

the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

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Wharf Road Plan Upheld

An important judgement of commissioner Roseth in the Land & Environment Court has strengthened the provisions of Leichhardt Council's LEP 21. He has dismissed an appeal against the refusal by Council of an application for the demolition of a rented dwelling and the erection of a new building at 29 Wharf Road, Birchgrove.

The site is located in a conservation area of late 19th and early 20th century houses. The existing 1870s weather-board cottage has been extensively altered although its basic single-storey form with a steep gable roof remains. The Council valued the cottage as a component of a group of historic houses that face the waterfront. If it were

demolished it should be replaced by a building that has a more sympathetic form to the character of the conservation area than the proposal. There exists a development consent for alterations and extensions to the cottage.

The applicant's case was that the cottage has no heritage significance, that the new building should not imitate the architectural form of a past era. The proposed house has a shallow slope roof and extensive glazing.

The judgement found that the Wharf Road group of buildings has very high heritage significance and although there is no justification in retaining the cottage for its heritage value its retention is desirable for its contribution to a

group of buildings. All the relevant planning controls indicate retention of the existing cottage. If demolished a replacement should be compatible with the traditional form and character of the other buildings. It does not need to imitate the materials and details of a past era but it should not depart from the traditional form to the extent that viewing from the water would set it aside as clearly different.

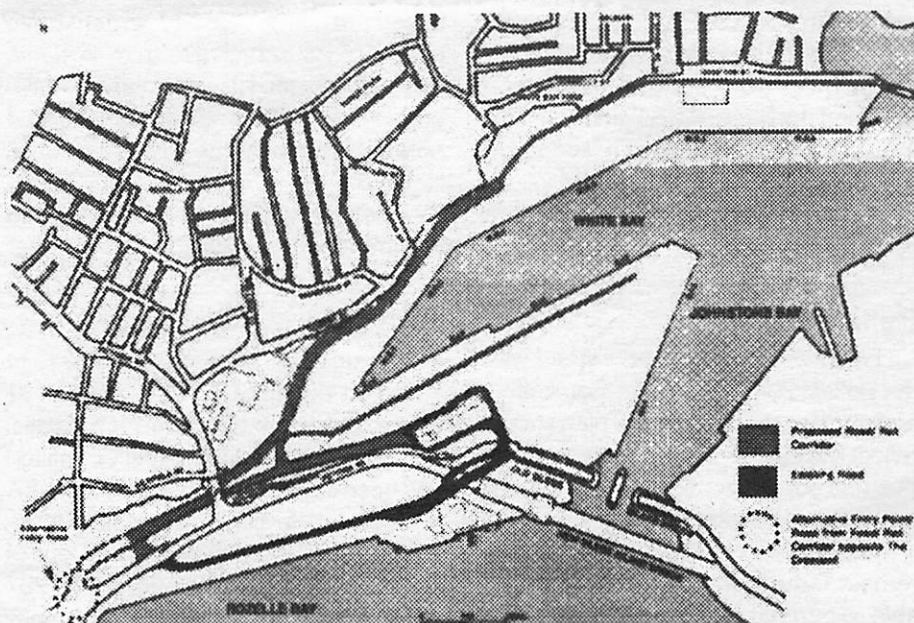
The community's desire to retain the character of the Wharf Road buildings overrides the applicant's desire to achieve optimum accommodation. Local residents Janette Sullivan, June Lunsman and Jean Lenane supported the Council's case.

White Bay Master Plan

Sydney Ports, under Sydney Regional Environmental Plan 26 - City West, are preparing a Master Plan for White Bay as a guide to future type and scale of port development. The plan will give users and residents information about the proposed changes. Important goals include addressing environmental issues such as traffic and noise, the port's operational efficiency, new infrastructure, reducing pollution, minimising energy usage, encouraging rail transport and improving the visual impact. The Master Plan will include landscaping

Over the past 20 years much shipping trade has moved to Port Botany. However, Glebe Island and White Bay terminals are needed for certain cargo that cannot be handled at Port Botany. Currently, cars, containers, machinery, timber, steel and dry bulk products such as sugar and cement are handled.

