



the balmain
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news sheet

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Modern Architecture

It is well known that the Leichhardt Council Planners discourage 'replication' of traditional architecture in redevelopment of sites. Some of the recent examples are merely 'boxes without topses' to quote a popular song. A site inspection of 17-19 Cove Street, Birchgrove took an hour to cajole the architect to respect the protests of a neighbour who would lose significance light because the proposed building extended to the boundary. It only required the stairwell to be repositioned. The compromise still agreed to the skillion roof that did not harmonise with the streetscape. The owners are believed at first to support a pitched roof design but were discouraged by the planner.

The NSW Government new harbour policy prescribes that new buildings should not 'break' undeveloped ridgelines and state that "while no shapes are intrinsically unacceptable, rectangular boxy shapes with flat or skillion roofs usually do not harmonise with their surroundings. It is preferable to break up facades and roof lines into smaller elements and to use pitched roofs".

The proposed development of 36-42 Louisa Road is an affront to this policy. It would be higher than the existing eyesore rising to 3 1/2 floors above street level and there are 4 floors below. The developer claims the same floor space ratio of 1.66:1 as existing. There will be no setback from the street and car parking would be by a stacker which means that most of the time the cars will be in the street. Leichhardt Council is unlikely to approve the proposal.

SHFA Appeals

Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority has decided to appeal the decision by Justice Talbot in the Land & Environment Court to award \$60 million in compensation for the former Caltex site at Ballast Point. The judgement included an amount of \$43.5 million to be paid to a developer, Walker Corporation.

"It is difficult to understand the basis of the decision," said SHFA CEO, Dr Robert Lang. "The land is zoned industrial by Leichhardt Council. The Court decided to disregard this zoning and to determine compensation on the basis of medium density residential development."

The developer had paid \$825,000 for an option to buy if the site was rezoned although the Council was determined not to rezone. The Government originally offered \$10 million as compensation.

Follow the Leichhardt Track

Whips cracked, bells jingled and Wilhelm Ludwig Leichhardt's overland expedition set off into the wilderness. . . the men loudly singing 'God Save The Queen', Jimbour Station, 1st October, 1844, when the determined 30 year old Prussian scientist/explorer led his party of eight on a 14 month trek to Port Essington, NT.

The Ludwig Leichhardt Expo celebrates the 160th anniversary of Leichhardt's departure from Jimbour Station in Wambo Shire, Queensland. Five Western Downs Councils have combined to present the Leichhardt Expo from 21st to 26th September, 2004. There will be re-enactments of horses and riders in Leichhardt style with camp oven dinners, concerts and guest speakers including Bernd Marx from the Leichhardt Museum, Trebatsch, Germany, Leichhardt's birthplace. A group of Leichhardt Municipality residents will visit the Expo.



Trace the footsteps of Ludwig Leichhardt

All are welcome. Contact June Lunsman 9810 6885.

Ludwig Leichhardt arrived in Sydney from England on 14th February 1842 travelling steerage on the *Sir Edward Paget*. He wrote "I cannot adequately describe with what enthusiasm I sprang ashore, or with what joy I greeted every new plant and how the wealth of novel sights almost turned my head"

He landed with a letter of introduction to the NSW Surveyor-General, Sir Thomas Mitchell, who was impressed with Leichhardt's qualifications and suggested that he might like to be the naturalist with the next expedition of exploration. However, it was to be delayed indefinitely, so

he organised his own to go from Brisbane to Port Essington - a distance of 4,800km. This was to be financed by gifts from assorted pastoralists and businessmen. One Sydney merchant was Walter Beames who named his Piperson Estate, *Leichhardt* in honour of his friend. Leichhardt was persuaded to start the trek from the inland at Jimbour Station.

The journey was not a happy one. It was dogged by misfortune mainly brought about by poor leadership and inexperience. The exhausted party finally managed to reach Port Essington after 14 months and 17 days.

The trip revealed tracts of land suitable for settlement and many important streams, one named *Beames Brook*. After resting the explorers arrived back in Sydney by ship on 25th March 1846 to public acclaim as they had been given up as lost. "*Sydney welcomed Leichhardt as a hero and for some weeks he was the most famous man in Australia*". Sunday Telegraph 30th April 1995.

