



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

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Water Police

In 1789, a year after the colony of New South Wales had been founded, Governor Phillip selected twelve well behaved convicts as his peace keeping force in the colony and established a 'Row Boat Guard' to 'patrol the harbour and foreshores of Sydney Cove, to detect smuggling and to prevent the passing of letters between convicts and crews of sailing ships lying at anchor.'

In 1830 following a number of incidents in the Parramatta River, Governor Darling directed a separate Water Police, operating under the head of the Sydney Police to be established at Long Nose Point. The station consisted of one six-oared whale boat manned by 8 boatmen, a Conductor who was sworn as a constable, 2 free men and 5 convicts.

By 1838 the Water Police Station had been moved to Goat Island. An item in the SMH June 1837 'A station for the water police is to be formed on a peninsula point that runs from the eastern end of the island and a gang of men are employed cutting a sort of canal across the isthmus to prevent communication between the magazine and the police station.' The Goat Island Station closed in 1862. The original sandstone build-

1920s Pwater Police

ing was in ruins for many years but has now been restored and is clearly seen on the eastern point of the island.

The Water Police used Cadman's Cottage at The Rocks between 1846 to 1863 as a court and clearing house with jail cells and the lower floor. John Cadman was appointed Superintendent of Government Boats in 1827 and lived at the cottage for 29 years. The cottage today is the oldest surviving residential building in Sydney constructed in 1816.

Once more the Water Police were relocated to an old shipyard docks at Dawes Point where they remained until 1886. The year 1865 coincided with the advent of steam and combustion engines and two steam launches, the *Biloela* and *The Argus*, the fastest vessels on Sydney Harbour, were used by the Police for thirty years, when replaced by motor craft.

The Police launch *Osiris* was constructed during 1930 and entered into Police service about 1938 but was not bought by the Department until 1951. Early in 1938, three ships from the American Navy visited Sydney Harbour. The visit concluded on 13th February and a large spectator fleet had gathered to farewell the *Louisville* and her two accompanying US ships. The Police launches

Cambria and *Osiris* were detailed for escort and the Police Band was playing on the deck of the *Cambria*.

One vessel of the spectator fleet the *Rodney*, was carrying 100 passengers. As the vessel turned to gain a better view of the departing ships, the passengers all rushed to one side, so the ship overturned. The Police Band immediately went into action, along with the crews of the Police launches. Passengers were taken from the water and given resuscitation by the Water Police. The US ship *Louisville* also gave help. As a result of the disaster 19 passengers of the *Rodney* were drowned.

From 1986 the Water Police have been located at Wharf 25, Harris Street Pyrmont and will locate to Cameron's Cove, Balmain. Building preparation has begun on the site and the Department of Public Works have cleared the overgrown rear hill section for landscaping. A sandstone cave has been revealed once more.

Water Police Stations are also at Coffs Harbour, Nelson Bay, Newcastle, Broken Bay, Botany Bay and Port Kembla.

