



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

Vol 37 No 1 Issue 275

Founded November 1965

February 2002

Town Plan Review

The Leichhardt Council recently received recommendations from a review of residential density controls from consultants, Planning Matters Pty Ltd and they were discussed at the January meeting of the Planning Committee.

Their findings showed that local residents were predominantly employed in retail, commercial, high-tech industrial and health sectors.

The options require the role of neighbourhood centres, a review of business zonings, protection of traditional industrial areas, mix use zones for areas where retail and commercial development dominate, the rezoning of industrial areas where residential has been approved to a Business zone, review floor space ratio controls to encourage redevelopment in main road locations and use incentives to encourage employment generation.

An assessment of existing FSRs showed only 20% compliance. Accurate FSRs are rarely known or calculated properly. Numerous approvals were given over the FSR standard – up to 1.77:1. Most existing landscaped areas were below LEP standard – only 25% complied. Existing lot sizes often below the LEP standard – 41% total sample ranging from 32% in Balmain to 67% in Glebe, but appears not to be a big issue in development control and more likely to affect tenure than density.

The built form controls within the DCP (such as wall heights, roof forms and heights, street setbacks) are most relied on and are most effective in determining outcomes of DAs.

The consultants key recommendations are:- Delete concept of density and FSR controls from LEP 2000. Move landscaped area control to DCP and add provisions to specify objectives of control and criteria on which can be appropriately varied. Add provision to DCP to specify objectives of landscaped area control. Move minimum lot size control to DCP but add provisions to specify objectives of control and criteria on which can be appropriately varied. Pursue issues and concepts in relation to higher densities opportunities in form of sub-precinct studies.

Ampol Complex

A book *Show me a Mountain* by Colin Simpson published in 1961 celebrating Ampol's 25th Anniversary contains some interesting facts to the former industrial site in Buchanan Street Rozelle, now a new resident and commercial complex.

The following is taken directly from the book. 'There is a rocky piece of foreshore at Balmain which, as anyone who knows Sydney is aware, is not much more than a stone's throw across Darling Harbour, which is just downhill from the centre of the city. This scarp of sandstone was called Bald Rock. Bald it was and strewn with rubbish and it was so belligerently rocky that it had daunted anyone who had thought of making use of it. But near by was Bald Rock Wharf, fronted on deep water. And there it was, a four and a half acre site, seemingly all rock; but it was such centrally situated rock that the founder of Ampol, William G Walkley, decided in 1936 to take an option on it, through the vendor's agents, Richardson and Wrench, for \$35,000.

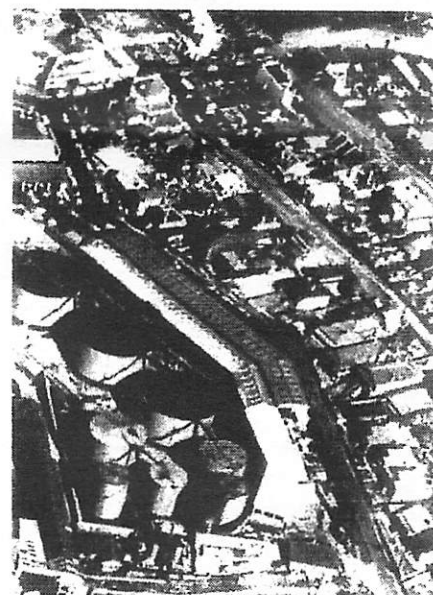
As soon as there was \$200,000 capital in hand, the contract was given to the Cockatoo Docks and Engineering Company for the construction of 3 one million-gallon tanks and another to hold a half-million gallons. The contract price was \$30,160 - which today (1961) would not build one million-gallon tank.

The work was not carried out without fatalities. One of the contractor's men was electrocuted, another died of heart failure and a blasting operation sent a hundredweight of rock hurling right across Buchanan Street and through the roof of Overall's Foundry, where it struck and killed a furnace man. Damage was also done by that blast to the office of a timber merchant, who took out a court injunction that stopped all blasting-until its continuance was agreed to with charges of reduced size and greater use of steel mats to control flying rock. The move from Sirius House to Balmain was made at the end of September 1937.'

In 1958, Walkley amalgamated with Caltex to form a company to build a refinery at Kurnell. At the time of writing

the book on 1961 this was still on the drawing board. It was built on 160 acres and after its completion all bulk petrol was delivered from there. The tanks at Balmain still held petrol, which was pumped, into drums and there was also power kerosene, lubricating oil and other drum products kept at Balmain but there were still some tankers operating out of Balmain. Sometime in the late 1970s, Ampol built themselves a new Head Office at North Sydney and the NSW Office only operated out of Balmain. In the early 1980s the whole Company left Balmain and a new NSW Office was established at Ermington. For many years Balmain was left vacant with only a caretaker/gatekeeper left in charge. In order to sell the land for development purposes, the entire area had to be dug down deeply, in some cases over 20 feet and all of the soil sterilised. For many years prior to the Company leaving the premises, it had been the common practice for the yard to be hosed down regularly with all the oil spillage's and other contaminates washed into the storm water channels and consequently into the ocean. The trucks with their greasy surface residue were always cleaned in the yard. At the time this was common practice in all industries and any thoughts of pollution never occurred to anyone.

