



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Presented at the Balmain
Association's AGM on 3rd Oct. 2007

As President of the Balmain Association for the past year, I have greatly enjoyed working with our highly dedicated, knowledgeable and resourceful team of office bearers and committee members to implement and sustain the longstanding aims of the Association to preserve the heritage, amenity, character and historical records of the area.

A major responsibility of the Association continues to be the maintenance and management of the historic Watch House, which is kept in excellent condition and fully booked for exhibitions and local functions. The activities in the Watch House of the Association itself have included the very popular Children's Photography displays and the Sandstone Heritage exhibition.

People are welcome at our monthly meetings, and the regular Saturday attendances of History Committee members enable visitors to interact directly in obtaining and giving

historical information and material. This activity supplements the ongoing postal, phone and email communication which is distilled and included in the regular newsletters, a much appreciated responsibility of our Editor.

In addition to all this, we are constantly contacted over and involved in local planning and heritage issues. This year has included strong concerns over the Multiplex and Tigers sites, White Bay, Rozelle Bay, Birchgrove Oval, Mort Bay Park, Rozelle Hospital and Callan Park. Constant themes are opposition to ad hoc over-development, traffic congestion, pollution, inadequate regional open space and facilities and lack of government consultation and respect.

The resilience of the community's spirit is maintained by such events as Back to Balmain and the Rozelle School Re-union, which the Balmain Association will continue to participate in and foster.

Looking forward, we also plan to pursue ideas to engage more young people and new members. This includes revitalizing our brochures and website. I am confident that the next year will be productive and, above all, enjoyable for all of us.

Jane Ward

Committee
photo.
Standing:
Christina
Ritchie,
Kathleen
Hamey,
Andy
Mitchell,
Ann
Bastock
and Roger
Parkes.
Seated:
Rita Ellis,
Jane Ward
and Val
Hamey.



BA MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

President: Jane Ward
Vice President: Diana Garder
Secretary: June Lunsmann;
Treasurer: Val Hamey
Assistant Treasurer: Andy Mitchell
Public Officer: Bob Ellis
Newsletter: Fergus Fricke
Committee: Ann Bastock, Kathleen Hamey, Rita Ellis, Roger Parkes, George Cooper, Christina Ritchie.
History Committee: Bonnie Davidson, June Lunsmann, Rita Ellis, Kathleen Hamey, Diana Garder.
Watch House Hire: June Lunsmann.
Auditor: Tim Potter

TOUR GUIDES SOUGHT

For many years Kathleen Hamey has conducted heritage tours and walks in Balmain on behalf of the Balmain Association. The tours have been a great success thanks to Kathleen's remarkable knowledge of Balmain history and her delightful way of enthralling and enthusing residents and visitors alike.

Kathleen has decided to hang up her portable amplifier, take down her heritage guide shingle and concentrate on all the other community activities she is involved in. If someone, or some others, are interested in taking over Kathleen's guiding or wish to be involved in some way please contact Kathleen on 9818 4954

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THE CENTENARY OF THE BALMAIN TIGERS

Next year (2008) will see the 100th anniversary of the Balmain District Rugby League Club. Sadly, (for all the 'true believer' Tiger fans) there is no truth in the oft-stated claim that Balmain was the first rugby league club in Australia ... but it was mighty close to the truth. Ray Chesterton, in his well-researched book *Tiger, Tiger Burning Bright* says, "The Sydney rugby league competition was finally and officially launched early in 1908 and the first club to form was Glebe. For decades, the (now defunct) Newtown Club was thought to have been the first club, but a recent investigation has shown conclusively that Glebe was the first; on the 9th of January 1908 at the Glebe Town Hall. Newtown was formed on the 14th of January 1908. Souths followed on the 17th of January and then Balmain on the 23rd of January 1908 at a public meeting at the Balmain Town Hall". Other clubs to participate in the inaugural year were Norths, Wests, Cumberland and Newcastle. Annandale was to form a club in 1910 and Sydney University in 1920.

Birchgrove Oval was the headquarters for the newly formed rugby league club. It was there that, on the 20th of April, the first game was played by Balmain in the 1908 competition year. Two games were played at Birchgrove on that day. The Tigers defeated Wests 20-11 and Souths defeated Norths 11-7.

Balmain's first jumper had black and gold horizontal bars. It was the same colour and design as the rugby union club. The union competition had 11 clubs by 1907, having been formed in 1874. The league club logo was a football with a tiger on one side and a kangaroo on the other. Underneath was written "Balmain District League Football Club. Founded 1908."

