



the balmain  
association  
incorporated  
news sheet

# The Peninsula OBSERVER

Vol 35 No5 Issue 267

Founded November 1965

October 2000

## Sydney Harbour Foreshores

**The Sydney Harbour Foreshores Authority has two redevelopment projects in the Rozelle-White Bay-Lilyfield precinct. Both have potential to generate investment and new jobs through adaptive designs for reuse.**

The heritage-listed White Bay Power Station and the rail-freight corridor from Rozelle Bay to Lilyfield are prime targets for redevelopment. The new Metro link station at Catherine Street will service the goods yard.

The power station is now in a two years planning process that will involve extensive consultation with local residents and other stakeholders. The White Bay site is zoned for commercial use. Both sites are potentially very valuable because of their proximity to the city.

The SHFA is vitally interested in the rejuvenation of the inner city. The Authority will work with Metro Light Rail, the local community and other partners in the future development of the suburbs.

The White Bay Power Station is on nearly 4 hectares of land on the south-eastern side of the Balmain Peninsula. It was built by the NSW railways between 1912 and 1917 to provide power for Sydney's expanding electrified railways. It was extended in the 1920s and was taken over by the Electricity Commission in the 1950s. The complex includes a turbine hall equivalent in scale and dimension to the Queen Victoria

Building, a boiler house and switching house, as well as a control room and coal loader.

An initial conservation plan prepared by the former owners, Pacific Power, outlined which items should stay with the heritage-listed buildings, with overall heritage implications to be a major consideration in the forthcoming master plan.

Public access will be an important part of any redevelopment as the site is easily reached from the city and has city skyline views from the upper levels.

Together with the Powerhouse Museum it remains as an example of this important building type. Recognition of the past will be an important element in its future development.

The Rozelle Goods-marshalling Yards, just three kilometres from the CBD, occupies 9 hectares and its redevelopment will benefit the inner west and could provide employment for up to 3000 people.

Metro Light Rail will be a major consideration in any plans. The existing rail tracks to White Bay will be relocated and a new port access road will be built. The potential for developing a business park will be among the options investigated with the site also suitable for warehousing, services trades, entertainment and retailing.

In developing a masterplan for the site, the SHFA will canvas a range of options with business, industry and the community to ensure this project brings maximum economic benefits to the area.

## Back to Balmain Day & Balmain Regatta

**Old Tigers once again will renew friendships in Elkington Park, Glas-sop Street, during the 12<sup>th</sup> Back to Balmain Weekend on 28<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup> October 2000.**

For the first time a 50-50 dance, in the vein of years gone by, will be held at the Balmain Town Hall on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October from 8pm to 11pm. Get your feet tapping and dancing to the music of Don's Imprimatur Ten Piece Band. Admission \$15 and Con. \$10. Refreshments on sale.

Balmain Hospital will hold a photographic exhibition in the Boardroom, 10am to 2pm, 28<sup>th</sup> October to 4<sup>th</sup> November. Peter Reynolds will open the exhibition. Entry Free.

Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October will begin with schools open for inspection, 9am to mid-day. Bring your school photograph along and try to identify your schoolmates of Balmain, Birchgrove and Rozelle Primary.

10am: Ecumenical Church Service at St Andrew's, Darling Street and Curtis Road.

Noon: BYO picnic at Elkington Park.

1 pm: Leichhardt Municipal Band and followed by dancers from the Honeybrook School of Dance.

2 pm: Balmain Regatta off White Horse Point, Elkington Park. A dress parade of boats will precede the Regatta.

Come and enjoy an old fashioned picnic in the park. Steak sandwiches, ice creams, soft drinks will be on sale. Enjoy a swim in the historic Dawn Fraser Pool.

The Association will be on site to chat about 'the good old days'. Donations of photographs are most welcome and local history publications will be on sale.

