

the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

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Founded November 1965

April/May 1997

No Mr Knowles!

The Planning Minister, Mr Craig Knowles, is pushing amendments to the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act that will severely restrict community consultation in development proposals. He proposes a single approvals system that will link associated licences, permits and approvals with one development consent. There is general agreement with the thrust towards reducing red tape and complexity of planning. However, the proposed amendments strengthen the position of developers and would lead to alienation and dissatisfaction. James Coleman, consultant, says, "History offers strong support for the view that a combination of commercial greed, poor design and compliant consent authority will inevitably produce a substandard result". The Environmental Health & Building Surveyors Association has attacked the proposals, "The new religion is that competition is the solution".

John Ralston Saul, author of *The Unconscious Civilization*, in SMH 22 March, wrote, "Efficiency, has become the legitimising word of our time. Where once we dropped in 'by the grace of God' and still drop in some version of 'reason', we have now pushed the concept of efficiency into the leadership role for our civilisation".

The amendments to State significance give too much power to the Minister for Planning and reduce his accountability. His existing powers for declaring regional and state significance are adequate.

New categories of exempt and complying development present the greatest threat to residents amenities. Some additions such as fences, retaining walls, barbecues 2.6m high, pagodas and decks could be constructed without proper negotiations with neighbours. Many councils have already in place Local Approval Policies. They are the most appropriate bodies to determine what needs council approval.

Developers will be able to buy a pri-

vate certifier as an alternative to Council for complying development. The employment of private certifiers to assess individual applications will present conflicts with local policies. For example too many restaurants may cause parking difficulties and streetscape problems. The café society burgeoning in Balmain is already imposing pressure on residents' amenities. Payment for parking provision under Sect 94 is no solution when no land is available. A 24 hour chemist shop could be replaced by 24 hour take-away food premises without an approach to Council or resident consultation. In the proposed amendments, complying development has to be approved within 7 days.

It is incredible that a private certifier paid by a developer would be sympathetic to the interests of residents. There is no motivation for them to act in any way but to accede to the interests of their clients. All the evidence indicates that private certification will increase costs.

Reform can be achieved by administrative rather than legislative changes. A database should be introduced throughout NSW through the medium of a state wide intranet. Providing access to such information, together with sensible legislation for integrated development consents, will encourage developers and builders to prepare applications that meet the local government planning controls.

The conditions requiring contributions towards public open space under Section 94 should provide for dedication of land in preference to the payment of a monetary contribution. If the land is available it should be dedicated. A recent decision by the Land & Environment Court concerning the development application by Colgate-Palmolive allowed the erection of ten townhouses. Only part of the land was dedicated for open space resulting in a gross overdevelopment of the site.

Evidence for the developer suggested that the council had a responsibility to make up the shortfall of open space for the new residents. Even if the land was available it could not have been purchased by the monetary contribution.

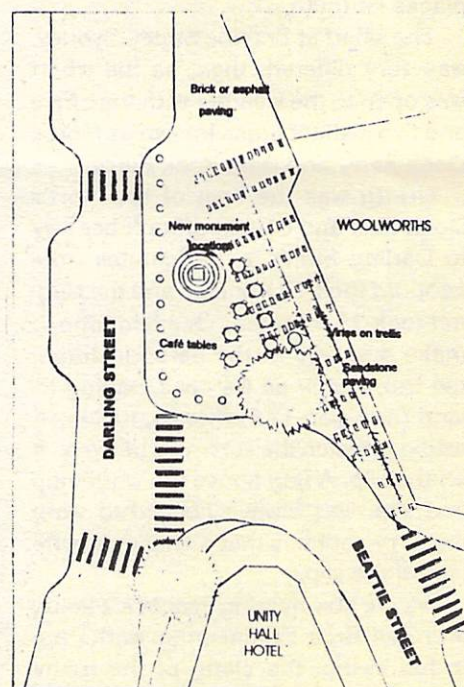
It will be necessary for the Council to strengthen its development controls to remove any ambiguity that may be interpreted by the Court in the developer's favour.