The origin of Balmain's black and gold colours is not known for certain. One theory is that the colours were those of the blackwattle trees in the nearby Blackwattle Bay. Another theory is that they were adopted after Balmain local, Bill Beach, a champion rower, used a black and gold jumper while defending his world title in England. The latter theory was put to me by a local octogenarian, longtime Balmain resident and ardent Tiger supporter, Mrs Betty Fountain.



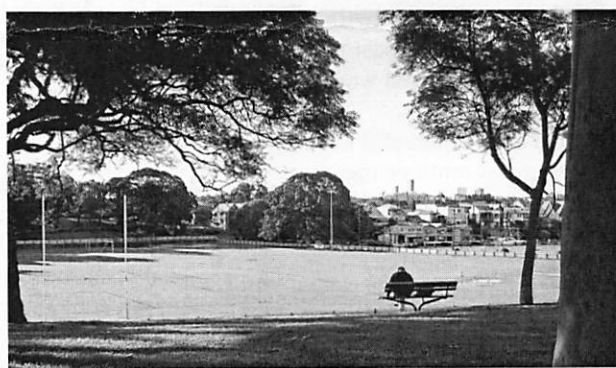
"Pony" Hallway clears the ball from a scrum in a match against Newtown circa 1915. Photo from *Tiger, Tiger Burning Bright* by Ray Chesterton, Playright Publishing Pty Ltd, Sydney 2000. Reprinted with permission.

Balmain, in the early days were better known as "The Watersiders" because they were located at Birchgrove Oval and played there. Birchgrove Oval was the first 'home ground' for the Balmain Rugby League team. Snails Bay was an active part of Sydney harbour and was used to unload timber mainly. The area was essentially working class and was a provider of players for the football teams of the area. Later, the team was moved to Wentworth Park, but this proved unpopular with the supporters. They then moved back to Birchgrove Oval, but this was again unsatisfactory because it could not properly cater for the large crowds being attracted to the games. In 1928, a deal was struck with the rugby union team and the League team moved to Drummoyne Oval. Then, in 1934, it was decided to make Leichhardt Oval the home for the Tigers.



Birchgrove oval in 1902

On the 27th of July 1999, in a vote of 299 to 95, the Balmain Rugby League Club decided to merge with the Western Suburbs Rugby League Club (known as 'The Magpies'). So ended 92 years of history for both these inaugural clubs. The merged club is now known as the Wests Tigers.



Birchgrove Oval in 2007

But "The Tigers" is still a strong rallying call for all the aficionados of the game. And the team has gone from strength to strength. In 1999 Balmain finished third last in the competition and Wests, their new partners, finished last. In 2005, Wests Tigers won the competition. A resurgence indeed. The strong support for the club continues. At their evening game played against the North Queensland Cowboys on Monday 30th of July 2007, the Wests Tigers attracted a crowd of more than 17,000 fans to the Leichhardt Oval. As one who was there, it was impossible not to be impressed with the diversity in the crowd; young children, family groups, young men, old players – the lot. A special area is put aside for people with physical disabilities. It is a lovely night out – and the football was good too – The Tigers won 54-10. By way of comparison, the Rugby Union Grand final between Sydney University and Eastern Suburbs was played the previous Saturday and attracted only 5,500 people.

The first rugby league game staged in Australia was played between a NSW side and a team from New Zealand on the 17th of August 1907. New Zealand was on the way to tour England playing "northern union" rules, which embraced the changes introduced to make the game faster-moving than rugby union and, therefore, more appealing to the spectator. The breakaway code of rugby knew that people came to see fast-moving back-line movements and not the dreary sideline kicking game. The Australian clubs adopted these rules which had been developed in the north of England.

Even those not classified as "died in the wool leaguies" cannot help but notice the impact the football team has on the community. I remember, as a Glebe resident in 1969, walking up for a tippie at the Toxteth and seeing large yellow tiger footprints painted on the footpath. That was the year The Tigers won the premiership. The excitement was highly infectious and when the game was over, the Balmain/Glebe area erupted in a euphoric celebration. Maybe it is because I am that much older, but the excitement seems less – but it still pumps along at a grand rate and we all like to see the Tigers win. And when the game is put on at the historic Leichhardt Oval, attendance is almost obligatory.