Beattie Bush Balmain Icon

An appreciative audience attended the presentation of the documentary by Julie Nebauer of *The Paper Queen* at the Balmain Library on Wednesday 9th June.

Who was Bettie Bush? A little lady who stood on a median strip with her trade mark of Tigers rugby league socks, amidst the daily peak hour traffic for some 25 years to sell newspapers on one of the city's busiest intersections, Victoria Road and The Crescent at White Bay.

Every city in the world has its street identities that make their impact on society. They become part of the urban landscape, taken for granted until one day they are no longer there.

Beatrice Bush was born in Evans Street Rozelle in 1925 and was one of seven children.

It is unknown how her larynx was injured but she remembered being conveyed to hospital at a young age when a dresser fell on her. This was to be a handicap for her for the rest of her life as she missed a lot of schooling and finally left school at 14 years of age. Her first job was in a handkerchief factory at Broadway.

Beattie was a seamstress in the 1950s when she married her husband Frank Bush. They were to have two sons Glen and Phillip and it was in 1970s when teenager son Glen quit his paper run that Beattie started selling newspapers.

Julie Nebauer said the image of Beattie pushing the newspaper trolley up the hill from White Bay to the newsagent symbolised an uphill battle in life.

Beattie's husband Frank would join her at White Bay by sitting at the bus shelter and watch over her while she sold the papers to the thousands of motorists. Beatrice and Frank were forced out of the area as rents began to rise and they moved to Macquarie Fields. After Frank's death in 1991 Beatrice returned to her paper selling and to do so, was up at 4am each day to catch the first train at Liverpool to the city then a bus to White Bay to collect her



trolley of newspapers, holding on to her sense of place.

After a busy morning Beattie would often drop by the Merton Estate Hotel for a soft drink and a rest before the return trip to Macquarie Fields. Her health declined and she died in November 1996.

Folk singer Judy Small immortalised Beattie in her 1984 song, *The White Bay Paper Seller*. A *little wizened figure scarcely more than skin and bone / She looks as though the wind's about to sweep her right away / As she sells the daily paper on the corner at White Bay*.

The documentary has been placed in Leichhardt Library and The National Film Archives along with contemporaries of Beatrice Bush, such as Arthur Stace (*Eternity*), Bea Miles, William Chidley and Billy Blue celebrating the individuals who have played an important part of our cities' social history.

Thank You Julie

Photo from David Liddle's *The Balmain Book*.

**The Annual General
Meeting of the
Balmain
Association Inc will
be held at 5pm on
Wednesday
6 October in the
Watch House**

History Week

11 – 19 September 2004

The past is all around us. It's there in our books, our records, our archives, our institutions and our memories. It encourages us to think about places, objects or ideas of the present link with the past and tell stories about our history. History Week is the annual, state-wide celebration of history organised by the History Council of New South Wales to promote history. The Balmain Association will participate with a Photographic Exhibition, coach tour of Balmain and a guided walk. See What's On.

Our new website can be found at
www.aussiehosts.balmainassociation.com.au
Why not browse.

No 2 Evans Street, Rozelle.

What a difference 30 years can make. Recently the Association History group began cleaning the archives room thoroughly and we found many photographs of old hop taken by former members.

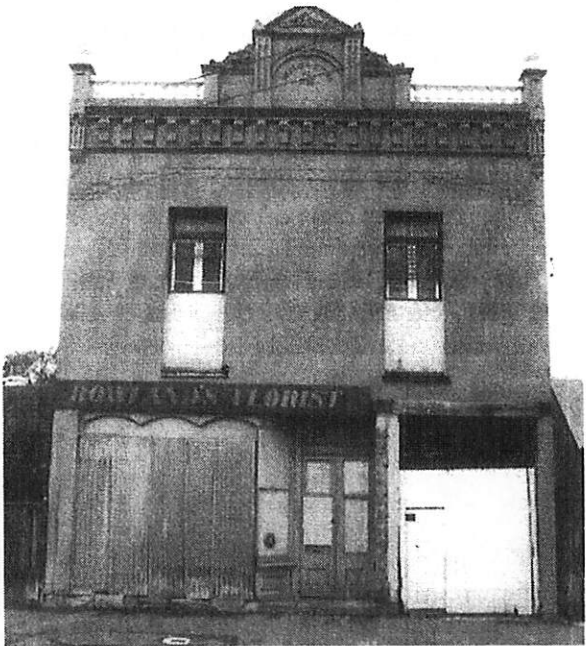
I have updated important research of the 970s with photographs of the old butcher's hop or McGrath store built in 1885 at 2 Evans Street, Rozelle.

