



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

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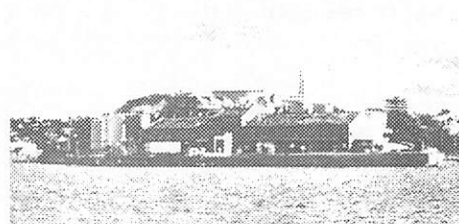
August 2003

Ballast Point Vision

The Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority has invited the community to create a vision for Ballast Point. This will be developed with key principles from workshops to establish the design parameters of the park. SHFA is committed to involving the community and hopes to present a number of draft concepts in the last quarter of 2003. In June a series of site tours were held

and 166 completed questionnaires produced a wish list of desirable features. Trees, gardens, vegetation and open spaces featured prominently in responses, 91percent of which came from people living in Birchgrove and Balmain. Seats, picnic areas and barbecues were also suggested.

On Sunday 20 July representatives of local organisation were guests of the SHFA on a tour, by bus and ferry, of Sydney Harbour to study and

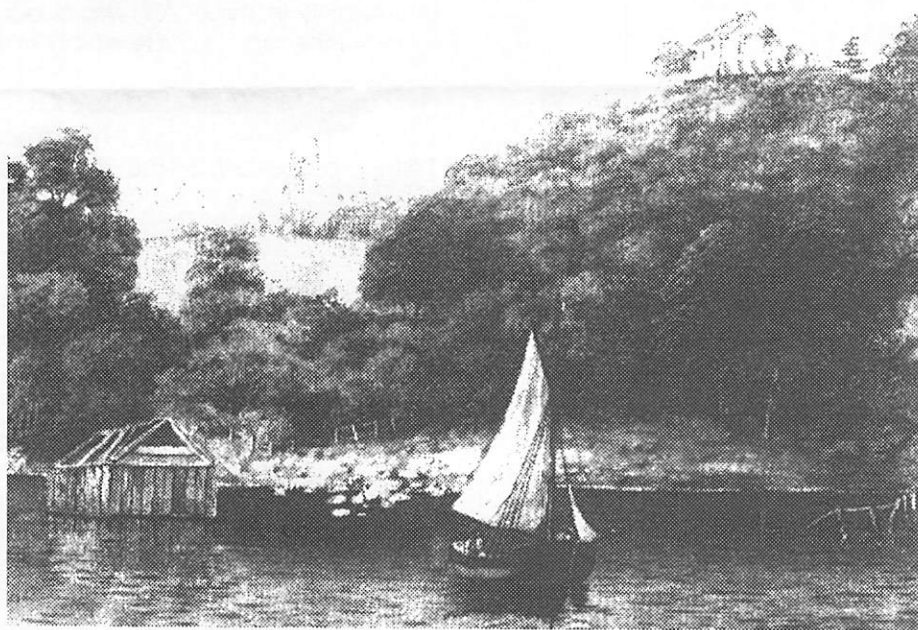


Ballast Point, 2003. Photo J Lunsman

analyse their size, uses, aspect, views, access, ecology and history to reveal how and why they had developed in their current form. Most interest was shown in those parks that had a similar size and aspect to Ballast Point such as Little Manly Point, Cremorne Point, Sawmillers Reserve and Berry Island. There is a marked difference between Little Manly Point, with its asphalted levels, and the bush tracks of Berry Island.

At the workshop, our representatives will be stressing the integration of Ballast Point and Mort Bay. Although parking is necessary it should not intrude on the landscape. It is possible that the lower level accessing from Yeend Street would accommodate the majority of vehicles with minimum parking at the Ballast Point Road entrance.

Comments or questions about the transformation of Ballast Point into parkland can be addressed to ballastpoint@shfa.gov.au. A newsletter is available. Contact the Project Team on 9240 8500.



Ballast Point - Sydney Harbour at Balmain, 1890. F Flockton.

History Week 2003.

