBD use public transport, only 20% of those working in Leichhardt itself use public transport, suggesting a need for improved local public transport.

Between 1986 and 1991 the population of Leichhardt rose slightly and Council estimates that there is the potential for a further 8000 households over the next 15-20 years as a result of redevelopment and urban consolidation. The present trend in car ownership per household will lead to a sharp rise in traffic in Leichhardt. Measures to reduce the rate or density of development will not alone stop this trend.

Measures will be needed to reduce the rate of growth of car ownership and use if traffic and parking problems are not to further deteriorate.

A strategy is required which aims at: (a) Integrating land use and transport development, (b) Improving regional and local public transport services, (c) Using traffic management measures, (d) Provide funds and form partnerships with the local community, neighbouring councils, State and Federal Governments and others to promote these initiatives.

The Town Plan currently in draft form should encourage a greater mix of employment with housing with "shop-top" housing above retail or other ground floor uses, home employment and the maintenance of "corner stores". It should establish standard parking rates for different land uses with minimum and maximum levels designed to avoid overspill problems. Allow developers concessions to provide less than the standard rate in exchange for a contribution to the Transport and Access Fund.

Council should investigate car-pooling and the use of minibuses through its involvement in relevant transport committees. Under schemes developing in Sydney and Melbourne, people would belong to a car pooling club and would either telephone for a lift or to indicate they were available to take

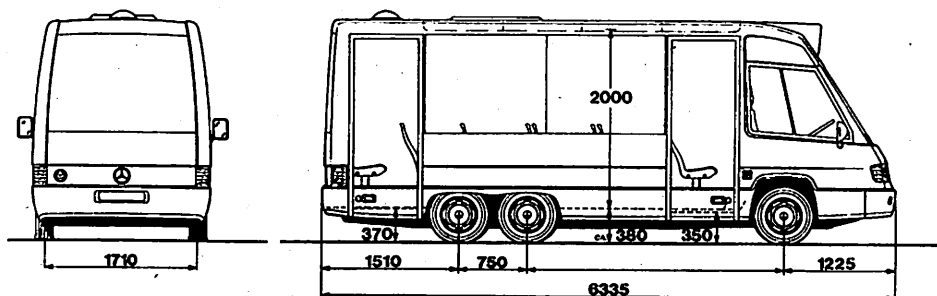
a passenger. In some places overseas (eg Berlin), car clubs have developed where a group jointly own a pool of vehicles and use them when required. This reduces the garage space needed, as well as allowing access to special vehicles (eg people movers, light vans, etc) for a particular trip.

Personal Public Transport (PPT) is a new approach aimed at meeting diverse urban travel needs of the individual person, by increasing the flexibility, convenience and affordability of the transport system. New multihire on-demand services utilise maxitaxis and taxibuses under computerised despatching systems. They provide passengers at bus stops with real-time data (based on where the buses actually are not on the timetable). This involves a network of interactive electronic displays and the use of GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) tracking of buses. It will be possible to operate door-to-door at a small surcharge. Payment is made using smart cards. European initiatives allow free travel if the bus is five minutes late of indicated departure and arrival times. Federal Government will fund a pilot study.

The shortened travel time to the CBD made possible by the new Glebe Island Bridge could result in a more frequent service to reduce waiting times. The regular bus services should employ mini and midibuses with improved frequencies (10-15 minute headways). Commuters have been found to prefer smaller vehicles and such vehicles can be used to good effect in the confined streets of Balmain. Brisbane City Council has introduced midibuses to provide improved access in their CBD. Westbus has introduced "Nepean Nipper" services in Penrith based on 29 seat midibuses and running with improved frequencies replacing hourly bus services by larger buses. The STA was investigating using midibuses over 18 months ago.

Mercedes-Benz O 100 City – the alternative for narrow city streets and traffic-reduced zones

It can comfortably transport up to 22 passengers.



Balmain Personality Nicol Stenhouse, Lawyer

Nicol Drysdale Stenhouse was born at Coldstream in Berwickshire, Scotland, on 27 June 1806, and named for his grandfather. His father, James, died in Jamaica two days before Christmas in the same year and never saw his son. At the age of 18, his mother, Elizabeth, was in the one year wife, mother and widow. She remarried when Nicol was eight years old, and he went to live with his grandmother in Berwick-on-Tweed where he spent the next six years at Berwick Grammar School. The studious child was fortunate in having a wonderful headmaster, Mr G Gardiner, and became his great favourite, studying classical and modern languages with an intensity which astonished even the headmaster. By the age of 15 he had mastered Greek, Latin, German, Italian, French and Spanish.