The first occupant listed in the Sands Directory was Joyner Bros, grocers, in 1887, who remained there until 1891 when the grocery moved to another address at 135 Beattie Street.

There was no listing of 2 Evans Street in the Sands until 1897 to 1901 when it recorded Mrs A McGrath, grocer, then in 1903 T Edwards, grocer. There was no listing again until 1912 to 1914, Frederick Dale, grocer and then, surprisingly, for the next two years as a baby clinic. From 1923 James Lockhardt, butcher, had the hop for many years until 1960. The locals always refer to the building as the old butcher hop.

I remember it as that when I played tennis on the old Ashgrove courts in Beattie Street. Sadly these courts have now gone as have so many tennis courts and butcher shops in Balmain and Rozelle.

Bonnie Davidson.



Old butcher shop, built in 1885 as it was in 1970s and left how it looks today

Birchgrove Tennis Court Centenary Year 2004

The Sydney Mail, Wednesday 25th May, 1904, reports a grand occasion of the opening of two grass tennis courts of the Birchgrove Tennis Club, Rose Street. A large gathering of beautifully dressed women with large ornate hats, some carrying parasols and men in smartly dressed in suits, ties with caps, bowler hats and even a top hat or two had been grouped on the courts for the official photograph.

Pamela Jeffery, in the Birch Grove Estate, states, 'by 1904 a tennis pavilion and grandstand had been made ready'. In the Balmain Jubilee Municipal 1860-1910 booklet, 'Birchgrove Park with seven acres is in a most charming position at the head of Snail's Bay, from where an uninterrupted view of the harbour is obtained. On it there are three cricket or football spaces, each having ample room within their own playing field. A neat little grandstand overlooks the oval, whilst at the side is a tennis court and pavilion, surrounded by a well kept garden.'

The Birchgrove Park Trust Committee was set up in 1882 and operated until 1948 when control was vested in the Leichhardt Council after the amalgamation of Balmain Council.

Tennis was being played in Balmain even before the 1904 date as the Sydney Mail 18th June, 1887, reports that a match was played on Saturday, June 11, at Balmain, between the Balmain

and Montrose Lawn Tennis Clubs, and result as follows:-Balmain 10sets, 62 games; Montrose, 1 set, 23 games. The tennis court was most probably in local resident's grounds.

The early minute books of the Trust have not survived but the 1931-1948 are available at the Mitchell Library. It would appear from the minute book for 1944, that court surface was still lawn, 'weeds and foreign matter to Tennis Courts to be dug out and new sods of good grass be replaced.'

In 1935 the Hard Court Tennis Association applied to build on vacant land on corner Grove and Rose Sts. The court was not built.