History Week is the annual, state-wide celebration of history organised by the History Council of NSW and this year between 13th and 20th September, the Association will hold exhibition of photographs from the archives and heritage walks.

Photographs from our archives will feature Illuminated Addresses and by public demand the Shipyards of Balmain and maritime heritage. This exhibition will be on display each Saturday during September at the Watch House 12 to 3pm. Free Entry.

Bay to Bay Walking Tour. A two hour guided tour outlining the history of the former industrial foreshore of Mort Bay and the maritime villas of Snells Bay. Departs Watch House 13th September, 1.30pm. Cost \$10.

White Bay Wanderings. A two hour guided tour featuring the changing waterfront of White Bay. Departs Watch House 20th September, 1.30pm. Cost \$10.

Both tours conclude at a nearby Hotel.

Bookings: 9818 4954.

The Annual General Meeting of the Balmain Association will be held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 1st October 2003 in the Watch House 179 Darling Street

Balmain Personalities

The Burrill Family

During Heritage Week held in April, the history group received many family and house history enquiries and for the history committee, this is the only way we find out about many old Balmain families. This family history is the result of resident Barrie Ward's visit to the Watch House.

Mr Ward's great grandfather Peter Burrill arrived in Balmain in about 1885. Burrill's wife Emily died after the birth of their first child Thomas (Tom), and so the family that departed from Leeds, England comprised of Burrill's mother Susannah, sisters Sarah and Susannah and brother, Joseph and baby Tom. It is thought that the family lived together for a short time as the only address in the Sands Directory is for Joseph Burrill in Glassop Street in 1885.

Peter Burrill set up a business as a coach builder, with a shop front at 475 Darling Street with factory at rear in Roseville Lane. Sister Sarah opened a drapery shop nearby at 481 Darling Street and brother Joseph was a cabinmaker, with the address in 1885 as *Grainger House* Glassop Street. Later Joseph moved to Hampton Street.

Mother, Susannah died in 1886 and was buried in the Balmain Cemetery, now Pioneer Memorial Park, Leichhardt. On the cemetery registrar her son Joseph is listed as an undertaker.

Peter Burrill never remarried and devoted much support to the Balmain Central Mission in Montague Street and made most of the furniture for the building. Tom his son, was eventually taken into the business. Peter Burrill & Son employed ten workmen and apprentices working in the very large workshop. The business was awarded a gold medal by the Royal Agricultural Society for the best business vehicle in 1905.

Tom Burrill married Matha Herbert in 1908. Two children were born, the link in this story, Florence E 1911 and Harvey 1917 who sadly died in 1926.

Peter Burrill was taken suddenly ill and died in Balmain Hospital on 25th June, 1928, aged 78 years and was buried in the Field of Mars Cemetery, Ryde. In his will, Burrill left a third of his estate to Balmain Hospital and a



Burrill & Sons, Coachbuilders and employees

third to the Methodist Central Mission, Balmain. With the decline in the coach building due to the advent of the motor cars and his father's death, Tom Burrill sold the business which became G M Smith motor builders and spray painters. Tom died 1955 aged 74 years and wife Matha in 1948 aged 63 years.

Peter Burrill had built a large house at 78 Elliott Street where his sister Susannah may have managed the home. Sarah Burrill managed the drapery business and also lived at the family home, (now L'Unico restaurant) until her death in 1935 and Susannah died in 1938. The Burrill sisters and Peter were buried in the same grave in the Methodist Section at Field of Mars, Ryde.

Joseph Burrill married Emma Holmes in 1889 and lived at 20 Hampton Street, Balmain until 1900 when the family moved to Katoomba. There were three children, Annie born 1890, Arthur born 1894 and Joseph W born 1895 died 1900. Arthur Burrill died age 22 years at Gallipoli in the First World War. A memorial service was held at the Leura Presbyterian Church on 15th September 1915. Arthur Burrill's last letter dated 20th My 1915: 'Dear Mother, Father Sisters, ...I must ring off now as I have no more news. In case I cannot write from where I am going I will say GOODBYE to you all. I am going into the fight knowing the dangers, but my trust is in God. I will do my duty to the end, to the best of my ability, knowing that it is for God, King and Country.' Joseph Burrill died at Katoomba in 1920 and his

wife Emma died at Petersham in 1944, aged 86 years.