Issues important to Balmain residents are transport, noise reduction and visual impact. Sydney Ports plan to build a new access road to the port from the City West Link. This road will reduce congestion from the area by removing port-related traffic from Robert Street. The site of some silos scheduled to be



demolished is identified as a suitable location for two large warehouses.

The port facilities operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week and the noise is disturbing to nearby residents. According to Sydney Ports, a Noise Reference Committee, including local community members, regularly discusses noise management issues and improvement strategies. Areas of the port that are underutilised will be developed in the future. Adjacent residential complexes

under construction have included noise reduction features. No doubt the developers have expressed their concern.

Although Sydney Ports advertised that the Discussion Paper would be available to read at Balmain Library it has not yet been delivered. Copies may be purchased from Leichhardt Council for \$15. If you are interested in attending one of the workshops early in 1999 contact Andrea Fernandes at Keys Young on 9956 7515 or fax 9956 7514.

Sir Frederick R Jordan Chief Justice 1934-1949

Frederick Richard Jordan was born in London on 13 October 1881. He was the son of Frederick Jordan, hay and straw merchant of Buckinghamshire and of his wife Sarah nee Nobel of Scotland.

His parents migrated to Sydney when he was 5 years old and from 1888-1894 his father was a Van Proprietor at 40 Llewellyn Street, Balmain. The building at 23 Mullens Street, where his father conducted a produce store from 1897-1911 was resumed and demolished to allow Roseberry Street to have access to Mullens Street. Jordan Snr address was then 28 Dock Road until his death in 1924 aged 78 years. His mother Sarah had died in 1915 aged 65 years.

With this modest background, Frederick R Jordan began his education at the Balmain Public School and Sydney Boys' High School, where his intellectual ability soon showed itself. He matriculated from the School in 1897 but university education was then financially out of reach.

His first employment was as a clerk at the Master in Lunacy's office for two years then as a clerk, shorthand writer and typist in the Public Library of New South Wales from 1900 to 1906 when he joined the State's Intelligence Department. He saved enough to begin evening studies in arts at the University of Sydney, winning Scholarships that carried him on to law. He was admitted



Portrait of Sir Frederick Jordan
by Sir William Dargie

to the Bar on 19 August 1907 and from 1912-1929 his address as Barrister was at Selborne Chambers, 174 Phillip Street, Sydney.

For a number of years he lectured in the Law School of the University of Sydney in Equity, Company Law, Bankruptcy, Probate and Divorce and not only distinguished himself as a lecturer in this wide range of subjects but prepared notes on Equity which have proved of lasting value both to students and practitioner. He was soon acknowledged as a leader at the Equity Bar and he went on to become a King's Council in 1928.

The family home at 28 Dock Road was transferred to him from his father

in 1916 and it is believed that Frederick Richard Jordan remained in residence until his marriage to Betha Maud Clay on 9 January 1928. His home address was then, 47 Towns Road, Rose Bay. There were no children from the marriage.

In 1934 Jordan gave up his leadership of the Equity Bar to become Chief Justice of New South Wales and he was appointed K.C.M.G. in 1936, then on the death of Sir Phillip Street in 1938 he became Lieutenant-Governor.

Jordan was an efficient administrator of his court especially when wartime stringency made abnormal demands and administered the government for nearly a year from June 1945.

The Hon. Sir Frederick Richard Jordan, ninth New South Wales Chief Justice, died on 4 November 1949 at his home in Vacluse; he was accorded a state funeral.

The house at 28 Dock Road remained in the estate of Jordan until his death. Although in good repair the building was demolished in 1998 to make way for a new house.

Plaque number 29 of the Balmain History Trail, is dedicated to Sir Jordan and can be seen at 21 Mullens Street, Balmain and a portrait of Sir Jordan by William Dargie, can be seen in the library, ground floor, Frederick Jordan Chambers, 53 Martin Place, Sydney.

Source: A.D.B., The Australian Law Journal 1934 and information from Paul Blacket.

Kath Hamey

Ballast Point

Leichhardt Council has agreed with the Ballast Point Campaign Committee and decided that the master plan should reflect the current zoning (waterfront industrial) not residential development as proposed by Walker Co.