In 1823 he went to Edinburgh University graduating with a Master of Arts on 21 January 1825. On 3 September 1827 he became indentured for five years to John Black Gracie, Writer of His Majesty's Signet. During



the last three years of this indenture he attended law classes at the University of Edinburgh, qualifying on 14 February 1833 to practice as a solicitor in the Supreme Courts of Scotland.

Six years later Stenhouse decided to migrate to Australia, sailing on 1 March 1839 from Leith via Cape Town where he visited his cousin and arriving in Sydney Cove via Adelaide on 22 October 1839. He lost no time in laying the foundations for his new life: in April 1840 he was admitted as a solicitor to the Supreme Court of New South Wales and soon entered into a partnership with an Irish lawyer, William Hardy, which

was not dissolved until after Stenhouse's death in 1873.

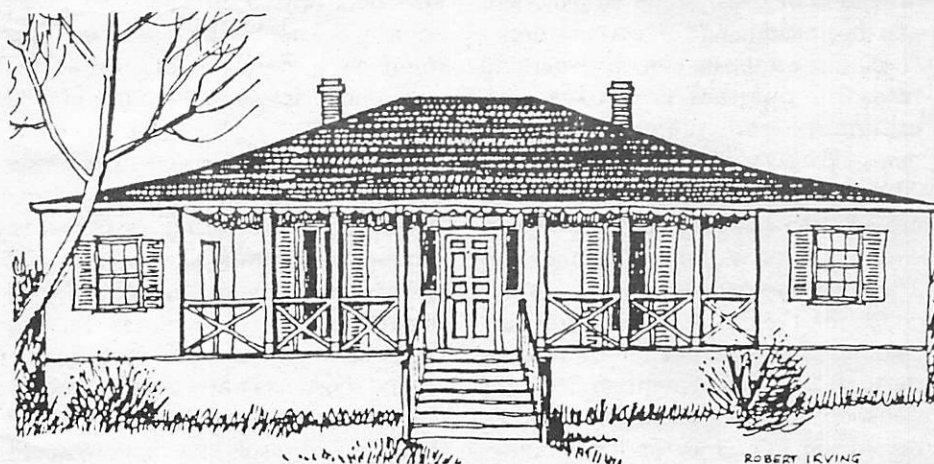
Nicol Stenhouse married Margaretta Underwood at the Pyrmont Presbyterian Church on 23 January 1846, a union which apparently brought them both contentment and twelve children. His connection with the Peninsula began in 1851 when he moved to *Hillside* (now *Eastcliffe*) in Pearson Street, East Balmain and it was in Balmain that he found the house where he happily spent the last 17 years of his life - *Waterview House* in Caroline Street which had been the first house on the Balmain Land Grant. The library at his home, later referred to as a "literary Parthenon", became the gathering point for many writers of the day, including Daniel Deniehy, Charles Harpur and Henry Kendall. Stenhouse is often thought of as Australia's first literary patron, and many early writers owe much to his generosity for help and support. He also chaired meetings of the Balmain Literary Institute and was an alderman on Balmain Council for many years, including a year as Chairman in 1862.

At first Stenhouse leased *Waterview House* but after the owner subdivided the land around the house in 1861 Stenhouse was able to purchase the house in Margaretta's name for 700 pounds, which allowed him to live out the remainder of his life in comfort. He died of chronic nephritis on 18 February 1873, aged 67.

After Stenhouse's death 14 dray loads of nearly 4000 books which were sold and later became the core of Fisher Library at the University of Sydney. *Waterview House* was demolished in the 1920 s.

Sources: "The Stenhouse Circle", Ann-Marie Jordens. LHJ No 10.

Bonnie Davidson



Waterview House about 1835

Salemakers Gone

EH Brett & Sons of Brett Street have closed after nearly 100 years. The sailmaking business was established in 1900. The Bretts Hire & Repair Service, tarpaulin makers, 123 Darling Street has been moved to Silverwater.

Edwin Henry Brett was born in 1860 on Guernsey Island. On completing his 7 year apprenticeship as a sailmaker, he arrived in Sydney in the late 1880s and set up as general ship chandler in Newcastle, NSW. After trying his luck

on the goldfields he settled on the Balmain waterfront.