Roger Parkes

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION WITH CAROLYN

Carolyn Allen was elected Mayor of Leichhardt on 26 September 2007 and will be mayor until the next Local Government Election in September 2008. The conversation below took place over coffee at her house under difficult circumstances. Her uncle, who she is close to was dying, she was using an icepack on the ankle that was sprained the day before while undertaking mayoral duties, and a dog had apparently swallowed one of her contact lenses. Nevertheless she was, as usual, cheerful and looking forward to a year's leave without pay, to concentrate on being Mayor of Leichhardt! Below are her abbreviated answers to some questions.

Was there life before Leichhardt?

I was born and brought up in Bathurst. My father and uncle had a poultry business. My uncle was a member of the Labor Party and was later a member of parliament during the Whitlam years.

When I completed my leaving certificate at Bathurst High School I went to Sydney University. I was the first member of my family to go to university. I did an Arts degree majoring in Geography and Economics. After that I did a Dip. Ed. and started a Grad. Dip. of Town and Country Planning.

Why and when did you come to live in Balmain? One of the student projects I was involved in while studying Town and Country Planning in 1967 was centred on redeveloping Balmain. What I saw was a very attractive and active community. I came to live in Balmain in 1968 but left to work in Europe and Canada from '72 until '79 after which I came back to Balmain.

What do you like about Balmain? Balmain appealed initially because it was like a country town. It was self-contained and self-sufficient. There was great diversity and there were interesting people. Everyone was helpful. A film group met once a month at Ewenton House. We drank with Colgate workers at the Unity Hall Hotel and we worked on restoring the Watch House. The Dawn Fraser Pool is my favourite place in Balmain.

What have been the major changes in Balmain in your time here? There are more people now, more buildings being renovated and extended, more shops open, more cars, more and more cars, more wealth (the blue collar workers have gone), more and better parks, and the Dawn Fraser pool is cleaner. There are more dogs but less dog shit (more responsible dog owners). There are more cafes and restaurants.

What would you like to see change in Balmain? I would like to see fewer cars and less emphasis on car parking. Perhaps the community members could commit to reducing the number of car trips by 10%.

Some streets could be blocked off to through traffic and trees planted in the streets. Possibly parking provided at White Bay or car use taxed if the revenue could be guaranteed to go into improving public transport.

Where would you like to live if you left Balmain? I don't want to leave Balmain.



How have you changed in your time in Balmain? I came from a family involved in community. When my children began attending Birchgrove PS I became very involved with the school and community issues and as an extension of this I became involved in education policy generally and an advocate for public education. I specifically worked for children from low socio-economic backgrounds and then generally with social justice issues - at local national and global levels.

Local government is the very foundation of democracy and the area where social capital is built so I have found it disappointing that so much time is spent not on community issues but on individual building developments. I hope you understand that as one who has worked hard for social justice and improving amenity for all, I find it uncomfortable to spend so much time essentially making rich people richer and needing to approve developments which decrease the diversity and affordability of housing in my own community.

What do you do in your spare time if you have any? I read a lot: history, politics and historical novels are my favourites. I belong to two book clubs. I swim, go to the theatre, and listen to music- jazz and opera mostly.

Why did you enter local politics? I have supported independents, including Nick Origlass and Issy Wyner, for many years. At the last election nobody wanted to be number one on the Leichhardt Community Independents' ticket so I drew the short

straw. I think State and Federal government issues are more important than local government ones but local government is an arm of the State Government and as an elected councillor I have some influence on State Governments that I would not have as an individual.

How do I refer to you as mayor? I don't know. I suppose I will be referred to as

"Madam Mayor" on formal occasions but I will not introduce myself as the mayor to anyone and I will not wear the mayoral regalia except on occasions such as citizenship ceremonies, when a sense of occasion is appreciated by the participants.

What do you hope to achieve in the next year? Largely to see planned developments such as the renovation of Balmain Town Hall, the enlarging of the Leichhardt Aquatic Centre and the Norton Main Street come to fruition. Frank Sartor is requiring all councils to develop new town plans so this must be done. Go some way to ensuring there is more diversity and affordability in housing: we need to encourage the retention of two bedroom houses for instance. We need better town planning tools, especially where heritage issues are concerned.

What are your greatest concerns?

That satisfactory outcomes for Callan Park, White Bay and the Tigers and Multiplex development proposals are achieved. Although I am opposed to building more highways (only better public transport will solve the traffic problems), the M4 East seems likely to go ahead but it must not be a toll road (to prevent increasing traffic on local roads) and there must be adequate exhaust air filtering to ensure satisfactory air quality.