The six week consultation period was totally inadequate for the public to consider what is the most significant reform of planning acts. Further discussion with local government and the community is essential to prepare more equitable legislation.

Write to Mr Knowles and Sandra Nori, MP to indicate your objections to this attack on peoples' rights.

Loyalty Square

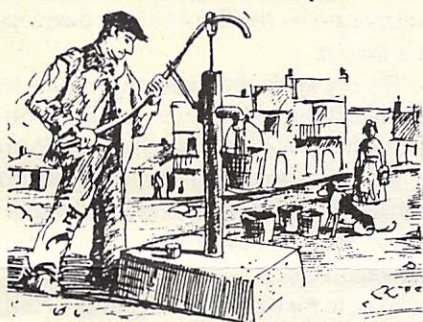
Leichhardt Council has allocated \$152,000 for the upgrade of Loyalty Square. A plaza will improve the safety and amenity in the busiest part of Darling Street. The Association, together with the Chamber of Commerce have lobbied for this scheme for a number of years and it is pleasing that work will commence soon.



A Walk Up Darling Street Remarkable Changes

The local newspaper of Balmain, the Link dated 14 January, 1932, published a Pen Picture by former Alderman of the Balmain Council, Alfred H Bogle. The History of Balmain in the Eighties, 1880s.

This was in reply to an article in the Link on 23 December, 1931 when The Mayor, Alderman Reginald Thornton, wrote on the subject of the Village Pump in Beattie Street near Elliott Street. The article 'had greatly surprised the younger generation who would find it hard to realize that 50 years ago (1880) drinking water in dry seasons had to carted from the Public Pump'.



FILLING BUCKETS AT A STREET PUMP

What comments would Messrs Thornton and Bogle make of Darling Street, to-day, March, 1997?

In response to your invitation to supply you with a few historical facts on Balmain - to mark the great progress during the past 50 years, I have submitted the following pen pictures - as a ferry trip from Sydney to Darling Street, Balmain, thence to Pigeon Ground (Gladstone Park), naming in very great respect, some of the late residents and places en route.

The wharf at Erskine Street, Sydney, was very different then, as the wharf was open to the weather with the office and two distinct areas known as Mort's Dock Ferry and Bald Rock Ferry.

Utility was the best of the Mort's Dock fleet and could puff puff her way to Darling Street in 10 minutes - the *Leopold* took 12 minutes and the *Cygnets* took 15 minutes. One had time to make a survey of the harbour during the trip, hence as we pass Darling Island (now part of Pyrmont), it is interesting to watch the steamers being built on the slip. A flag above the workshop and slip, was always hoisted to warn the ferry captains that a ship was coming off the slip.

We are now nearing Peacock's Point, and Bell Bros Engineering works are in full swing, the clang of the many

hammers and the puff, puff of our steamer and the splash, splash of the paddle wheel, make pleasant harmony. Bell's later sold to Foster and Minty.

Adjoining these works we see Harry Beattie's ship-building yard in which the keel of a wooden schooner is, with the bow and stern post in position. Upon this keel fully 10 years later, *The Lord of the Isles* was formed and duly launched. Alongside this yard is the Waterman's Hut and in this shelter shed, as many as 28 watermen waited with their fleet of rowing boats for signals to approach ships, etc. As we pass Fenwick's water tank boat, our Captain calls down the polished brass speaking tube, 'easy - easy - then stop 'er - stern' and we bump Darling Street jetty.