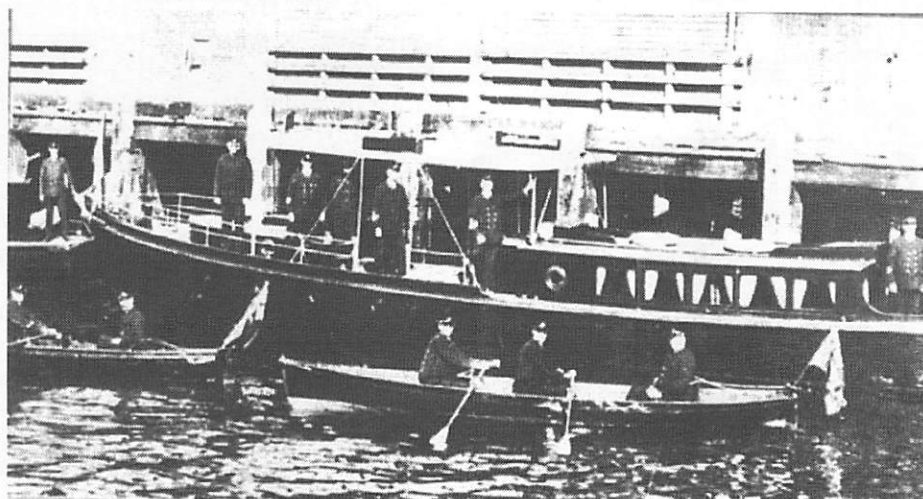
Thanks to Sgt Jeff Olsen, Water Police

Great moments in science

New Scientist has called Karl Kruszelnicki 'the prince of the popularisation of science in Australia'. He is the Julius Summer Miller Fellow at the University of Sydney. He has qualifications in science, maths, engineering and medicine, spreads the Word of Science on radio, TV and the Net, as well as through his books.

The Friends of Balmain Library invite you to the Balmain Town Hall for a talk by Dr Karl Kruszelnicki, 370 Darling Street,

Entry \$20. Con. \$15. Children \$10. Friday 21st February 2003 from 7.30pm. Drinks and light supper included.



Ballast Point Bill

The State Government will pay at least \$24.5 million in compensation for its acquisition of Ballast Point for a harbour park. The exact amount will depend on the Land and Environment Court, after developers, McRoss, rejected an offer of \$10.1 million - its share of the compensation based on the Valuer-General's assessment of the worth of the land. McRoss will be forwarded 90 per cent of the compensation offer in line with statutory requirements, with the balance to be determined in court. Caltex have accepted the Valuer General's figure of \$14.4 million as its share, and has agreed to clean up the site as soon as possible.

Following a long campaign by residents and several prominent figures, notably, former minister, Tom Uren, and former prime minister, Paul Keating, to return the former Caltex refuelling depot site to public ownership the State Government compulsorily acquired the 2.6-hectare site in September.

We are surprised at the size of the compensation considering that the only expense incurred by McRoss has been legal and design costs and they never actually acquired the site.

The chairman of the Ballast Point campaign committee, Roger Parkes, said that the site had always been zoned for industrial use by Leichhardt Council and that Lang Walker, which owns McRoss, had taken "a gamble" on a rezoning when he acquired an option on the site in the early 1990s.

It is understood McRoss's appeal is based on a dispute over the zoning of the land when the Valuer-General assessed the developer's compensation.



Ballast Point 1874 Holtermann Collection

It is now owned by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority on behalf of the people of NSW. It will now be developed as a public park. A small area would be set aside for maritime refuelling to help maintain Sydney as a working harbour.

Archives Additions

The Association received two donations to the archives in December 2002.

Archivist and local resident Judy Newton on behalf of Unilever, has donated archival material relating to Lever Bros & Kitchen, Balmain. The Unilever archives will be closed and the Association is most appreciative to receive such treasures.

A list of apprenticeship indenture names and some indenture papers. One name is Harry W Wran, Letterpress Printer 1917. Photographs, booklets, etc. and a boxed tooled leather bound Souvenir Address given to Joseph Meek, managing director: *Sir, We, the Sydney Employees of Lever Brothers Limited and Levers Pacific Plantations Limited, give you and Mrs Meek a hearty welcome back to your adopted country from this your second trip round the World and ask you to accept this Souvenir Address as an expression*

of our sincere congratulations on your safe return. A colour copy of another Address, given to J M Meek, Esq. on his retirement on 30th June 1924 from Lever Brothers after 22 years as managing director.

The second donation was by Mr David G Laws of Florida, USA, via his Sydney cousin Douglas Laws, who presented the result of 18 years family research relating to his great-grandfather Jacob Garrard. This is described elsewhere.



Heritage—Look Down

The civic surface beneath your feet is a repository of heritage, history and the here and now. Heritage is conserved in the durable iron and concrete lids that punctuate the pavement and roadway, in manhole covers, iron covers and metal plate attachments of a long gone veranda structure. Committed spotters can study an archive of public utilities and their predecessors, such as PMG and Telecom, Commonwealth Cables, HP Gas, Gas, SV, S, MWS&DB (Metropolitan Water Sewerage & Drainage Board), DMR, Tri Mar Registered design. Some W (water) signs stand alone while one has the name Durhams Foundry and another H J Bourne Balmain. The most interesting are the Sate Survey Points, each with a number.