Are there likely to be a further round of council amalgamations soon? People talk about it but I have not seen any evidence that the State government will want to involve Leichhardt in an amalgamation. Leichhardt has a population of over 50,000, which makes it much bigger than many rural councils.

Energy use per capita in Leichhardt is high. What, if anything, should be done about it? The energy use is a measure of our affluence. We can reduce council's footprint and we can assist residents to reduce theirs through education campaigns and leadership. Community consultation for our 20/20 strategic plan indicated that environmental sustainability was a major concern of our residents.

What can be done to ensure a good outcome for Callan Park? Work within the existing system. I think that a compromise can be reached. Sydney University should not control the whole of Callan Park. Council should maintain and manage the playing fields.

Residency Test for Balmain Hopefuls

The Federal Government has introduced a test for applicants for Australian citizenship. It sounds such a good idea we thought we should run with the concept and develop a test for residency in Balmain. The test should be a sudden death one, however, and not like the government's test that has no limit on the number of times applicants may take it. We also think that the test should be an aural one and, to make it more democratic, there should be a panel or jury of Balmain residents who will decide whether the applicant is a suitable person for residency. It should be understood that there will be no leaking of answers because the correctness of the answers will depend on the jury's views so the whole process will be fair and no individual can be held solely responsible for the decision. Further suggestions for suitable questions will be greatly appreciated. Also being considered is a test for current residents who wish to leave Balmain - but this test will have to wait for another time.

Proposed prospective residency questions:

1. How much money have you got?
2. Do you believe in metred parking in Darling Street and its surrounds?
3. Should public whipping be carried out in Loyalty Square for residents who paint their houses the wrong colour?

4. Do you support the installing of an automated barrier system on exit and entry points of the Balmain peninsula which will only allow a vehicle in when one leaves?
5. Should Frank Sartor be appointed the President of the Balmain republic? Please explain.
6. Does your family really require four 4x4s and where will you park them?
7. Where will you park your motor cruiser and yacht?
8. Trees a) should be chopped down b) are large weeds c) spoil views d) are good for producing wood chips e) block drains f) endanger power lines g) all of the previous h) other (please specify)
9. How many dogs do you have?
10. Do you intend to swim in the Dawn Fraser pool?
11. When was the hundredth café opened in Balmain?
12. Does Balmain have enough restaurants and hairdressers?
13. Should there be real resident agencies as well as real estate agencies in Balmain?
14. Are you willing to become a trend-setter and reduce the size of any house or apartment you buy in Balmain?
15. Will you throw out useful household goods in the next household collection?
16. Will you be prepared to search through skips for any useful piece of wood etc to store in your house because it might come in handy?
17. Do you know what footpaths are for?
18. What is the Balmain Association: a church, a retirees' club, a drama society?
19. What, besides being close to the CBD, is Balmain noted for?
20. What is there the greatest need for in Balmain: retirement homes, nursing homes, childcare centres, cafes or service stations?
21. Where would you like to live if you were refused residency in Balmain?
22. Do you vote for Labor or The Greens?
23. What is a worker?
24. Where would you send your children to school if you were young enough or mad enough to have any?
25. How will you annoy your neighbours?
26. In the Leichhardt LEP should there be a limit of 10 hairdressers per hectare?
27. Also, what should be the FSR (fashion sense ratio) allowable in Balmain? (NB it is important that the FSR is not too high as this would be likely to lead to frock-shop led inflation and a poker machine drought due to increased expenditure on fashion items.)
28. Finish the following sentence in less than 100 words. Gardens are unnecessary because
29. Complete the next sentence in less than two words starting with the letter "s". Leichhardt Council
30. What do you grumble about besides residency tests?

New Schedule for the Completion of Ballast Point Park

As you may have seen site works at Ballast Point are winding down. SHFA has announced that Caltex's demolition and remediation work is nearing completion and is expected to be finished in late October or early November. Once the remediation is finished there will be a period of approximately 8 weeks for the site auditor to issue the site audit statement that will say the site is suitable for use as a park. Given this timeframe SHFA anticipates that the work on establishing the park will begin mid January. A 10-month construction period for the park is being allowed for.

INTERPRETIVE SIGN FOR COCKATOO ISLAND

COCKATOO ISLAND

Cockatoo Island is the largest of the Port Jackson islands. Initially named Bird Island in 1788, it became known as Cockatoo Island by 1839. The island's history includes convicts, prisoners, a reformatory, and shipbuilding and repair. There is no recorded history of the use of the island by the Eora people.