Council resolved that the site should remain industrial until funds are available to purchase it for open space; that the community be consulted on the possibility of financing the purchase through a special voluntary rate levied on the whole community; that representatives of the Ballast Point Campaign Committee be approached to set up a meeting with Caltex to discuss the acquisition of the site. The Mayor has written to the Managing Director of Caltex requesting such a meeting.

A petition is being circulated supporting the resolutions.

Mort Bay

Council has been offered site C of 1.5ha on the edge of Mort Bay for \$1 by the Minister for Planning, Mr Knowles. However a remediation cost \$1 million has been suggested by Council officers.

Included in the conditions of consent placed by Council on the Dept of Housing during negotiations in 1987 was a daycare centre and a community worker for two years to help Council's Community Services Planning.

Catchment Management

We attended the launch by Mr Amery, Minister for Water Conservation, of the Total Catchment Management of Sydney Harbour and Parramatta River. A number of committees have been set up influence, coordinate and integrate the activities of authorities, groups and individuals.

Heritage Week 24 Apr-2 May

Photo Exhibition in the Watch House on 24 Apr - 1 May 11am-3pm.

A Heritage Pub Crawl will depart from the Watch House at 2pm on Sat 24 April. Cost \$12 pp.

Old Balmain Guided Walk from the Watch House at 2pm on Sat 1 May will include afternoon tea at Clontarf Cottage. Cost \$12 pp.

Small Detached Houses

Leichhardt Council has just completed an exhibition of minor changes in DCP20 that strengthen the objectives of controlling the renovation and demolition of small cottages. If adopted they will encourage restoration of small houses through innovative adaptation for contemporary needs. Demolition will not be granted if repair is possible.

White Bay Park

White Bay was named after the Principal Surgeon John White, who arrived on the First Fleet on 26 January 1788. Dr William Balmain became Principal Surgeon of the Colony of New South Wales in 1796 when White returned to England. The 1.6ha area of the park is from Booth Street to Stephen Street with boundary of Donnelly and Vincent Streets. There is no foreshore access to White Bay as the Container Facility restricts access.

John Booth's Steam Sawmills, Joinery and Timber works dominated the White Bay foreshore for 50 years from the 1850s. Morrison & Sinclair set up the shipbuilding business in part of the mill in 1904 until 1923 when the business moved to Long Nose Point. The Harbour Trust set up its shipyard on some of the allotments in 1922. In 1929 the trust leased the shipyard to Atlantic Union Oil Co Ltd as its Balmain terminal. Changed in the oil company structures saw Esso Australia take over the lease in 1972.

On the corner of Stephen and Vincent Streets, Burn's Timber Yard is listed in 1893. Different business set up over the next few years until 1903 when Pool & Steele Ltd, Engineers, were firmly established for the next 60 years.

Facing Donnelly Street some 24 houses were built from the 1850s to 1890 including *Subiton*, John Booth's sandstone house and four, two-storey semi-detached timber houses built for the Booth family. All have been demolished over time, the latter four semi-detached houses were demolished in 1970.

In October 1969, the Maritime Services Board leased the portion on corner Vincent and Stephen Streets to Terminals Pty Ltd for 'liquid chemical

bulk storage', bringing the area of the tank farm to 0.5ha.

In the face of strong resident opposition led by the Balmain Association, the scheme was approved. The bulk storage was of flammable liquids, fish oil, vegetable oils and molasses.

Excavation had been begun in October 1968 and in August 1970 it was discovered that 300,000 gallons of petrol were being stored in the new tank farm which was within a narrow roadway's width of occupied houses. Nine years later the Balmain Association's News sheet prompted residents outrage when it was found that Terminals' was seeking to extend the lease to 1985.

Nearby residents had been in danger of explosion of flammable liquids since 1929 when Atlantic began storing petroleum-based products. Atlantic excavated the lower part of the site and after World War 11, the company expanded storage capacity by setting a large tank in a deep excavation on the Donnelly Street alignment. This is the walled, sunken area to be seen today in

the park. Seven more tanks were installed in the next 20 years.

In October 1979, there was government support for public open space on the strip of land above the container facility. The State government refused to extend leases on the basis that all bulk chemical storage should be moved out of Sydney Harbour.