Barrie Ward's mother, Florence Emily, married Thomas Ward in 1932 and lived in many Sydney suburbs, but mainly in Ryde. Mrs Ward purchased the land in Ryde which was part of Dr William Balmain's grant in that area. Mrs Ward died in 2001

Thanks to Barrie Ward for his family history published in the Peninsula Observer.

Leichhardt Library

After many hiccups and delays, Leichhardt Library is finally moving to the Italian Forum, Norton Street, with a larger space within the complex.

With the transfer to the Sydney Council of the Giebe Library recently, the relocation of the main Municipal Library with modern computer facilities has been eagerly awaited.

The official opening will be at 12 noon Saturday 9th August and after the opening ceremony, the library will be open until 4pm.

A section for local studies has also been included. Peter Reynolds is to open the local history area at the library at 5.30 pm on Monday 11th August. All Welcome.

The Leichhardt Library then can be found at the Piazza Level, 23 Norton Street, Leichhardt 2040. Phone 9367 9266.

Hegarty's Ferries

During February 2003, an auction was held at Neutral Bay Marina, Sydney, of three small timber cross-harbour vessels previously operated as Hegarty's Ferries. The craft involved were the *Emerald Star*, *Leura* and *Twin Star*, built by Gordon Beattie of Woy Woy in the 1940s. The ferries were taken off their run between Circular Quay, Kirribilli and Lavender Bay during January by the owning group, Captain Cook Cruises, which decided that the operation was no longer viable.



The ferry *Leura*

A Sydney water taxi operator, Mr T Lloyd, successfully bid for the *Twin Star* and heritage listed *Emerald Star*, paying \$65,000 for each vessel. Mr Lloyd is part of a consortium that wants to put the ferries back on their original run and to this end the

consortium is negotiating with the NSW Minister of Transport. Mr T Lidbury, owner of a commercial security business, bought the *Leura* for \$36,000 and plans to turn it into a houseboat for his family. The *Leura* will be temporarily moored at Abbotsford Boat Shed pending a decision on her eventual permanent home – possibly on the Hawkesbury River.

Since this article appeared in the autumn 2003 edition of Australian Sea Heritage magazine, the *Twin Star* and the *Emerald Star* went back on their passenger runs on 17th March, but because of operational difficulties, the vessels ceased oper-

ating on 19th May. *Leura*, is being refitted on a private mooring in Drummoyne.

Capt Norman Downard Hegarty had a slip-way in his backyard – or perhaps it was the front yard – at 32 St Georges Crescent, Drummoyne, some 70 years ago.

Capt Hegarty had been running small motor ferries from Erskine St, Sydney along Johnstone and White Bays and sundry charter services.

Following the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932 Sydney Ferries Ltd was indecisive as

to which of its many routes would remain viable and withdrew from the long-running passenger ferry service to Lavender Bay. Capt Hegarty quickly stepped into the Lavender Bay run that has continued until this year. During WW11, *Emerald Star* worked on the Cockatoo Island workers service. Most of the company ferries carried female names such as *Evelyn* for his wife, *Estelle*, his daughter but the arrival of a son was celebrated by the addition of the word *Star* to the names of the ferries.

In 1949 Capt Hegarty sold the ferry company. After a few different owners, the ferries came under Stannards in 1978 until, in turn, resold to Captain Cook Cruises, all keeping the tradition of the Hegarty name on the vessels.

Source: Sydney Afloat February 2003. Australian Heritage Fleet.

