

the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

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National Trust Heritage Festival 2003

The theme of this year's Heritage Festival is freshwater – water, waves and wanderings.

The Balmain Association and the Committee of Clontarf Cottage invite you to participate in the events to be held from 5th April to 12th April.

Shipyards of Balmain Photographic Exhibition.

Balmain Watch House. 179 Darling Street.

Photographs from our archives featuring the maritime heritage of the area.

Two model ships will be on display. Saturday 5th & 12th April. 11am to 4pm. Free Admission.

This exhibition will be on display also 19th & 26 April, 3rd May, 12 to 3pm.

ANZAC

The first dawn service to commemorate Anzac Day was held on 25th April 1923 at Albany, WA, by Rev White of St John the Evangelist, the oldest Anglican Church in West Australia. The name of the church is unusual but the foundation stone of another St John the Evangelist Church was laid in 1882 at Birchgrove Road, Balmain.

The following is taken from the Centenary book of the Balmain Church: 'Parish newspapers tell of the frequent farewells that took place from St John's. 255 men had enlisted for the war from the parish and by the time peace was restored 57 had paid the supreme sacrifice. Of those that returned, doubtless, many suffered wounds and the effects of mustard gas until the end of their days.

St John's boys along with those from other parishes in Balmain served in many theatres of the war.

Bay to Bay Walking Tour.

A two hour guided walking tour outlining the history of the former industrial foreshore of Mort Bay and the maritime villas of Snails Bay.

Depart Watch House 5th April 1.30pm. Cost \$10.

Bookings 9818 4954.

White Bay Wanderings.

A two hour guided walking tour featuring the changing waterfront of White Bay.

Depart Clontarf Cottage. 4 Wallace Street. 1pm, 12th April.

Cost \$10 includes afternoon tea. Bookings 9818 4954.

Clontarf Cottage 1844.

Open for inspection 12.30pm to 5pm. 12th April.

View local children's art works on display.

Enquiries: 9712 7474.

*William Gladstone Sommerville, the son of the Town Clerk, served as 4th Engineer of HMAS *Parramatta*. He was a member of the choir and survived the war only to die from disease in 1919.

The parish News of November 1916 records the laying of the Foundation Stone of the Rectory. At the time it was estimated that £1348 would be needed to complete the project and the parish had raised £250 when building commenced. In the early part of 1917, the Rectory was dedicated by Archbishop Wright of Sydney as a memorial to the soldiers who had died in the First World War.

An 1918 honour roll recorded the names of the men from the Parish that had served in the forces was also dedicated by Archbishop Wright. The Tasmanian Oak for the roll was donated by parishioner Mr Chidgey'. *Billy Sommerville was the son of Alexander W Sommerville. Town Clerk and Treasurer who was a Balmain Council Clerk from 1893 to 1935.

Archives

Mrs Judith Ramsay of Chatswood has donated an 1879 spelling book of her great-uncle Francis Lowe who attended the Superior Public School, Balmain. A signed receipt dated 14th January 1889 of £75 for land in Harris Street. A letter dated 22nd April 1887 offering her grandfather, Joseph Lowe, membership of the NSW Naval Volunteer Artillery Brass Band. Invoices dated 1880s for John Lowe & Son, Bricklayers & Contractors. Perrett Street, Balmain. The Lowe family lived at 13 Perrett Street from 1884 to 1909.

Local Celebrations.

On Wednesday 30th April, 6pm to 7.45pm, the Balmain Library and the Friend of the Library will launch an Old Balmain photographic exhibition to celebrate the 25th Birthday of the Library. Speakers are local identity Issy Wyner and Mayor Maire Sheehan with special guest local artist Klin Sullivan. Free at the Library. Bookings: 9367 9211.

The pupils and teachers of Rozelle Public School are planning many events to take place in mid May 2003, to celebrate the School's 125th Birthday. Contact: 9810 2347.

Some years ago the History Committee received a letter from a resident of Newport, South Wales, UK. The contact lived opposite St Woolas Cemetery and had noticed a memorial to William G Sommerville and asked if any relatives still lived in Balmain. A photo of the memorial was received.

*If you are looking for a service records of World War I & II, the Australian War Memorial and the National Archives of Australia can assist.