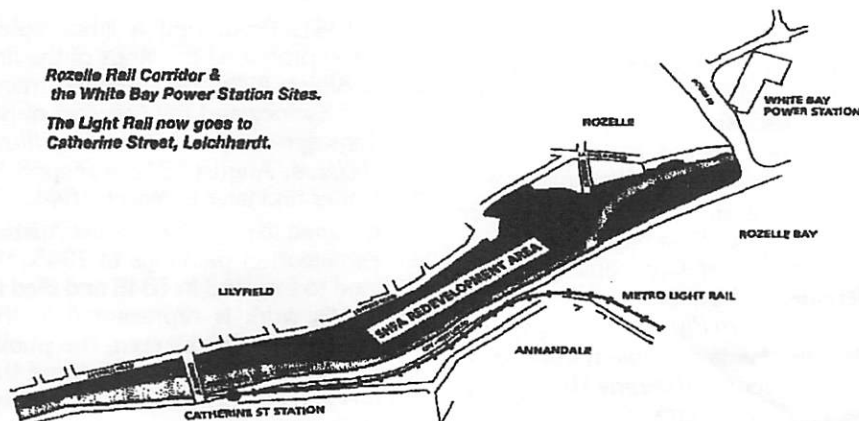
Mark the date in your diary and make the effort to get along to what will be one of the better days of your life. Don't forget to bring a sign or placard showing your family name and the street in which you lived.

In case of inclement weather, the picnic will be held at the Balmain Town Hall.

Enquiries: 9810 1078. 9818 4954. 9713 4486.

Rozelle Rail Corridor & the White Bay Power Station Sites.

The Light Rail now goes to Catherine Street, Leichhardt.



## New Acquisitions

**The History Committee have received two exciting collections 'On Loan' to the Balmain Association.**

On behalf of the Friends of Cockatoo Island, the well-known artist and member of the Association, Frank Marjason donated a painting. Another supporter of the Friends, John Williams, donated an c1850 engraving of Cockatoo Island by John S Prout.

The second collection is of eleven photographs of the architect, Edmund Thomas Blacket and family. Visitors to the former Manor House Restaurant at 393 Darling Street, Balmain may have noticed the photographs in the Bar area.

The present owner Marcus Tilbrook of Silverbrook Research is mindful of the history of the 1870 building and the association with Edmund Blacket but wished the collection to be more widely displayed. We are happy to comply. A selection of the photographs and the two Cockatoo Island art work, will be on display in the meeting room at the Watch House.

Edmund Blacket (1817-1883), whose work of nine buildings in Balmain/Rozelle is accredited to Blacket, was, according to Joan Kerr in "Our Great Victorian Architect", probably one of the most prolific and versatile architects Australia has ever known.

His work included hundreds of churches and domestic buildings but also abattoirs and asylums to warehouses and wool stores.

Blacket was born on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1817 in Southwark, England, the seventh child of James Blacket, a prosperous cloth merchant and his wife Margaret. After an education at a Congregational College in Hertfordshire, he worked in his father's London office and at a linen mill in Stokesley, Yorkshire. While living there he designed and built the town clock and the Wesleyan church organ.

Blacket married Sarah Mease in 1842, shortly before the two left England forever, on the *SS Eden*. On arrival in Sydney, the first man-made object he noticed and recorded in his diary, was St James Church spire and then the Governor's mansion. His plans of going on to New Zealand were abandoned as Bishop Broughton was so impressed with Blacket's letters of recommendation that he appointed him Inspector of Schools for the Church of England in the Colony. In 1845 he was the architect



Edmund Blacket

for St Mary's School in Adolphus Street. Two years later, he was Diocesan Architect and also enjoyed a flourishing private practice. Certainly he was

part of the Watch House, five years later. During this period Blacket and his growing family of eight children lived in Glebe.