Continued inside



Part of former Ampol in Rozelle

Leichhardt Local History Group

You are invited to the launch by Jack Munday AO of the Leichhardt Local History Group on Friday 15th February 2002 at 6 pm Balmain Town Hall Meeting Room. Light refreshments will be served. RSVP: Friday 8th February 2002. phone 9810 6885.

The aims of the group are:-

- * To promote local history activities through the Leichhardt LGA.
- * To assist in raising funds for local history and resources.
- * To act as advocates for increased awareness of local history in the Leichhardt LGA.
- * To offer assistance to the community.
- * To facilitate networking and liaison between local history groups in the Leichhardt LGA.

Subscription Rates: Individual \$20. Household \$30. Pensioner/Student \$10. Institutions \$50. Please send payment to Treasurer. 86 Allen Street Leichhardt 2040.

Farewell

A reception for the Rev John Cashman and his wife, Robyn, will be held after the service on Sunday 17 February 2002. The Reverend began his Ministry at the parish of St Marys Anglican Church, Balmain, in January 1978, one of the longest serving ministers of the church. Only the Rev Merryn Archdale served longer by one year, 1882 - 1907.

The first service in the Edmund Blakett designed building was in 1846. By 1856 the church was no longer big enough so a new St Marys was opened on Christmas Day 1859. Only the Blakett Chancel remains. The original pews have now been rearranged and the area behind them opened for Sunday afternoon recitals that have become a feature.

Many changes have taken place in Balmain during the Cashman years. Social upheaval from industry moving out and with professional families discovering the peninsula sending property values soaring. The Rev Cashman, supported by the Ladies Guild, worked on community concerns of particularly the teen-age group and in later years supported the reconciliation of Aboriginal people. Over years the ministry from time to time amalgamated with St Thomas Church, Rozelle, and discussions are once again taking place with the neighbouring parish.

John and Robyn are retiring to Fernhill, South Coast. Our very best wishes go with them.

Soot Blackens Balmain

The Link 24 September 1969

Balmain people were 'hopping mad' at a repetition of the 22nd August incident in which a ship berthed at the White Bay container terminal, showered the district with oily soot, reported much worse than on the first occasion. The two occurrences are thought by some to be due to mechanical fault, now believed to have been corrected.

One commentator said the incidents could have something to do with the fact that both ships were on their maiden voyages. This comment proved correct, as it was the new ANL ship, the oil-turbine Australian Endeavour, which caused the trouble. The ship was berthed at White Bay last week on its maiden voyage from Europe.

Residents said that the black carbon deposit from the ship's funnel continued for about an hour which descended over their homes that settled in layers almost an inch thick and even went under the doors.

The soot went as far afield as Mort Bay, where some local resident thought it had come from the other ANL ship berthed there-the Australian Enterprise, which was warming up its engines prior to sailing that day. The Mort Bay terminal officials said the Enterprise was a diesel-engine vessel and that no deposit had emerged from its funnel.

The incident caused a temporary work stoppage at a Darling Street clothing factory, Freedom Pty. Ltd. The 28 women employees said they could not stand the oil soot entering the premises and left. The factory manager, Mr R Lloyd said when he opened the front door to enter the premises the next morning he saw a layer of oily soot on the floor. It took about 20 minutes for each girl to clean her machine sufficiently to start work, but later they said

they could not stand the soot getting into their hair and eyes and falling down the backs of their necks.

"It was the type of soot that forms a smear and penetrates the skin, leaving a black mark almost impossible to wash off" said Mr Lloyd. 'They stopped work but when they returned next morning, small particles of soot were still falling, the wind blowing them through the ventilators'.

Mr Lloyd said it cost \$824 to clean the soot out of the factory. In addition a considerable amount of white work was ruined and the total damage would run into a couple of thousand dollars. Residents around here have had enough. It's appalling to think that in this modern age we can't have a ship enter port without showering the district with soot. I have received an invitation from the Lord Mayor of Grafton suggesting that our factory should move to Grafton where we wouldn't have such problems.

Thirty three years later we are hopping mad at the horrendous noise pollu-



White Bay Terminal under construction 1964

tion emanating from the White Bay Terminal. Long term residents in this severely affected area will testify that the noise levels have continued to rise since P & O Ports gained the lease several years ago. Sydney Ports, who make millions per annum from the lease, refuse the residents' request for a curfew and flatly reject financial compensation for residents to install insulation.

