



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

Vol 39 No5 Issue 292

Founded November 1965

December 2004

Australian National Flag

A surprising connection between a Leichhardt resident and the design of the National flag has been discovered by member Victor Alberts OAM.

The flag that was raised at Sydney Cove on 26th January 1788 was the First Union Flag that originated in 1606 when the crosses of St George (England) and St Andrew (Scotland) were combined. On 1st January 1801, the cross of St Patrick (Ireland) was added to the Union Flag although it was not until 4th June 1801 when the modern Union Flag was hoisted at Dawes Point, Sydney.

When more than a quarter of a million people gathered at Centennial Park on the 1st January 1901 to witness the birth of a nation, it was the Union Jack which flew high over the celebrations. Although the separate colonies had come together to unite as one nation, sadly there was no official flag to represent this memorable occasion, however once the first Federal Parliament was sworn in, Prime Minister Edmund Barton soon addressed the need for a national flag.

In 1900 a Melbourne journal, *The Review of Reviews of Australasia*, had initiated a National Flag competition and in conjunction with the government announcement, they agreed that entries received by the journal would also be accepted in the government competition. The combined prize money of £150 was interestingly received an additional £50 prize money from the Havelock Tobacco Company, a total of £200, a considerable amount for the time.

The competition generated much enthusiasm and excitement with 32,823 entries received from people of all ages. With such a response to the competition, certain guidelines such as history, heraldry, distinctiveness, utility and cost of manufacture were introduced.



Based on these guidelines set by the panel of judges, they concluded that the Commonwealth Flag to be representative of the new nation should have the Union Jack with a blue ground and a six pointed star and the Southern Cross.

On 3rd September 1901, Lady Hopetoun, wife of the first Governor-General, opened a display of the entries in the competition at a public ceremony held at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne. The Prime Minister Edmund Barton, announced that five winners, who had submitted similar designs were to share the honour of being declared the designers of Australia's own flag and each was to receive £40 in prize money.

The winners were: Ivor Evans, a fourteen year old schoolboy from Melbourne; Egbert John Nuttall, a Melbourne architect; Annie Dorrington, an artist from Perth; William Stevens, a ship's officer from Auckland New Zealand and Leslie John Hawkins, an apprentice to a

Sydney optician, aged eighteen of 58 Henry Street, Leichhardt.

The flag combined the Union Jack, a six pointed star immediately underneath the Union Jack and is known as the Commonwealth star that symbolises the six federated States of Australia and finally, the Southern Cross on the Flag depicts Australia's geographical position in the southern hemisphere, with the 9, 8, 7, 6 & 5 points on the stars respectively reflecting the brightness of the stars in the sky.

In 1903, minor changes to the Southern Cross were made with each of the four main stars having 7 points and the smallest fifth star still with 5 points and in 1908, a 7th point was added to the

Commonwealth Star to represent the Federal Territories. The National Flag was proclaimed in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette on 20th February, 1903, confirmed by Parliament in 1953.

Leslie J Hawkins was born in Petersham on 19th February 1883. His father John, a carpenter, moved to 58 Henry Street, Leichhardt in 1887 and remained until 1922.

Leichhardt Rotary Club, as a Rotary International Centenary Project, with Leichhardt Council wants to build a small monument and flag-pole in the street outside where the Hawkins house once stood and fly a reproduction of the Hawkins designed flag. The project committee hope to have a plaque commemorating Leslie Hawkins outstanding achievement in place on the 20th February, 2005. Mr Alberts has been in contact with Hawkins' daughter now living in Adelaide, who wants to be part of the commemoration.

Sourced from the Woolworths Australia Heritage Posters.

President's Report

As we decided last year to leave the Watch House free from outside exhibitions during the weekends of Heritage Week and for the whole of September, we had crowds of visitors who came particularly to see our historical photographs displayed throughout the building. Several families came specifically to look at photos of their ancestors' homes and, as well as asking us questions, often gave us information for which we were grateful.

We had a very well-attended book launch at the lovely Clontarf Cottage in December 2003. The book, by historian Dr Peter Reynolds OAM, covered the story of William Balmain's family and the challenges to the sale of "Balmain's land". Recently Dr Reynolds received donations towards the establishment of a website for the Leichhardt Historical Journal and this included a donation from our association. The LHJ and this association are affiliated – that organization was formed in 1971, six years after ours.

In April we had a delightful morning tea with a group of Balmain's from Texas. They had been in contact with us some time ago and were anxious to come over and visit as they are three generations who are direct descendants of William Balmain. They enjoyed their trip to OZ and especially this suburb and the Watch House and we received warm thanks from them as they left and again when they were back home in Hooks, Texas.