His first innovation was to add flags to the firms products. By 1910 canvas products included hatch and boat covers and his was the first Australian company licensed to make lifejackets. The firm was also the first to move into the manufacture of shaped tarpaulins for bulk-wheat storage on farm properties. It pioneered the water-proofing of locally made cotton-canvas that was invaluable during World War II when supplies of Scottish canvas were

unavailable. The record of firsts is impressive and includes the making of the first covers for cricket pitches.

An article remaining unchanged for over eighty years was the "Aussie" waterbag made from Belgian flax and Indian jute, woven together. The material was slightly porous allowing the breeze to keep the water in the bag fresh and cool.

Development applications have been lodged for 5 dwellings worth \$400,000 on the Darling Street site and 8 dwellings for \$725,000 in Brett Street.

Balmain Cemetery Part II

Since the December "Observer" article about research into headstones which had been removed from Balmain Cemetery, the History Sub-Committee has continued its search and discovered nine more. The most exciting find was the memorial in Field of Mars Cemetery, Ryde, to Nicol Drysdale Stenhouse, whose biography appears elsewhere in the *Observer*.

One of the problems with making this discovery was that, despite the fact that Stenhouse was a dedicated Presbyterian all of his life, his memorial was found with the Huntley graves in the Anglican section of Field of Mars. His daughter, Ethel, had married Leonard Huntley, whose family gave its name to Huntley's Point.



Stenhouse Memorial

We are not sure of the date on which Nicol's memorial was moved, but his daughter died on 25 September 1933 and his son-in-law on 17 April 1936 so we assume it was at some period between those two dates. The Association is marking the importance of the discovery by having the grave placed under perpetual care. Three other headstones were also moved to Field of Mars Cemetery. Memorials to Robert Langley, his children and his mother-in-law Elizabeth Leapers were placed in the Presbyterian section on 11 December 1918. The memorial to Edward Goodsir, for who Goodsir Street is named, and his niece Kate Coulon was moved on 8 December 1921.

Rookwood Cemetery received three headstones: Mary Ann Vaughan to the

Church of England section on 30 September 1902; William James Paul on 12 February 1907 and Duncan Campbell and Family on 5 September 1941. The last two were removed to the Presbyterian Section.

Two headstones were removed to Woronora Cemetery: Guiseppina Shaw on 12 June 1918 and Henry Tidswell in 1943. Tidswell's home, *Alderley*, in Booth Street, Balmain, was the house which became the core of Balmain Hospital.

As tends to happen with historical delvings, our research led us into a number of interesting by-ways. The article in the "Gazette" which contained the notice about the closing of Balmain Cemetery also notified the closing of the Roman Catholic Cemetery in Allen Street, Leichhardt, on which St Columba's School stands today.

We learned that in addition to all the headstones which were bulldozed to make way for the park, there were also four vaults demolished, belonging to the Stewart, Drysdale, Goddard and Reeves families - a substantial demolition indeed.

We have also tracked down more information about undertakers, following our discovery that two women had taken over the mortuary business from their husbands. Sands Directory for 1858 listed eight undertakers. In 1876 there were nine, of which Mrs Jane Thomas was one. By 1886 the number had grown to 30 of which Mrs Kirby was one. The following year she was listed with a branch in Weston Street (now Victoria Road). By 1896 there were 35 undertakers listed, many of them belonging to Wood & Co and Kinsella. W H Wood was the first undertaker in Balmain, with premises in Darling Street near St Andrews Church. The merger of Wood & Coffill became apparent in 1911. That firm and Kinsella still trade today; many others have been taken over by American companies.

Burial records indicate that not everyone used professional undertakers. There are five fathers listed - McBride, Faulker, Naimby, Corrie and one with the unusual name of Kockoosacki - who acted in that capacity, perhaps to keep down costs.

In the course of our investigations, we have received a substantial amount of historical data for which we are grateful. For example, one mail delivery brought the accompanying photograph



John Clarke's Memorial

of the memorial to John Clarke, of Sydney, who died in 1871. Mr Clarke was a Professor of Dancing who owned the Colonnade Ballroom in Elizabeth Street Sydney and went one day a week to Windsor to teach. His brothers also taught dancing.

Council Policy Changes

Leichhardt Council officers are selecting an architect to design changes to Loyalty Square and Darling Street. It is believed that funds are available through the RTA and Main Street programs. This project has been around for some time and needs to be progressed. Other suburbs have led the way to improvements in shopping centres.