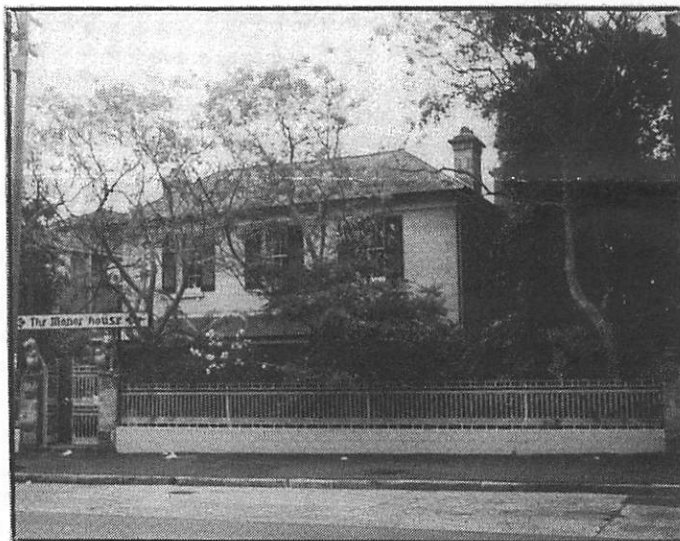
He purchased the land at 393 Darling Street in September 1860 but did not move to Balmain until after Sarah's death in 1869. Edmund T Blacket is listed in the 1871 Sands Directory and resided there for less than five years. The house was designed and built by him as he left it to his two younger daughters, who were unmarried at the time of his will in 1881.

Blacket is next listed in Booth Street in the Sands Directory of 1875 then 1876 to 1882, he was listed in Darvall Street. For many years it was thought that he had built and resided at *Alderley*, which is now the core of the Balmain Hospital. Research has shown that the house was built for Henry Earnshaw Tidswell.

Blacket moved once more to *Roland Villa* in Croydon Street, Petersham where he died on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1883. Sarah and Edmund Blacket were buried at the Balmain Cemetery. Daughter Marian was also buried there in 1909. Blacket designed the headstone when his wife died in 1869. One of the few headstones saved from the demolition of the cemetery when the area became Pioneer Memorial Park, Norton Street, Leichhardt, was removed to the Blacket designed St Stephens Church ground, Newtown.

In addition to the buildings already noted, Blacket's legacy in Balmain includes,

c1844 *Eastcliff*, 11 Pearson Street, c1870 *Woodleigh*, 7 Stack Street, 1876 *Convent of the Immaculate Conception*, Jane Street, now altered and 1874 St Thomas' Church and 1882 Rector, Rozelle.



The Manor House

responsible for St Mary's Church, Balmain East, which was built in 1846. The church was much enlarged in 1859 by William Weaver and William Kemp, but the original Blacket chancel was retained. He was appointed Colonial Architect in 1849 and designed the lower

### John Skinner Prout

John S Prout was born in Plymouth, England in 1806. He was largely a self-trained artist, spending much time in the west of England making topographical views of ancient monuments.

In 1839 he and his family sailed for Sydney on the *Sovereign* to Sydney where his brother Cornelius had been under-sheriff. Prout published a *Journal of a voyage from Plymouth to Sydney*.

His wife, Maria, an able harpist, gave several concerts in the early 1840s at the Royal Victoria Theatre.

By 1841, Prout had a lithographic plant and produced drawings of the fire at the Albion Mills. He sketched many views of Sydney and the first part of his drawings appeared in the *Sydney Illustrated News*, August 1842, a second in November and later in March 1844.

He helped to organise the first Australian exhibition of paintings in 1845. He returned to England in 1848 and died in 1876. His work is represented in the South Kensington museum, the public galleries in Sydney and Hobart and the Mitchell and Dixon Galleries in Sydney.

## Presidents Report

Everyone involved in the Back to Balmain 1999 was disappointed by the awful weather. The 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Balmain Regatta off White Horse, Elkington Park, held the same day was hardly spectacular, as there was not a breath of wind to activate the sails on the competing boats. The Balmain Sailing Club will run the event from 2pm on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October. This year the 12<sup>th</sup> Back to Balmain reunion will also take place on 29<sup>th</sup> October and should we face inclement weather on the day, plan B, has the afternoon activities to be relocated to the Balmain Town Hall. Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October at 8pm at the Town Hall a great 10-piece band will play for a 50-50 dance.