For two weekends in May the fabulous Inter-twining group held their display "Light Cover" at the Watch House. As always it was awesome! The exhibition features hand-woven, hand knitted garments, wraps and scarves plus tapestries and rugs. The hand woven basketry and hand made silver jewelry also create a great deal of interest. There were, of course, many other impressive exhibits over the past year. I was on duty at the Watch House during the "Here, There and Everywhere" exhibit by Jan Moore and Janet Carter over two weekends in August. It too was awesome!

Watch House Restoration

2004 proved to be a year of unfulfilled promises of further restoration of the Watch House. Work was to begin on the northern parapet wall during the months not allocated to art exhibitions fund-raising but due to circumstances beyond our control and for the first time in some 10 years the dedicated sum of \$12,000 was not spent.

A number of stone restoration works will be undertaken in the near future. The NSW Dept. of Commerce (Heritage Branch) has approved our submission to obtain sandstone from the Minister's supply under the Centenary Stone

Also on one Saturday afternoon, when I was on duty, a French family – Mum, Dad, two boys and a little girl who were here on a visit – came in to have a look at the Watch House. The parents spoke excellent English coloured by their French accents. The kids didn't speak our language but wanted to know so much about the pictures in the history cell and, of course, the cells too. So Mum or Dad would ask me the questions, then they would tell the answers to the three youngsters in French. They stayed for ages and were very impressed with the building as I was with them!

As most members of the Balmain Association know the money we make from renting out the Watch House for exhibitions and the commissions coming from this practice makes it possible to maintain this building which brings so much pleasure to so many people. This year is the 150th year of the building of the original lower level of the Watch House and we had a great free damper and tea day on a sunny Saturday during History Week. We thank June Lunsman and Ruth MacLeod who worked hard to make sure all visitors were well fed. I just took the job of chatting to the guests.

Thanks for your continuing membership and call in any Saturday between 12 noon and 3 o'clock if you are passing by as we are always happy to have visitors especially members of our association.

Ann Bastock

**A Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year**

Association Website

The Balmain Association website can be visited on:-

<http://balmainassociation.aussiehosts.com>

Program for restoration of the building. This stone was sought for the colour match for the Southern corner and wall, park side. We anticipate that the Association will only have to pay the costs of sawing the stone to the required size ready for dressing by our contractors.

The works to be undertaken are as follows:

Restoration of the Northern parapet wall. This entails replacement of one course of stone approximately seven meters long and replacement of the stone capping above. Replacement of two courses of chimney stone, collar and cap for the small fireplace in the entrance foyer. This is the lower right hand chimney stack seen in the Balmain Association logo. The original chimney was removed in the

National Box Co.

In September 2003, the Australian National Maritime Museum at Darling Harbour held an exhibition "Sydney-Working Harbour". Always on the look-out for photographs relating to Balmain, one caught my eye, showing the National Box Co. at Fitzroy Avenue, Balmain.

With the assistance of M/s Lindsey Shaw, Senior Curator at the Museum, three copies of the Box Co from the Merlin Hansen Collection were received recently by the Association. The date is 1930s and one is of a loaded truck, second, an aerial view of the factory on the foreshore, swimming pool, part Elkington Park and houses in Fitzroy Avenue and third displayed here.

Before the advent of plastic, timber boxes of all sizes were used to transport goods. Balmain had many timber businesses and also some devoted only to timber box production.

The 1947 Sands Business Directory mentions five companies. C Cant, 23 Ennis Street, H H Cush & Co, 135 Mullens Street, Alf Ray, Emily Street, Rozelle Box Co, 35 Cook Street and the National Box Co, 16 Punch Street.

From 1925 to mid 1970s, B A Hansen, managing director, of National Box Co

address was 16 Punch Street then later Fitzroy Avenue as the business expanded.

The State Government acquired the site for open space and the Leichhardt Council prepared the upper and lower areas as an extension of Elkington Park. Fitzroy Park has wonderful views of the Parramatta River islands of Snapper, Spectacle and Cockatoo. The road to the lower section has been cut through the cliff face and there is evidence of building installations from the former National Box Factory. The Council has recently upgraded the foreshore walk way with sandstone. If you study the cliff towards the Punch Street end, you should find an engraving of King Neptune, a later addition.

Kathleen Hamey.



Overlooking the swimming pool to National Box Co - 1930s

early 1980s due to safety concerns about its deterioration. Restoration of the Southern corner and wall. Though quite sound, the Southern wall is appalling somewhat badly and it is necessary to commence indenting (replacing the face of the affected stones) this wall whilst enough of the original wall is intact to maintain the existing wall alignment. It appears the appalling is due to the stone being laid with the bed vertical, like books in a bookcase, which opens up the bed, rather than laying the stone on its bed horizontally, which keeps it in compression. Excessive spalling is of concern at the South-west corner, above the entrance, from a safety concern. 'L' shaped indents will be required here.

Indenting the external faces of the lower courses of the two internal cells backing onto the exercise yard, failure here due to raiding damp and exacerbated by the incorrect bedding. Again this is not structural but repointing the failed stone is impossible. Structurally, the courses have been treated to prevent further deterioration by rising damp.