The political deals made by some councillors to gain control has brought policy changes that do not encourage confidence particularly in relation to open council and heritage issues. We are still waiting for the observance of a conservation policy for small working-men's cottages. Every month there is an application for the demolition of one or more of these residences. They are generally replaced by a larger building that increases the pressure on parking and is unsympathetic to the street-scape. It is important that these small dwellings be kept to maintain a stock of affordable housing. Small residential buildings should not be demolished unless it can be demonstrated that retention is not possible. Additions should be complimentary to the existing building in detail and form.

Iron Cove Invalid Convict Gang

The penal colony of New South Wales in the 1820s was a community where an amputee worked alongside the able bodied and convicts with wooden legs were routinely assigned to Government gangs. Amputees received no special consideration and those who misbehaved would be sent to iron-gangs. There were varying degrees of capability and the men were held at the Hyde Park Barracks on arrival until their situation was decided upon, although leg amputee Jacob Julian (Hooghby 1828) went directly to the Iron Cove Invalid Gang.

In 1821, thirty-four convicts and an overseer were employed at Iron Cove, to gather shells for the extraction of lime for building purposes. In the 1828 census, invalids including amputees were working in this Gang which by 1830 had become a conventional road gang engaged in ditching, breaking and spreading stones, raking etc.

In 1831 disabled convicts were still being assigned to Iron Cove but its proximity to the settled areas made their supervision difficult and it was inevitable there would be "trafficking". This might include any form of sale or barter of goods and services to the settlers and in the case of the Iron Cove Invalid Gang, trafficking was in charcoal.

In March, 1831 the gang overseer, Christopher Cochran (Caroline 1828) was sentenced to six months in "irons" for allowing the men to make charcoal instead of working for the Government. Two months later, the Hyde Park Barracks transferred errant members of the Gang to the Port Macquarie Invalid Gang. These included men charged with neglect of work, absconding, stealing and insolence, as well as the run away lunatic Joseph Richardson (Royal George 1828), and leg amputees Andrew Boyd (America 1829), and James Stapleton (Borondino 1828).

When the last of the large transports arrived in 1840, the convicts already in the Colony were becoming eligible for Certificates of Freedom. From this time, the number in the work gangs in the Hyde Park Barracks began to dwindle and the number in the invalid gangs to increase.

The Hyde Park Barracks closed in 1847 as a convict depot. Most of the remaining prisoners were given tickets-

In Your Garden Fresh as a Daisy

Plants with daisy-like flowers add their special charms to a garden. There is a large range to choose from among groundcovers, annuals, perennials and evergreen shrubby plants. Most would flower better if grown in a sunny, well-drained position and with plenty of humus added to the soil.

The shrubby type plants such as marguerite daisies need cutting back when their main flowering is finished. This keeps the bushes shapely and vigorous and produces lots more flowering growth. Insect pests are not usually a problem, but the ground-hugging plants may provide shelter for snails and slugs. Spraying around these plants with pyrethrum could repel the unwanted visitors.

Depending on the type of plant, daisies are grown from seed, cuttings or division of mature plants. Cuttings can be struck in your regular propagating medium.



Many annual chrysanthemums are great daisy producers - "Painted Daisy", "Goblin" as well as paludosum are popular. Perennial chrysanthemums include indicum and maximum (shaster daisy). Doronicum carpetanum will brighten a semi-shaded area with its green foliage and yellow daisy-like blooms.

If container plants have congested root systems, loosen the roots and spread them into prepared holes so that the roots can grow out into the surrounding soil. If the soil is heavy add plenty of organic material.

Bonnie Davidson

of-leave and entered mainstream society. Some whose physical or mental health had broken down under the convict system were never released and were transferred to the lunatic asylum. The remainder, being classified as unsuitable for release, were placed on Cockatoo Island.

Source: Sick and Disabled Convicts. Beverley Earnshaw. RAHS Journal June, 1995, Vol 81, Part 1.

Kath Hamey

What's On

Watch House Exhibitions

- Elaine Norling Feb 3-18
- Womens Collective Feb 24- Mar10
- Lilyfield Watercolour Group Mar 15-16
- Susan Kerville Mar 22-31 Autographed documents
- Judy Brownlie May 4-12 Tonal impressionism

Printed on recycled paper by
Snap Print, Balmain

© Not to be reproduced without
authorisation

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.