Another important event was the launch in April during Heritage Week of *John Balmain*, by our dedicated historian Peter Reynolds, to celebrate the Balmain Bicentenary. Among the large crowd that visited the Watch House that evening was the Deputy Mayor Chris Kruden, who gave the lively introduction address and several members of the Balmain family who had assisted Peter in his research for this fascinating book. Copies are available at the Watch House. The theme this year, naturally was sport. A very interesting photographic display of the District's sporting heroes and heroines drew crowds of visitors and to continue the theme of the Balmain Bi-centenary, a photographic display of early Balmain was held at the Glass House adjacent to the Town Hall.

Those of you who have been to our Watch House in the last few years will be aware that we have converted the back cell into a history cell where each Saturday a volunteer is available for history enquiries. Bookings for the hire of the building for exhibitions have become so popular that we actually had to make sure we left most of June free to complete some extensive and necessary restoration work. The money raised from the hire of the Watch House is the primary source of income for the maintenance of this historic building and the exhibitors repeatedly express their total satisfaction with the venue.

I am pleased to report that local residents action group and the Association's requests to the Government Transport restored the ferry service to Yurulbin (Long Nose) Park after a break of some six months.

Five of our committee has volunteered as drivers, uniform distribution, sailing and the media. I had the honour of taking a television team from Vancouver around Balmain while they made a

feature to be shown on Canadian Television during TSN's coverage of the Games. The journalists with the team talked to staff and clients at the London, the Sir William Wallace Hotels and of course Dawn's old pub-The River View. They photographed Gladstone Park, Loyalty Square, Town Hall and Fire Station and a line of Harley Davidson's parked along a busy stretch of Darling Street.

Our collaboration with The Northside Storage Tunnel Team is now over as work in the area is almost complete. As a follow on to this Sydney Water contacted me to attend a work shop to discuss the proposals concerning transportation on biosolids and the impact it would have on our area. The latest news to hand on this issue is that Sydney Water has submitted to DJAP a proposed strategy for progressing this procedure.

Please keep up valued support and our Association can look forward to another productive year.

*Ann Bastock*

## Oral History Project

The decision to form the Balmain Association in 1965 to some extent reflects changes in the demographic, industrial, social and political structures of inner western Sydney, and indeed of Australia. Some of those people who were involved in the early days of the Balmain Association might be willing to record their memories and views of those times. This should constitute a useful record of the development of the Association, the suburb and the wider context of which suburban change is a part. It will also no doubt unfold many colourful stories! It is intended to interview on the period 1965-70 (mainly in the interests of limitation, but also because this is a period of great change); however, if interview subjects have things to say applying outside this period, they will, of course have opportunity to voice them.

Contact: Gail Abbott 9810 4278.

The Annual General Meeting on 6 September 2000 elected the following:

PRESIDENT: Ann Bastock  
VICE-PRESIDENT: Rita Ellis  
SECRETARY: Jeremy Arnott  
TREASURER: Val Hamey  
PUBLIC OFFICER: Bob Ellis

Other committee members: Joyce Landau, Yvonne Davidson, June Lunsman, Kathleen Hamey and Stephen South.  
Watch House Hire: Stephen South.

## Treasurer's Report for year ending 30 June 2000

| Income          |          | Expenditure        |          |
|-----------------|----------|--------------------|----------|
| Donations       | 334.50   | Catering           | 159.10   |
| Grant (Council) | 1000.00  | Gifts              | 20.00    |
| Memberships     | 2019.00  | Subscriptions      | 104.10   |
| Book Sales      | 5627.00  | Publishing         | 2034.25  |
| Photos          | 272.50   | Photo Prints       | 221.00   |
| WH Rent         | 5395.00  | WH repairs         | 20525.00 |
| Commission      | 15139.45 | Conservation       | 558.00   |
| Research fee    | 696.00   | Office supplies    | 113.85   |
| Tours           | 410.00   | Transport          | 200.00   |
| Walks           | 774.00   | Household supplies | 391.45   |
| Interest        | 544.82   | Bank Charges       | 10.00    |
| Total           | 32212.27 | Insurance          | 199.95   |
| Surplus         | 3022.05  | Miscellaneous      | 156.25   |
|                 |          | Microfiche         | 400.00   |
|                 |          | Printing           | 1448.76  |
|                 |          | Postage            | 315.32   |
|                 |          | Tax                | 42.43    |
| Cheque Account  | 7193.05  | Telephone          | 82.21    |
| Term Account    | 14000.00 | Water              | 219.10   |
| Petty Cash      | 8.70     | Electricity        | 486.00   |
| Other assets    | 71.80    | Cleaning           | 1000.00  |
| Total           | 21201.75 | Total              | 29190.22 |