AWM, GPO 345, Canberra, ACT 2601. www.awm.gov.au.

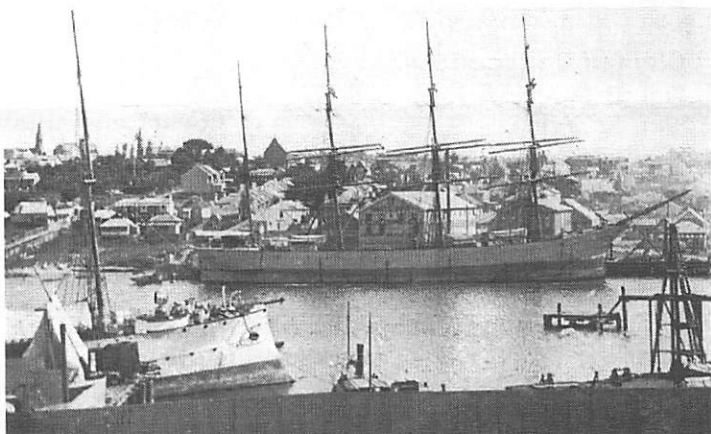
NAA, PO Box 7425, Canberra. ACT 2601. www.naa.gov.au

Shipyards and Repairers

The theme this year for the photographic exhibition at the Watch House during the Heritage Festival is Ship and boat building in Balmain. The following extract is from Gourlie's Corner – Growing up in Balmain with Wal Gourlie.

Many shipyards were located around the shores of Balmain and some played a very important role during World War 11. They were: Mort's Dock & Engineering Co., Poole & Steele, Howard Smith's, White & Co., Adelaide Steamship, Chapman's Dock, Jubilee, S G White, Morrison & Sinclair and Sydney Ferries.

Corvettes and frigates were built for the navy during World War 11 at Cockatool Island, Mort's Dock and Poole & Steele. The corvettes were generally named after Australian towns and the frigates after rivers. Only two corvettes were launched by a male and this honour went to Rev. A G Rix of St John's Church, Birchgrove Rd, Balmain. Rev Rix was an honorary naval chaplain and was present for the launching of 61 ships. Arthur George Rix was minister of St John's Church from 1928 until 2nd April 1953, when he passed away.



Mort's Dock 1905

on 2nd May 1942 by Mrs T Punch. *Latrobe* on 19th June 1942 by Rev A Rix.

Here are some names of some corvettes built in Balmain dockyards.

Poole & Steele: *Katoomba* launched on 6th April 1941 by Mrs H Loyd. *Geraldton* on 16th August 1941 by Mrs W Mc Kell. *Kapunda* on 23rd June 1942 by Mrs M Quirk. *Wallaroo* on 18th February 1942 by Mrs A Poole. *Cootamundra* on 3rd December 1942 by Lady Davidson. *Cowra* on 27th May 1943 by Mrs P Spender. *June* on 16th November 1943 by Mrs J Rosevear. **Mort's Dock.** *Lismore* on 10th August 1940 by Mrs G Mourhead-Gould. *Burnie* on 25th October 1940 by Lady King. *Lithgow* on 21st December 1940 by Mrs W Bennett. *Mildura* on 15th March 1941 by Mrs J Durnford. *Deloraine* on 26th July 1941 by Dame Mary Hughes. *Warnambool* on 8th May 1941 by Mrs E Simpson. *Colac* on 30th August 1941 by Miss M Hady. *Dubbo* on 7th March 1942 by Mrs E Serisier. *Armidale* on 23rd January 1942 by Rev A Rix. *Inverell*

Leichhardt Historical Journal.

Leichhardt Historical Journal No 1 was published in 1971 and in January 2003 No 23 joined the series. All Thanks to the editor Peter Reynolds. Co-editor on the publication and contributor was Max Solling. The 115 page journal is richly illustrated with 58 photographs and maps with index references.

The contents include an item by member Rosaleen Tidswell on her forebear Henry Earnshaw Tidswell and Alderley, Balmain.

Part 1. A Semi-Rural Retreat. Places, People and Society in Glebe 1828- 1861. Michael Foster and Max Solling.