There are some other more isolated areas to restore. Namely, the external Northern wall and window sill of the Northern interior cell and window sill on the exterior Southern wall of the Southern interior, original cell.

Jeremy Arnott.

NSW Maritime Authority

The Waterways Authority has been restructured and is now known as the NSW Maritime Authority. The Authority continues their focus on enhancing the foreshore for the benefit of the public. The State Government has broadened its vision for Sydney Harbour and the Waterways Authority has commenced a program to gradually remove oversized and underutilised structures from the foreshore. The NSW Maritime Authority are the owners of the seabed and therefore its consent is required before a waterfront owner can lodge a development application to build on their land.

In July 2004, the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources released in draft form a revised *Sydney Regional Environmental Plan*. The draft contains guidelines for the design, siting and construction of all new facilities.

Wherever possible fixed jetties will be replaced with floating pontoon system. Boat-sheds that lie over the waterway and not on private property.

Reduce the scale of development over submerged land wherever feasible. Development opportunities for public access in the inter-tidal zone.

Consequently, if a waterfront facility has the potential to be shared, greater than 16m in length, excessive in size, consists of a fixed jetty without a floating pontoon facility, is under-utilised or derelict, or a boat shed which is not sited completely on the freehold adjacent to the waterway, it cannot assume a lease over the structure will be offered on the same terms to the next owner.

The Authority now issue a conditional lease that states that the structure will require removal or modification during the term of this lease.

There are 4890 private moorings, 1320 commercial single moorings, 1490 commercial marina berths and 500 private marina berths in Sydney Harbour.

Heritage Concessions

"Developers and building owners today can negotiate dispensation on some development conditions as a trade-off for maintaining and enhancing the heritage integrity of their buildings. Then there is the added incentive of heritage floor space, which can be sold and transferred onto other CBD sites," Gavin Lloyd, director of CB Richard Ellis strata project marketing, was quoted in the Sydney Morning Herald, 20/11/04.

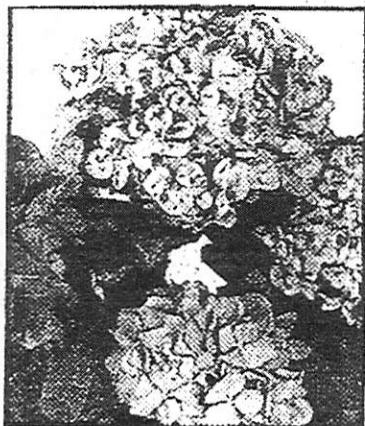
In the past five years, strata developers, working with planning authorities and the Heritage Council, have rescued some of Sydney's most significant heritage landmarks.

In Your Garden

The Long, Hot Summer

Summer would not be summer without the magnificent heads of hydrangea dominating the shady parts of our gardens, with varying shades of pink and blue and the occasional white blooms. A house in Mort Street has its front garden full of the white hydrangeas that look lovely.

The flowers reach their peak at Christmas but remain on the bushes into March and even April, their colours becoming muted with age. Hydrangeas colour in response to the soils in which they grow. Pink blooms indicate limey soil, blue shows acid soil. If you want to be sure of blue blooms it is necessary to apply sulphate of aluminium to the soil in October and November. Pink or red blooms



Hydrangeas

require the addition of lime now and again in mid-winter. The amount that you add will depend on how limey is the soil. Start with a good handful and add more if necessary. These indicators help to determine the soil's suitability for acid-loving plants like camellias and azaleas.

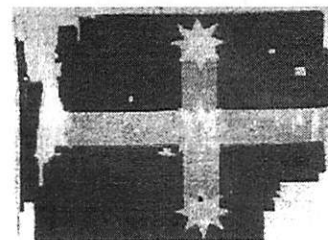
You must prepare for summer heat by mulching everything as that insulates roots and conserves moisture helping plants to feed themselves. Gradually get your plants used to less water. Soil dries out very quickly and

Bonnie Davidson

What's On

Watch House Exhibitions

- 'Now and Then' photographs showing development of former industrial sites.
- Assistance with family and house history.
- Balmain Association publications for sale.
- Each Saturday during from 11.30am - 3pm, December and January except Christmas Day and New Years Day.



Printed by Snap Print, Balmain. © Not to be reproduced without permission.



If undelivered return to:
The Balmain Association Inc
PO Box 57
Balmain 2041

SURFACE
MAIL

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

Miss Theresa L Hayward
61 Louisa Road
Birchgrove NSW 2041
2005/12

The Balmain Association Inc

Representing Balmain, Birchgrove & Rozelle.

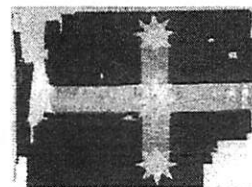
Our aims are to:

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:
<http://balmainassociation.aussiehosts.com>

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



Eureka
Stockade
December
3, 1854