Unofficial scribes in wet concrete are rarely organised. Their inscriptions are impetuous acts of opportunism by merely attempting to immortalise their names, initials, dates or symbols. There are roughly painted yellow signs LMC on footpaths and roads denoting forthcoming repairs and improved access on gutters for children's carriage and sign 'do not park here' in a driveway denoting a residents anguish.

Chalk messages inviting locals to attend a Christmas street party and children's drawings with hopscotch drawn out on the footpath. These are reminiscent of the word Eternity that haunted the City streets when Arthur Stace wrote in chalk, his message in the cover of darkness each night. Stace was born in Redfern but his parents moved soon after to 5 Moore Lane, Rozelle where he resided until his 12th year.

Until recently you could decipher stencilled signs of 'Up the Tigers' and tiger paws could readily be found but these have faded away like the Balmain Tigers League of old. The latest stencil is Down with Bush a comment on current issues.

The pavement is a complex document, crowded with information about social relations and cultural practices. Other spotters could observe many more civic billboards within our municipal boarder. We would be pleased to compare.

Jacob Garrard

Mr David G Laws of Florida, USA, via his Sydney cousin Douglas Laws, has presented the Association with the result of 18 years family research relating to his great-grandfather Jacob Garrard. Mr D G Laws wrote: I believe the Balmain Association will be interested in this work on Jacob Garrard (1846-1931). Garrard lived in Balmain from 1867 to 1894; was an Alderman on the Balmain Council from 1879 to 1889; and was MLA representing the Balmain District from 1880 to 1891. He was a prominent union, political and business figure in the Colony of New South Wales but has been largely overlooked by historians. This work is an effort by Graham Wilson, a member of the history faculty of the University of New England prior to retirement and myself, to chronicle Garrard's career and assess his impact on life in the Colony.

Garrard migrated from England and settled in Balmain in 1867 after 7 years in New Zealand.

He worked as a fitter at Mort's Dock and became leader of the Eight Hour Conference of the Iron Trades which secured an 8 hour day for iron workers. A leader in the 1870s movement to have labour interests directly represented in parliament he became the second working class person, after Angus Cameron, to be elected to

the NSW Legislative Assembly. Working in his day job at Mort's Dock he attended Parliament after work.

He was the first from a working class background to become a Minister of the Crown for Works 1885-1886; for Public Instruction 1894-1898; for Labour and Industry 1895-1898. Responsible for key pro-labour legislation 1881 Trades Union Bill; 1882 and 1886 Employers' Liability Acts; 1896 Factories and Shop Acts; 1885 Act declaring Eight Hours day public holiday.

While pro-labour he did not join the Labor party because he was a Free Trader and refused to be bound by Caucus decisions. However, he generally supported pro-labour legislation and initiated much of it. He was a supporter of technical education as a mechanism for workers to improve their position and a leading advocate for salaries for parliamentarians.

Balmain Alderman 1879-1889; including a term as Mayor.

MLA for District of Balmain in 1880-1891; for District of Cumberland 1891-1894; District of Sherbrooke 1894-1898. Balmain businessman 1883-1900.

President Metropolitan Board of Water and Sewerage 1889-1904; and Board member 1899-1912.

President Ku-ring-gai Chase Board Trust 1900-1927; Managing Trustee 1902-1927; on Board of trust 1898-1931. Leader in parks movement.

Details of Jacob Garrard's life in Balmain will be continued in the next issue.

Balmain Glasshouse

The June 2002 issue of the Peninsula Observer carried an article on the compiling of a Development Control Plan for the Balmain Town Hall Precinct.