Flood's Estate Section 2. Land and Building Development in Leichhardt South from 1830 –Part 2 .by Peter Reynolds. The area includes sections of Albert, National, Myrtle and Flood Streets

From Cooper Street to Waterview Street, 1835-1970. Part 2 by Peter Reynolds.

Book review by Robert Irving. Canberra Following Griffin by Paul Reid.

Cost \$22 plus & \$5 pp at Watch House or 9818 4954.

A busy time at the Reynolds household. Rebecca Reynolds has produced another publication: the Index of Leichhardt Historical Journal No 14. This index joins previous published Index Nos 1 to 10 and Index 11 to 13. Congratulations Rebecca, only ten LHJ's to go! The index includes list of illustrations and plans.

Enquiries for the Index at: 9 The Avenue, Balmain 2041. Copies of LHJ No 23. Cost \$22 from Watch House. 9818 4954.

In November 2003, the 200 anniversary of the death of Dr William Balmain, it is planned for a publication in the Balmain Historical Monograph series. The history committee is assisting Peter with research and the book will include unpublished information about the children of the union of convict Margaret Dawson and Balmain.

Did you know that John, son of the union of Margaret and William, returned to Sydney and had a medical practice in Elizabeth Street in 1829?

Sharing Sydney Harbour

The NSW Government has a blueprint for the future management of the Harbour and its foreshores. It is exhibited until 4 April as the Draft Sydney Regional Environmental Plan No 32 and specifically addresses a Foreshore and Access Improvement Program and an REP for the Harbour to replace a number of existing planning instruments.

Improvements identified in our area are; New walking tracks along the Iron Cove, a track from Water and Cove Streets along Louisa Road, a

walking and cycleway from Robert Street at Victoria Road to Darling Street Wharf, Walking and cycling tracks through Callan Park.

If heritage items already included in the Leichhardt Town Plan are duplicated in the draft plan they will be deleted. Only items below the mean high water mark will be listed

Although the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act prevents the development of the site the Rozelle Hospital has been designated as a strategic foreshore site in the draft plan. This will have to be deleted before the plan is gazetted.

The Jacob Garrard Family

Jacob Garrard was born 3rd June 1846 in Harwich, Essex, England. His parents were Joseph, a gunner on Coast Guard Tenders and his wife, Martha, nee Piggott.

When Jacob was 13 years old, he left England with his eldest brother, Joseph, who was aged 24 and was a Master Mariner. They went to the South Island on New Zealand where they settled. Over time five more of their siblings also migrated to New Zealand, all settling in the South Island and mainly near Christchurch.

After two years at sea, Jacob was apprenticed as a Fitter. His apprenticeship completed, in February 1867 and aged 20 he arrived in Sydney and settled in Balmain where many of the Colony's largest engineering companies and docks were located.

On 15th April 1870, Jacob married Rebecca, the youngest daughter of John Cavill, a stonemason from Cornwall, England and his wife Mary Ann nee Carveth.

John Cavill had built a very successful Balmain business as a builder and later a real estate developer. Many of Cavill's sandstone buildings are standing in Balmain.

One building still in excellent repair is at 17 Union Street, John Cavill's home where Jacob and Rebecca wedding ceremony was held. Seven children were born to the couple, all in Balmain.

Their first home was in Moore Street, Rozelle. They then moved to Beattie Street, Darling Street, Duke Street, Montague Street, Nicholson Street and in 1890 to Darling Street. No doubt the reason for these moves was their growing family and a preference to live close to Jacob's workplace. Their 1870 and 1871 homes were in lower cost working class areas and Jacob had a long commute to Mort's Dock where he was a fitter.

The 1872 move to Duke Street settled them in a middle class neighbourhood near his work. It was also a convenient location when he became a Member of Parliament for 18 years while working as an



Jacob Garrard



Rebecca Garrard

engineer by day. When parliament was sitting he could row from the wharf at the foot of Duke Street across the harbour to the bottom of King Street, Sydney from where he would walk to Parliament House. At that time there was no parliamentary salary.