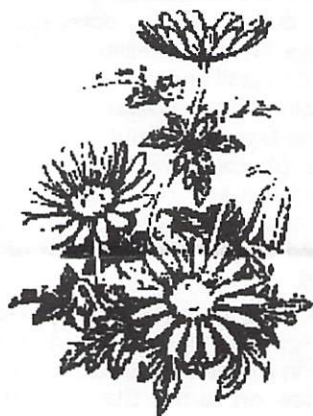
# In Your Garden

## October Notes

Mid-spring sees lovely colours all around the garden with azaleas, rhododendrons, flowering fruits, callistemons, weigalas and many other plants in bloom. Ornamental fruit trees, still at a manageable size, need a trim when their flowering has finished. Most evergreen plants can be planted. Choose one or two that produce perfumed flowers, such as boronia megastigma and daphne odora. Do not lift the spring-flowering bulbs until their foliage dies off.

Lawns grow quickly now so mow regularly. Be sure to water well after fertiliser has been applied. Using an all-purpose garden fertiliser, give a feeding to roses, fuchsias, hydrangeas, daphne and tub plants.

In the next few weeks, annual seedlings will be available. Look for zinnia, petunia, aster, marigold and helichrysum. Dahlia tubers can be planted during late spring. In November, when the evenings are longer, quite a few garden can be



done at that time of the day. Watering and the preservation of moisture in the soil are important for a few months so use any available compost as mulch. If rose blooms aren't cut for a vase, remove the spent flower heads. If chrysanthemum bushes are becoming leggy, cut them back to about half their growth.

Now is the time to repot those house and porch plants as well as basket plants which can be placed in new soil after they flower.

Bonnie Davidson

## What's On

### Watch House Exhibitions

- An Artist Spectrum  
Pierette Rootle 13-15 Oct
- Judy Brownlie 21-29 Oct
- Kings Cross, Nado Milat  
4-5 Nov
- Watercolour 2000 18-19 Nov
- Louise Beck 24-26 Nov  
Olson canvas
- Focal Point 2-10 Dec  
Rozelle Photo Workshop
- Realism 16-17 Dec  
Natalie Barlow
- In the Spirit of Yesteryears  
Chris Vella, Roger Janes &  
Ann Garbutt 10-11 Feb
- Arty Ms 2001 Odyssey  
17-25 Feb
- Father & Daughter 3-11 Mar

Printed by Snap Print, Balmain. ©Not to be reproduced without authorisation.



the balmain  
association  
incorporated  
news sheet

The Peninsula  
**OBSERVER**

Registered Publication PP225832/00001

If undelivered return to:

The Balmain Association Inc  
PO Box 57  
Balmain 2041

Miss Theresa L Hayward  
61 Louisa Road  
Birchgrove NSW 2041  
2001/12

**SURFACE  
MAIL**

**Postage  
Paid  
Australia**

*This, hope to see you at the 35th Anniversary, Watch House,  
Saturday 7th October, 6-8pm*  
H

### 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 and keep a permanent collec-  
tion 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 98184954.  
Email: [valham@value.com.au](mailto:valham@value.com.au).  
Our Web site:  
[http://member.rivernet.com.au  
/swsouth/watchhouse.htm](http://member.rivernet.com.au/swsouth/watchhouse.htm)

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 or on email  
[swsouth@rivernet.com.au](mailto:swsouth@rivernet.com.au).

Annual subscriptions:  
Household \$16, Concession \$7,  
Organisations \$21.