For the past 15 months the Balmain Town Hall Committee and the Rozelle Bay Community Native Nursery, have canvassed the Leichhardt Council for the use of the derelict glasshouse, set in the civic precinct, to be used for the propagation of native plants for the beautification of local parks. The RBCNN plants and nurtures propagation in Leichhardt municipality's parks on a volunteer basis, has outgrown its current igloo. Local flora is more adaptive to drought conditions and requires less water and maintenance.

At the Council's November 2002 meeting, Cr Hall Greenland with support of Mayor Cr Maire Sheehan recommended use of the building to the RBCNN and to report back to Council with costing for the refurbishment.

Quotes are being obtained to make the glasshouse suitable for occupation. Although most of the original glass panels are in place these will have to be replaced with toughened glass under new building codes. The watering system has been discussed with an irrigation firm. Some funds have been pledged but more community fund raising will be required to have this unique glasshouse, operating after years of neglect. Donations, sponsor a pane of glass and information: Beth Buchanan 9660 1404, Kath Hacking 9818 2504, Kathleen Hamey 9818 4954.

A planting plan is being developed "in house", and will be available for community comment prior to the work being undertaken. Tree and shrub plantings will compliment Iloura Reserve (original landscape design by Bruce McKenzie). An angophora, to balance the large fig tree, will be planted. The anchor is part of Sydney's WWII history. It was one of those used to keep the submarine net across the Heads, in place.

Now Peacock Point's beach and water areas are very accessible, and especially suited to young children.

Rita Ellis

Peacock Point

The emergence of a butterfly

The original land grant of 550 acres to Dr William Balmain was acquired by Dr John Gilchrist in 1801, and sub-divided in 1836. The Peacock sub-division, in 1841, was used for maritime related industries such as boat building, coppersmith plumbing for ships, and marine engineering.



Mid-way through last century, a large "Early Morn Soap" sign faced the harbour, near the fig tree. To the west of this sign was a man-made tidal pool, known as "Baulkies".

Last year, with part funding from Planning NSW, Leichhardt Council undertook landscaping works to implement the Peacock Point Masterplan. These works included:

- (1) reconstruction of the existing seawalls;
- (2) construction of a stairway from Edward Street to the waterside area;
- (3) remediation of existing soil;
- (4) construction of sandstone paved paths to provide a waterside promenade;
- (5) minor landscaping (earth shaping, turfing).

In Your Garden

February Gardening

For people living in units and townhouses, making green oases from little spaces may mean that a courtyard or balcony is the only private outdoor space available. Courtyards can be transformed into pretty green extensions of the living space - an outdoor room.

These spaces can be intimate with lattice smothered with vines. One difficulty facing balcony gardeners is exposure to prevailing winds. Even in cool shaded areas wind will quickly dry out pots and baskets. Some form of protection is needed. This could be a reinforced glass

screen that lets in the sunlight without obscuring the view.

The choice of plants is determined by the amount of sun available and that may vary with aspect and neighbouring buildings. Ideally an easterly aspect receiving morning sun would be protected from the fierce afternoon heat. Orange trumpet vine has lovely coral flowers throughout winter. Potat creeper (solarium jasminoides) flowers nearly

all the year with white lacey blossoms. Happy wanderer handerbergia has deep violet blooms in winter. Balconies are ideal for troughs and pots overflowing with petunias, pansies, lobelia, dwarf sweet peas, marigolds, primulas and ivy geraniums.

Bonny Davidson



What's On

At the Watch House

- **Original art works Norman Lindsay, watercolour, oil, pen & ink drawings, prints, Elizabeth Durack, mixed media & drawings, Walangari Karntawarra, aboriginal art. Ilya Volykhine, figurative abstracts 1-9 Feb**
- **Bing Wu 15-23 Feb Paintings**
- **Janis Carter 8-9 Mar Paintings & etchings of Tasmania. Landscapes of the Great South Island**
- **Louella Woodham 15-23 Mar Mixed media**
- **Judy Paddison Pottery & artwork 29-30 Mar**

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The Peninsula
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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 :vhamey@tpg.com.au. Our Web site:: www.balmainassociation.homestead.com

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