By 1883, Jacob had left Mort's Dock and opened a Real Estate Agency. He was residing in Montague Street and so was closer to the Balmain Town Hall. He was very involved in Balmain local government serving the Balmain Council 1879-1886 and was elected Mayor of Balmain in 1885. As well as his parliamentary obligations, also in 1885, he became Minister for Public Works and Railways.

In 1888 the family moved to Nicholson Street, East Balmain and Jacob was now Chairman of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Public Service and the Nicholson Street address was easy walking distance to the Balmain Wharf to the City.

As this new position took most of his time, he employed William J Laws to manage the real estate agency. Finally, Jacob became less active in

Balmain local government from which he was to retire in 1889 and with his wife Rebecca's worsening bronchitis, the family made a final move away from the harbour to Darling Street approximately opposite the Balmain Town Hall.

Jacob was a member of the Darling Street

Methodist Church and was its Sunday School Superintendent for 17 years. The church was at corner Hart Street and Darling Streets now demolished. He gave support for the betterment of public schools in Balmain, the provision of recreational facilities and the founding of the Balmain Cottage Hospital.

After 31 years in Balmain Jacob and Rebecca Garrard moved to Thornleigh then Hornsby in 1894. The loss of his seat in parliament in 1898 gave him time to attend to other affairs of importance in the community. In 1896 he joined the Salvation Army and from 1899 to 1912, served as a member of the Water, Sewerage & Drainage Board of which he was president 1907-1912 and for nearly 30 years he was a member of the Ku-ring-gai Chase Trust of which he was president for many years.

Jacob and Rebecca were passengers on the train which was involved in the Hawkesbury River disaster. It was the first train to run from Hornsby to Brooklyn and on it he was a representative for parliament. Several carriages capsized and they were both removed to safety through a carriage window.

They celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary in 1930. Rebecca died on 19th June 1931 aged 81 and Jacob died in the same year on 5th November. Both were buried in the Methodist section of Gore Hill.

Garrard Lane off Hart Street Balmain was named in his honour in the 1980's subdivision of the former Sydney Slipway & Engineering Co.

Source: Gore Hill Cemetery-Biographies. Jacob Garrard, David Laws & Graham Wilson.

ELECTORS OF Balmain & Leichhardt. Your Old and well-tried Representative Jacob Garrard, Again seeks Re-Election at your hands, and respectfully solicits your Votes and Interest For date of Meetings see daily papers. NOMINATION: Thursday, February 3rd POLLING: Saturday, February 5th.

In Your Garden

Bulbs Add Colour

In autumn, many kinds of brightly coloured spring flowering bulbs may be planted. Some require open sunny positions while others will perform well in shady spots.

Garden borders can look attractive with a combination of colours and textures. Bulbs such as freesias, muscari or grape hyacinths, spring star, anemone, ranunculas and lachenalices give colour displays to your garden. Anemones and ranunculas are best treated as annuals but the others may be left in situ to come up year after year. They need full sun, a well prepared bed with a generous ration of fertiliser added and mulch of compost over the top.

Bulbs for shady spots and under trees are bluebells, muscari, snowdrops and spring star. Daffodils planted closely in clumps are very

effective when surrounded by primulas, pansies or violas.

Flowering bulbs are rarely attacked by insect pests and diseases and grow very well in any good soil. When the flower buds appear, feed them Thrive soluble fertiliser to help blooms on good long stems.

Flowering bulbs give good value for money as many live on and multiply from year to year.

Bonnie Davidson



What's On

Watch House Exhibitions

- **Heritage Month April**
Photographs - Shipyards of Balmain. Ship Models

Art Exhibitions

- **Alan Sullivan May 10-11**
Artworks
- **Intertwining May 17-25**
Soft goods & fabrics
- **Ann Dorahy May 31-June 1**
Student paintings
- **Rozelle Photo Workshop**
Photographs June 7-8
- **Elsie McEwen**
Artworks June 14-15
- **Candice Williams**
Artworks June 21-22
- **Jan Melville June 28-29**
Artworks

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The Peninsula
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Dr Peter Reynolds
9 The Avenue
Balmain East NSW 2041
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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 :vhamey@tpg.com.au.
Our Web site: :
www.balmainassociation.homestead.com

Annual subscriptions:
Household \$20. Concession \$10
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