Bell's Foreshore

Most of Bell's Foreshore, East Balmmain, is zoned open space (to be acquired). At a meeting in Illoura Reserve on 27 July, residents resolved to campaign to save it from development.

Bell's Store (c1875-1885), a link with the maritime services of Sydney Harbour is proposed as a community meeting place with a maritime museum and cafe. The remainder of the area should be a passive recreation space. The Mayor, Cr Maire Sheehan and Cr Hall Greenland spoke in support.

RTA and Balmain Cemetery

Some months ago the Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW, Environmental and Heritage Site Location Unit contacted the Association as eight memorial stones from the Balmain Cemetery had been found.

During preliminary work on a property near Eastern Creek, for an extension to the expressway, a dam on site had dried out due to the recent drought and had exposed the stones at the base of the dam.

A report is in progress identifying archaeological, historical and aboriginal sites for the proposed road works and will reveal how and when the memorial stones were relocated to the bottom of a dam.

The Association will republish *Grave Concerns* including the information. But where should the memorial stones be relocated?

The Leichhardt Local History Group invited a spokesperson as guest speaker from the RTA and on 18th June to an evening for members and friends. Felicity Barry spoke with enthusiasm about the Heritage Sites Database and Ground Penetrating Radar.

The HSD includes exact location, description, condition and integrity, map and photograph of sites assessed to date. The GPR is a non-invasive shallow geophysical investigation that uses portable impulse radar technology. GPR has successfully investigated subsurface features associated with building foundations and

their infrastructure, including concrete bridges, underground storage tanks and utilities.

M/s Barry brought along some self-guided tour maps produced by the DMR and some designed by Montague Leong Design in Barr Street, the business who designed the Watch House story board in the foyer and the murals in the history room.

The leaflets: The Convict Trail-the Great North Road, Parramatta River Bridges-by River Cat, Parramatta - a heritage of roads and transport, Crossing The Blue Mountains-The Great Western Road, Historic Bridges- of the Hunter Valley, The Great South Road.

Contact: Felicity Barry 8837 0454, Leichhardt Local History Group 9519 3268.

In Your Garden

In the Shade

Most gardens have areas that are shaded or semi-shaded most of the time. That doesn't mean that you cannot grow plants there. Be aware whether the place is moist for long periods or quite dry.

Don't expect flowering plants to bloom well in shady conditions, instead look for plants with attractive foliage. The two tree begonias, *metallica* and *haageana*, bloom quite well under tall trees. Any soil can be improved by adding plenty of compost or other rotted organic material. Plants growing under trees will compete for moisture and nutrients, so water regularly and feed them with a balanced fertiliser.

Clived lilies not only thrive in shady areas, but also flower quite well. A shady, moist area is ideal for tree ferns and a selection of smaller



ferns. *Helleborus orientalis* likes these conditions and will flower throughout the winter and early spring.

For ground cover, any of the following should do well: *tolmiea menziesii*, *viola hederacea*, *asparagus sprengeri*, *ajuga*. For shady spots that seem to dry out easily try *bargeria cordifolia*, *nandina domestica*, *correas* (most varieties) or *westringia fruticosa*. The delightful long flowering will encourage nectar eating birds into the garden. *Dianella tasmanica* develops into broad leafy clump. In spring and summer it produces deep blue flowers followed by purple berries.

Bonnie Davidson

What's On

Watch House Exhibitions

- Debra Harris Artworks Aug 9-10 & Aug 16-17
- Bernadette Glover Artworks Aug 23-24
- Inner West Photographic 30-31 Aug
- Watch House Activities 1-30 Sept. Photographs of Marine heritage
- Denise Barry Artworks 4-5 Oct
- Patricia Quinn 11-12 Oct Watercolour group
- Sandra Elliot 18-19 Oct Impressionist mixed media
- Heather Kepski Artworks 25-26 Oct
- Nado Milat Artworks 1-2 Nov

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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 7.00pm 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: vhamer@tpg.com.au. Our Web site: www.balmainassociation.homestead.com

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