We now commence our promised stroll up Balmain. The first person we meet is old Mackenzie, the boatman, he has his skiff alongside the jetty and a long chapter could be written about this interesting and civil old sailor. On our left is the old *Shipwright Arms* Hotel and on the right the large galvanised shed erected for a tannery by the now famous Ludowicies - just beyond we see Looke's Boat building yard and the residence of Joseph W Looke, who was one of Balmain's early councilors. The William James cottages adjoin, they are noted for their gardens which extended to the ferry - where *Plym Terrace* now stands - the vegetables were sold by Charlie, an island boy who trundled a barrow. On the left we note two large houses. One is occupied by Mr Toogood, a storekeeper in King and Pitt Street, City, and the other by Mr Jacob Garrard, afterwards the Hon Jacob Garrard, MP for Balmain. The old weatherboard shop with shingle roof, on the corner of Nicholson Street, was the first general store and post office

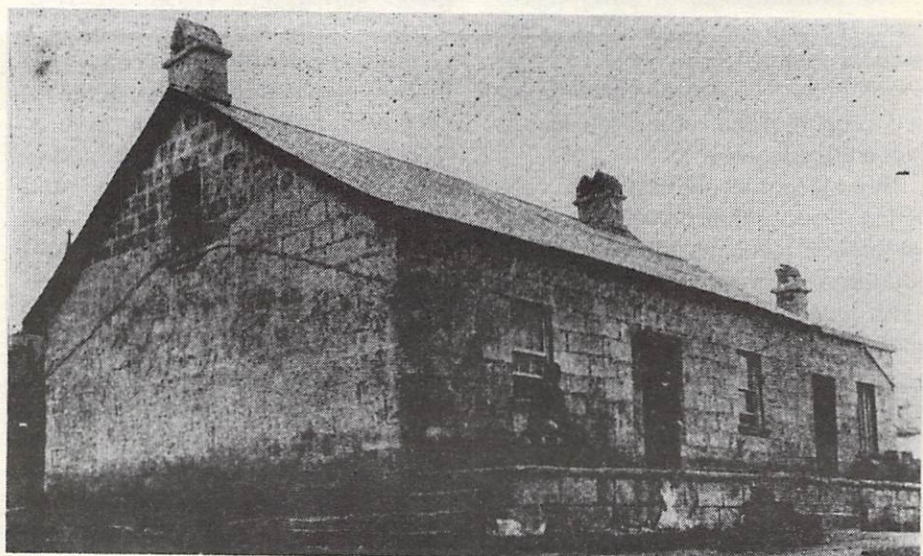
built and occupied by Mr Chidgey and now a butchery run by Mr J J Wheeler. Part of the old stone wall is still standing, at the rear of the up to date premises of Mr Adams grocery.

The *Albion* Hotel on the other side was a flourishing house where the boatmen and sailors loved to meet. On the opposite corner stood *Armitt's Cottage*, with large yard and stable. Armitt's coach was popular when fog prevented the ferry from making early trips. The coach had to travel to Parramatta Road, Leichhardt thence to the City. Wilkinson's Bakery was always a noted bakery - in the next block we pass *Leach's Bakery* and the Commercial Hotel, opposite is James Conway's butchery on the corner of Duke Street.

The large residence on the left, *Glentworth*, is Captain John Bloomfield's, noted for his glass house plants. Adjoining is Moat's grocery - then, the well kept boot shop of J H Mills - father of H Mills, Mayor of Balmain 1899 and 1900. In the cottage opposite known as *Cromwell* lived Dr Owen S Evans, who was Mayor in 1864 and was always most popular - adjoining is the handsome stone Church of England, St Mary's, with its Rector Tress. Dick Thallon the great footballer lives in the big house opposite and Capt Marshall in the weatherboard cottage, with his ship's cabin trim and neat.

On the right opposite, is the *Northumberland House*, occupied by Captain Rowntree, the long avenue of trees make a fine setting for the porch over the front door. Again on the left we see the once famous *Burnbank Hotel*, (see picture) occupied by Captain George Ternen, who was one of the first to build and run a steam boat from the foot of Ternen Street to Sydney.