The Minister for Urban Affairs & Planning, Dr Refshauge, has taken the licence to monitor noise from the Environmental Protection Authority and given it to Sydney Ports, so there is no doubt about its power. He has also approved the Master Plan for White Bay and Glebe Island Ports that will result in a huge increase in activity.

In the 1900s the area became industrial as well as residential but no one could have imagined the noise that container handling could generate.

Ann Bastok

Continued from front page:

Ted and Pam McGlenn of Budgewoi wrights. Ted worked for Ampol for 43 years where his work mate for 20 years was Wal Gourlie. The Association published Wal's memories in Gourlie's Corner. Ted McGlenn's family has had a long association with the Balmain district and many members of both his mother's, nee Saillards and father's family lived and worked locally.

Macquarie Mausoleum Isle of Mull, Scotland

by Jan Larsen

Two chance meetings in 2001 and the opportunity to visit Scotland in September has prompted me to write about my visit to the Macquarie Mausoleum on the Isle of Mull – an experience I would recommend to anyone with a love of Australian history and a particular interest in the career of the first military and fifth Governor of New South Wales, Lachlan Macquarie (1810-1821). He is not so well known in his land of birth but the locals on Mull are beginning to recognise him as the stream of Australian pilgrims to his Mausoleum is growing.

Firstly, Robin Walsh, enthusiastic curator of The Lachlan Macquarie Room at Macquarie University library in North Ryde told me in June of the mausoleum and sparked my interest to visit it as part of a trip to Scotland with my husband in September. Then a conversation with Kath Hamey in November at the Watch House about my visit led to this article.

After my husband's conference in Glasgow on September 11th, we escaped to the peace of the Scottish Highlands for just a few days with a night on Mull. We took the ferry early in the morning from Oban to Craignure and drove north to Salen where we had decided to stay.

We did not have time to go to other parts of Mull on our brief visit but focussed happily on our "Macquarie pilgrimage". We had such a glorious sparkling sunny day while most of the rest of the British Isles was subjected to cold rainy weather! We headed first to the Mausoleum just a few minutes by car west of Salen and with no-one else in sight, turned down the tree-lined road to the Mausoleum marked by the sign

from the National Trust of Australia past the Gruline Home Farm. There in the middle of a small grassed area surrounded by a stone wall, was the Mausoleum. It is located near the family's original Gruline House (unfortunately not open for visitors) in what was once part of Macquarie's "Jarvisfield Estate" that totalled over 21,000 acres by about 1817. He had initially purchased some 10,000 acres in the area in 1804 with funds inherited from his first wife, Jane Jarvis and added to it later. Unfortunately he did not get to spend much time there after his return from Australia before his death in London on 1st July 1824 and was buried on the island on 29th July 1824 after a long journey by land and sea.

To me it was very moving to spend time there reading the inscriptions especially with no other tourists around. Lachlan together with his second wife Elizabeth (died 1835) and their children baby Jane (died 1808) and son Lachlan (died 1845) are all buried in the mausoleum. Robin Walsh tells me that there are errors in connection with the date of Elizabeth's death – and the incorrect spelling of her name as Elisabeth.

The long inscription extolling the virtues of Lachlan Macquarie was especially moving including descriptions such as "throughout the period of 47 years spent in the public service (he) was uniformly characterised by animated zeal for his profession, active benevolence, and generosity which knew no bounds". "His services (as Governor of New South Wales) have justly attached a lasting honour to his name" ... and... "Rendered him truly deserving of the appellation by which he has been distinguished, The FATHER of AUSTRALIA".

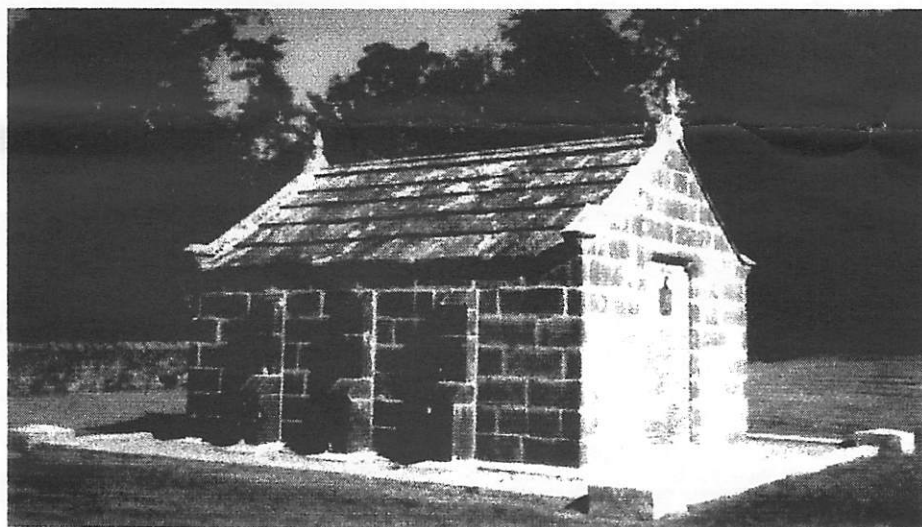
Lady Yarborough gave the land on which the tomb is situated to the people