Residents greeted with relief the announcement in early 1981 that Leichhardt Council would vote \$160,000 towards landscaping the former industrial site.

The White Bay Park opened to the public on 4 June 1982 giving panoramic views of Pyrmont, Anzac/Glebe Island Bridge with the soon to be demolished, wheat silos.

A History Trail Plaque for John Booth, Balmain's first Mayor and sawmiller, can be found in the park. The Council supports an application to rename the park with the Aboriginal name *Birrung*, meaning stars.

Source: Leichhardt Historical Journal 20, Peter Reynolds.



Esso Oil Storage White Bay 1967

Association Report

The last few months of 1998 were an expensive time as some long-term projects were completed. Copper guttering and some new downpipes on the back section of the Watch House were installed, eaves painted and the slate roof checked for cracks. The front section had similar work carried out in 1997. A volunteer is required to check the guarantee as Period Roofing has given the life of the work at 100 years.

Coir matting has been placed throughout the ground floor of the Watch House that gives a uniform ap-

pearance and will be easier to maintain.

The furniture has been catalogued and valued for insurance purposes and we were surprised with the total valuation.

The installation of the William Balmain memorial slate tablet at St Giles in the Fields, London should be completed by March, 1999. The address for visitors to St Giles for an inspection and a photograph for our files is St Giles High Street, London, W.C 2. The Rector Revd G Taylor would be happy to greet you.

Balmain Town Hall

A meeting to elect the Balmain Town Hall Management Committee is to be held at 4pm on Saturday 6 February in the Town Hall.

This follows the withdrawal of an application by Inspire Foundation to lease the hall.

One proposal is to operate a cinema to raise funds to install an elevator and to give the building a coat of paint to match the Post Office and the Court House.

Enquiries Kath Hacking 9818 2504.

In Your Garden

Time To Cool It

During the long hot days of summer garden jobs are best done in the early morning or late evening. Watering is most effective in the early hours and arduous garden projects are best put off until the mellow days of autumn.

Mulching is the answer to summer survival for your garden. Just gather the leaves and twigs and pile them on the soil along with manure and compost. Vigorous growth will be your just reward but there are a few minor jobs to be done.

Pruning. Cut off larger "summer burst" of azaleas to keep them neat and shapely and to encourage better flowering. Watch for the tiny lace bug under the azalea leaves. The best control is by spraying with Follimat, making sure to spray the under surface of the leaves.

Roses. Cutting blooms with long stems encourages growth and more flowers. Give them a light sprinkle of rose food — a matchbox-full is sufficient and should be applied to moist soil and



then watered in. Inspect for black spot on rose leaves. Treat with a spray containing Triforine fungus in the early evening after bee activity has ceased.

Hibiscus. Looking lovely in full flower but watch for tiny black beetles that damage the buds before they open. If damage is significant spray your hibiscus with Carbaryl.

Lawns should only be watered once or twice a week but thoroughly.

Bonnie Davidson

Watch House Exhibitions

- ♦ Arty Ms 11th Annual Exhibition of Womens Art 12-28 Feb
- ♦ Gary Notaley-Smith 13-14 Mar Hartstart Studio
- ♦ Patricia Quinn 21-22 Mar Watercolours in a combination of Eastern & Western style

Earth Works

Leichhardt Council has a community based interactive program aimed at reducing waste. The course begins on 3 February from 6-9pm and runs for 5 weeks. Residents can gain skills in waste avoidance, composting, worm farming and recycling. It also provides opportunities for outreach work within the local community.

For details contact Waste Project Officer, Cheryl Walker on 9367 9227.

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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 of the area & keep a permanent collection of historical interest; seek the cooperation of everyone

concerned in the realisation of the above.

The Balmain Association meets on the first wednesday of each month at 7.30pm in the Watch House 179 Darling Street Balmain. The Watch House is open every Saturday from 12 to 3pm. Our editorial phone/fax is 02 9818 4954. Email valham@value.com.au.

Interested artists, potters, sculptors, etc. who would like to organise an exhibition in the Watch House are urged to contact Steve South on 02 9810 1411.

Annual Subscriptions:

Household \$16, Pensioners & students \$7, Organisations \$21.