(conclusion in next issue)



Demolitions Worry

The Balmain Association has expressed concern to Leichhardt Council at the number of demolitions and potential demolitions of residences in Balmain and Rozelle. Some of these were for small workingmen's cottages that council planning officers formulated guidelines for possible retention.

In last two decades Balmain has been prominent in attracting investors who were willing to restore run down residences that maintained the streetscape and the heritage. The so-called yuppies were responsible for the saving of many properties that developers would have destroyed. Only the small area of Balmain allotments saved other buildings from demolition. Al-

though we recognise the diversity of the dwelling styles that is a feature of the Peninsula some of the new buildings are unsympathetic to their surroundings.

With the emphasis on high density and the enhanced desirability of the area together with elevated property values the trend is for less scrupulous investors to maximise their profit by overdeveloping the sites. There is also the problem of increased congestion by private vehicles.

We are encouraged by the recent sale of 27 Trouton St by a young couple who are determined to restore the old stone dwelling at obviously considerable expense. We were concerned by the imminent sale of 8 Duke Place, a

semi-detached residence built in 1860 but were gratified to discover that a local resident has bought it and intends to restore the building. The owners of 10 Duke Place organized support for its retention. Paul Davies prepared an application for a heritage order.

Other properties under threat are residences at 122 Short Street (c1882), 69 Ballast Point Road (1910) and two black brick dwellings at 22 Rose Street and 43 Louisa Road. Council recently refused a demolition order on 2-6 Short Street. There was no accompanying DA.

Residents are dismayed by the replacements that have been approved on some sites. They are disappointed that the streetscape is violated by the unsympathetic structures.

Goodsir Street Reserve

Fronting Goodsir Street between Moore and Mullens Streets is a small reserve of 340m² adjoining residential land owned by the Department of Housing. After a fire had destroyed two dwellings Leichhardt Council acquired the property and created a public reserve with some play equipment. It also serves as a pedestrian link.

Since its initial establishment the reserve has experienced problems with vandalism and has generally lacked any sense of place. Growing tired of these problems, local residents, working with Council, instigated a higher level of maintenance and initiated new landscaping to foster a sense of pride in the park. Council installed bright modern play equipment, fencing and lighting. They also mow the grass and collect garbage. The park is regularly watered by an adjoining property owner. There are continual donations of plants and trees by residents. The

resident group that initially began the park program has grown into a small army of volunteers who conduct clean-up days several times each year. The activity helps to generate a sense of community.

To secure this valuable amenity the local residents have requested Council to dedicate the park as reserve land for recreational use.

Thank You

The Association is pleased to have received donations of local history assignments from two mature age students of the Department of History, University of New England, Armidale. Congratulations and thanks to Barbara Howard for her study of the area bounded by Darling and Wise Streets, Iron Cove and Birchgrove Road and Deleila Ladd-Hudson for the area within Punch Street, Fitzroy Avenue, Elkington Park and Glassop Street.

Heritage Week Activities

Saturday 19 & 26 April

Watch House Photographic Exhibition. Trams on the Peninsula. Time: 11am-3pm Free. Balmain Association Inc.

Sunday 20 April

Heritage Walk and Ferry around Snails Bay and Ballast Point. 11am at 1 Ballast Point Road, Birchgrove. \$10 pp Bookings limited. Contact 9810 3639 Snail's Bay Residents Group.

Friday 25 April

Heritage Pub Crawl 1.30pm Watch House 179 Darling Street, Balmain. \$5pp Bookings 9818 4954.

Sunday 27 April

Rozelle Heritage Walk 1.30pm Balmain Road and Cecily Street \$5pp Bookings 9818 4954.

Archive Room, Dawn Fraser Pool

Sunday 20 April 1pm-3pm. Friday 25 April 2pm-4pm. Sunday 27 April 3pm-5pm. Free. Contact 9810 6885 Friends of Dawn Fraser Pool.