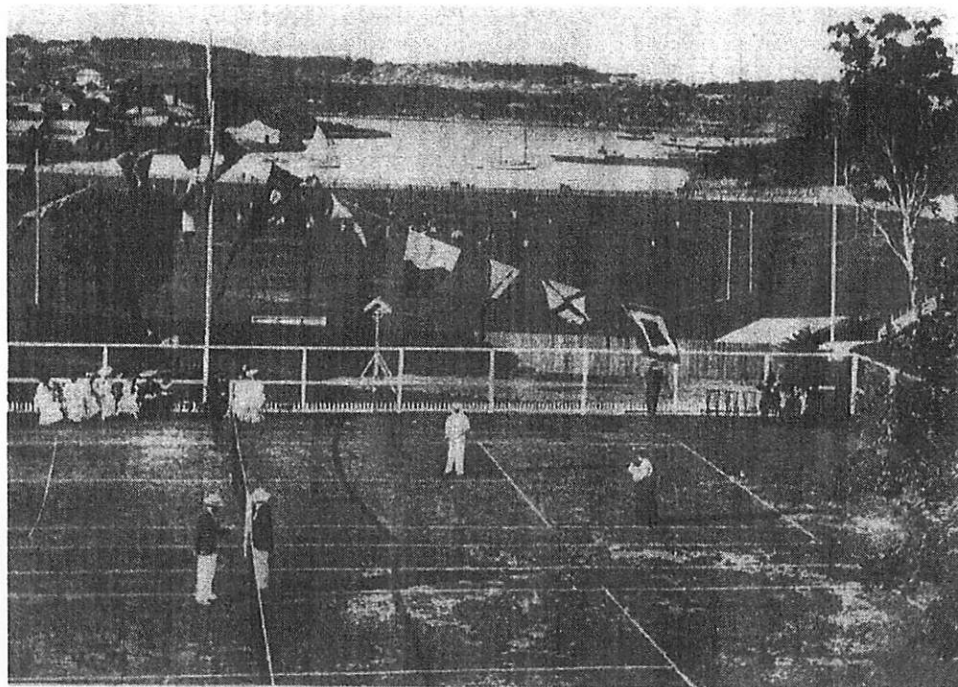
On the Grove Street side of the park the St John's Tennis Club court was officially opened in May 1920 and was called the Parkview Tennis Club. The court remains today.

From about 1953 the courts were upgraded from grass to loam and to include four courts by the Balmain Tennis Association. Exhibition matches to celebrate the opening, featured Lew Hoad, Ken Roewall, George Worthington and Jeff

Brown. The BTA was incorporated into the North Western Suburbs Tennis Association in the mid 1970s, who manages the six synthetic grass courts, leased from the Leichhardt Council.

For some 30 years the name Rocavert has been associated with Birchgrove Tennis Centre. Don's son Terry, former Wimbledon competitor, born in Arthur Street, Balmain and wife Kay born in Thomas Street, have taken over the coaching and are compiling the history of the Birchgrove Courts and are seeking memorabilia.

*Source: Terry Rocavert
Kathleen Hamey.*



Birchgrove Tennis Club, 1904

In Your Garden

Growing Roses

The modern rose is a plant as much at home among abelias and grevilleas in full sun as it is in the huge old rosebeds of yesteryear. Few gardeners have space today to devote to large traditional rose plantings so the landscape use of the rosebush has changed.

A few tips for planting roses: (1) Select the sunniest position in your garden as at least five hours of sunlight each day is required. (2) Avoid root competition with adjacent trees and shrubs. (3) Consider planting standard roses in a central position surrounded by bush and dwarf roses. (4) Plant roses with the graft union just above ground level. (5) Prune damaged roots



before planting. (6) Don't fertilise newly planted roses.

Each plant requires roughly a square metre. The roots are not adventurous but they are heavy feeders. Avoid shade that leads to diseases such as black spot, powdery mildew and grey mould on the petals and leaves. Treat powdery mildew and grey mould with Banlate and black spot with Triforine. Established roses need a matchbox full of a complete rose food every six weeks from November until March.

Here are a few fungal disease-resistant roses. Champagner, Fiesta, Goldmarie, Iceberg, Limelight, Bella Rosa, Patricia, Mister Lincoln, Tony Jacklin, Sunburnt Country, Red Cedar and Traumerei. My favourite is a lovely fragrant yellow rose called Diamond Jubilee.

Bonnie Davidson

What's On

Watch House Exhibitions

- **Rosemary Williams**
Art works 7-8 Aug
- **Douglas Little**
Art 14,15,16,17 Aug
- **Janet Carter Art**
21-22 & 28-29 Aug
- **Celebrating 150th Anniversary of the Balmain Watch House**
Open each Saturday in September, 11.30am - 3.00pm
- **Balmain Coach Tour**
Saturday 11 September
Depart Watch House 1.00pm - Cost \$5
Numbers limited
Bookings 9818 4954

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Birchgrove NSW 2041
2005/12

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 5.00pm 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 :vhomey@tpg.com.au.

Our Web site::

www.aussiehosts.balmainassociation.com

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Household \$20, Concession \$10

Organisations \$30.