of New South Wales in 1948. The National Trust NSW is responsible for the maintenance of the tomb, which is overseen by the National Trust for Scotland. Recently, the inscriptions on the red granite and marble panels have been restored, the roof repaired and the access road improved.

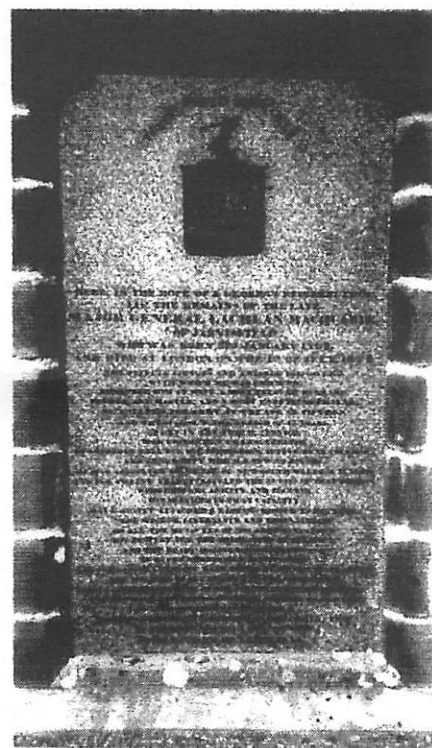
We headed on to the Ulva ferry and a few minutes later parked the car to walk past lots of black faced sheep to hail the small ferry 200 metres across the water by a quaint signalling system. Robin Walsh had recommended a visit to the museum at the Ulva Boathouse as well as the nearby Crofters Cottage – both have a quite a bit of information on the history of Ulva and maps of walks. We did not have time to walk to Ornaig where our Macquarie is reported to have been born and were happy to sit in the glorious sunshine near the boathouse and enjoy the scenery and some refreshments. The Boathouse has sandwiches and drinks and oysters in season. The proprietor lent me a file of letters between Lachlan and his brother Charles to read while we were sitting in the sunshine.

Altogether a wonderful little visit and highly recommended to Aussies!

More Information: The Macquarie University Library website has more details of the tomb and inscriptions – www.lib.mq.edu.au/lmr/tomb



Macquarie Mausoleum on Isle of Mull



Tomb inscription

In Your Garden **February Humidity**

As this is a very humid month, make sure to watch out for fungus diseases. In warm areas some tender plants, especially those newly planted, may need extra protection from the strong sun.

Avoid major plantings (trees and shrubs) until the weather cools. Prolong flowers on annuals with light trimming and feeding with a soluble fertiliser. Roses need a light feed of Rose Food to encourage new growth. Water well before and after feeding.

Organise your bulbs during February or buy them now but do not plant in Sydney areas until March, when the



weather is little cooler. Prepare your soil with a good dig and some fertiliser. Plants in pots should be given controlled release fertiliser granules. Mulch the surface with compost or peat moss. Plants in large tubs n be repotted every five years while those in smaller pots up to 30 cm diameter require potting every two years.

Baskets dry out readily and need constant monitoring for moisture content. For permanent baskets you will not lose many plants in the summer heat if you set up a drip irrigation system and you will save time and money.

Insects breed prolifically this month. Keep a watch for caterpillars, citreous bugs, aphids and lawn grubs

Bonnie Davidson

What's On

Watch HouseExhibitions

- Annette Dorahy 2-3 Feb
- Paintings of the Kimberleys Janet Carter 9-10 March
- Paintings, Jewellery & soft furnishings 16-24 March Sandra Berzins
- Paintings 28 Mar-2 April Rowan Fotheringham
- Paintings 6-14 April Simon Meilak
- Heritage Week 20-27 April
- Ceramics 4-5 May
- Student Art Group 18-19 May
- HartStart Studio 25-26 May
- Water Colours & Silks 1-2 June

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Registered Publication PP225832/00001
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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 and 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 98184954. Email: hamey@netpro.net.au. Our Web site: www.balmainassociation.homestead.com

Interested artists, potters, sculptors, etc who would like to organise an exhibition in the Watch House are urged to contact John Sullivan on 9555 1026 or fax 9810 6774

Annual subscriptions:
Household \$20, Concession \$10,
Organisations \$30.