Coaghan's Dairy

The article in the February, Observer, about the Conaghan Dairy, prompted member Joan Stephens, nee Carson, to send her memories as follows: I was born at 9 Napoleon Street, Rozelle and lived there for 25 years. As a small child of about 6 or 7 years, I often had to run errands for my mother to her friend, who lived at the bottom of Toelle Street, on the left hand side. House now demolished. Opposite the house at that time, was a holding yard where cattle were kept. I was either half way down or up, when a herd of cattle came and in no time I ran as fast as I

could away from them, as I was pretty scared, you can imagine. The cattle made quite a lot of manure in Toelle Street.

My mother played tennis at Conaghan's tennis court located near Manning Street. A Miss Conaghan taught music while I was a pupil at Riverside School.

During the 1930s and 40s, there were numerous tennis courts in the whole of the Peninsula and during school holidays, I went along to play.

Sunshine Picnics were organised by a group of women, my mother being one, who took the very poor children

from the area on a Saturday over to Balmoral Beach. It was all done on public transport, with the ferry from the Quay over to the Zoo Wharf and then the old toast-rack tram to Balmoral, where another group of ladies were waiting. I do not know if this group came from the Balmoral area.

We went to a picnic hall and two big wicker baskets, one full of girl's cossies and the other for the boys. Then it was swimming, making sand castles and prizes given, mostly old toys from other children. I won a big box of building blocks with beautiful pictures on them.

Joan Stephens, Oyster Bay.

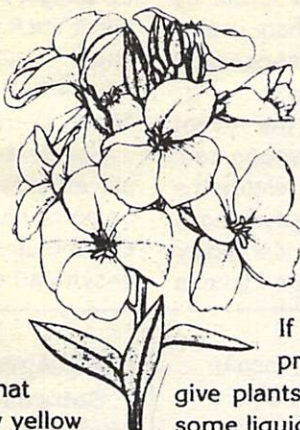
In Your Garden

April Gardening

There will be no mistaking autumn. Every time you go outdoors there will be another heap of leaves to rake up. Put all of these into the compost bin or in a heap, in layers with garden refuse or other organic material. It produces valuable compost in spring.

The now bare area under deciduous trees can be prettied up by planting a few bulbs of scilla, tritelia or grape hyacinth or a sprinkling with some seed or alyssum.

Evergreen climbing plants can be planted now. Rosa banksiae-luted is a fast growing climber that produces masses of pretty yellow flowers in spring. Roses, fuchsias, dahlias, sasanqua camellias, chrysanthemums, canna and nerines will also be



flowering well so you will enjoy working in the garden. Any of bulbs listed for March can be planted as hyacinths. Using an all-purpose fertiliser, give fortnightly feedings to established seedlings.

May is considered to be clean-up month and as it is much cooler it is easier to work in the garden. Don't leave it any later than early May to plant the spring flowering bulbs. Other bulbous type plants to plant or repot this month are astilba, sprekelia, brodiaea cliva (one of my favourites), belladonna, convalberia, lillium, and eucamis.

The early japonica camellias will be blooming. If weather conditions are not providing adequate moisture give plants a deep watering, adding some liquid seaweed. Watch that azaleas and rhododendrons do not become dry or their flowering could be affected. Thick clumps of buds on camellias

could be thinned if you want bigger blooms. If roses are to be planted during winter, prepare the soil with organic material and pelletised manure.

Bonnie Davidson

Watch House Exhibitions

- Pear Shape - watercolours
Suzanne Moss April 12-13
- Heritage Week April 20-27
Trams on the Peninsula
- Denise Rothwell May 3-25
Combined show with Quebec Art Gallery
- Georgina Lawson June 21-29
French provincial still life
- Enid Colquhoun July 19-27
with Judy Brownlie and Lyn Mitchell. Paintings & etchings
- Judy Brownlie October 11-19

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OBSERVER**

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9 The Avenue
Balmain East NSW 2041
97/12

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. Our editorial phone/fax is 9818 4954.

Interested artists, potters, sculptors, etc. who would like to organise an exhibition in the Watch House are urged to contact Steve South on 9810 1411.

Annual Subscriptions:

Household \$16, Pensioners & Students \$7, Organisation \$21.

HOW MUCH NOISE CAN YOU TAKE!

Did you know that you can report unreasonable noise to an authority that must act on your behalf? All you need to do is follow these three easy steps:

- 1 Try to identify the noise offender and select the appropriate service.
- 2 Phone and say "I am making a noise complaint and I want it registered." Give as much information as you can. *If possible*, keep a copy of details to send back with this calendar.
- 3 Mark the date of the call on the calendar below and use symbol to show what you registered.



SHIP & WHARF NOISE

CONTACT SYDNEY PORTS CORPORATION 24 HOUR
Ph 9364 2000 Fax 9247 7804



HELICOPTER & AIRCRAFT NOISE

CONTACT AIR SERVICES AUSTRALIA 24 HOUR
Ph 9582 1850 Fax 9556 6641



PARTY BOATS & EVENTS NOISE

CONTACT - WATER POLICE 24 HOUR
Ph 9692 5411 Fax 9692 5427

USE THIS SYMBOL ON THE DATE OF THE COMPLAINT

SHIP & WHARF

HELICOPTER & AIRCRAFT

PARTY BOATS & EVENTS



1997

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indicates when East Balmain Precinct meetings are held
(last Monday of the month in Clontarf Cottage, Wallace St)

Please record all noise complaints on this calendar and return to us at the end of 1997 - all records will be collated with the authority's records to see if complaints are being properly handled.

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO REASONABLE QUIET - ACT FOR YOUR RIGHT NOW!



**Inner City & Foreshores
Community Action Group (inc)
and
Precinct 2, Leichhardt Council.**

Dear Resident,

Some interesting extracts from the article "Plagued By Noise" in the "New Scientist" of 16 November, 1996:

"For years, scientists and doctors believed noise was only a problem if it was loud enough to damage hearing. Now, there is increasing evidence that exposure to relatively low levels of noise for long periods can affect our health, raise blood pressure, disrupt cognitive development in children, disturbing sleep and prompting psychiatric disorders."

"Noise does not have to be loud to cause health problems" - Director of Noise Centre of the League for the Hard of Hearing in New York.

"The World Health Organisation has revised its guidelines in the light of fresh research....The new guidelines will reduce the recommended night-time average level of noise suitable for undisturbed sleep from 35 to 30dB(A). For the first time, the guidelines will also include a peak night-time maximum of 45 dB(A)." ('Party boats' record up to 60dB(A)!).

"People living or working in noisy environments are at considerable risk of developing cardiovascular disorders and the risk of exposure increases with the intensity of the noise and the period of exposure" - research from Dept. of Occupational Medicine in La Sapienza University in Rome.

"People may appear to adapt to noise, but they do always at a cost to their system. Noise is stress and eventually the body gives in some way. Becoming adapted to noise may make people more susceptible to illness" - Dept. of Psychiatry at University College London Medical School.

For more information about these noise issues or about the Inner City & Foreshores Community Action Group (inc), or to obtain a copy of the 'New Scientist' article "Plagued by Noise", contact a committee member by fax or phone on either 9810-3279 or 9818-3334, or come to a meeting of Precinct 2, Leichhardt Council, held on the first Monday of each month at Clontarf Cottage, Wallace St., East Balmain, at 7.30 p.m..

Your registering of noise complaints by telephoning the relevant Authority will be an important step in ensuring the mental and physical health of your family and your community. Your calendar with details will help us confirm if your complaint is being properly handled. Post it back at any time to-

The Secretary

**Inner City & Foreshores Community Action Group (Inc)
33 Darling St., Balmain 2041.**