CONVICTS, ORPHANS AND PRISONERS, 1839 - 1911

- 1839 - 1869**
Convict prison. Frederick Ward, later known as the notorious bushranger, Captain Thunderbolt, escaped from the island on 9 September 1863.
- 1871 - 1888**
Island renamed Bileela (aboriginal for cockatoo) while used as a reformatory for girls.
- 1871 - 1899**
Henry Parkes established Vernon as a Nautical School Ship to train homeless and orphaned boys.
- 1889 - 1908**
Golf for men and women until Long Bay Golf opened.
- 1891 - 1911**
Fishing ship, Salmon, replaced the old and rotting Vernon.

MARITIME HISTORY 1847 - 1992

- 1857**
Convicts built Fitzroy Dock.
- 1899**
Paid labour built Sutherland Dock.
- 1871 - 1913**
Forty vessels, ranging up to 900 tons, were launched.
- 1913 - 1972**
Caltex's shipyard. Dockyard until 1933 then Cockatoo Dock & Engineering Co Ltd. Over 40 major naval ships were built and hundreds repaired and refitted. In its heyday 4000 men worked at the dockyard.
- 1972 - 1992**
Jardine Cockatoo Dockyard Ltd. The last and largest ship built on the island was the HMAS Success, a replenishment ship launched in 1989.

Further information:
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust: www.harbourtrust.gov.au

Leichhardt Council will install an interpretive sign about Cockatoo Island in the park beside Fitzroy Avenue. The sign is a result of a cooperative arrangement between Council and the Balmain Association.

AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

The humble "dunny" (*Toiletus backyardi*) has almost disappeared from Balmain and the inner west of Sydney and should now be put on the endangered species register. Some have disappeared because of redevelopments or additions at the back fence such as garages. Others have just been overgrown, or camouflaged, though not by the traditional method of the choko vine (Sadly choko vines also seem to be an endangered species in the inner west. Perhaps there is a dependency connection here though it is more likely that *influenza* is the cause of both demises.).



Dilapidated and camouflaged

There are of course other species of the same genus (*Toiletus indoori*) which are seen in ever increasing numbers and must now, on average, have an occupancy rate of close to one per person and, in some parts of Balmain, even two or more per resident. These introduced species, like the cane toad, have driven the native species, such as the (*Toiletus backyardi* and *Toiletus publici*) to near extinction.



A remanent semi-detached dunny

Fifty years ago dunnies were ubiquitous in Balmain though not in as great numbers as the newer species. Besides the *Toiletus indoori* there are an increasing number and variety of *Toiletus constructi* and even rare examples of the "upstairs dunny" (see photo) though this variety should more accurately be called the "upladders dunny". There are some who maintain that upladders dunny is just a climbing variety of *Toiletus constructi*.



Photo at the left shows an example of *Toiletus constructi* and above, *Toiletus awai*

Recently though the true "upstairs dunny" has evolved thanks in part to the Federal Government's Work Choices legislation. Although there have been no reported sightings of upstairs dunnies in

Balmain, at least one has been seen elsewhere as the second photograph shows. So far there has not been a botanical name allocated but there have been a number of suggestions such *Toiletus howardi*, *Toiletus politici* and *Toiletus awai*,

Thanks to Federal Government initiatives the upstairs dunny and the upladders dunny are on the increase but we should be paying more attention to the disappearance of the humble or common dunny. It is of heritage significance and it is becoming more rare as FSRs increase. While there are still a few surviving ones around, probably most of those on view are stuffed (with gardening tools usually).

For many years Leichhardt Council has encouraged tree planting and enforced tree preservation orders with miraculous results. Perhaps it is time to preserve the one species that Council appears to have paid little attention to, the "backyard lavatree" and the attendant dunny lane. An alternative would be to undertake a photographic record of those that are left standing or the brick shit-house might disappear from our lexicon as well as our suburb.

MORE ON THE CAMERON STREET WALL

In a letter headed "Dear Councillor" in the September issue of The Observer it was observed that some beautification of the wall separating Cameron Street from Mort Bay Park would be appreciated. David Liddle also suggested the inclusion of small "peep holes" in the wall.

It was subsequently pointed out that there was another side to the story, as well as the wall, and that Council had been working on improvements for some time. Carolyn Allen indicated that she had been regularly in contact with council officers about the wall and that a DA was to be submitted soon so that the changes could be carried out.

Carolyn also suggested that maybe there could be a very small community occasion for the opening of "The Liddle Peep Holes" in the wall when the changes have been completed.

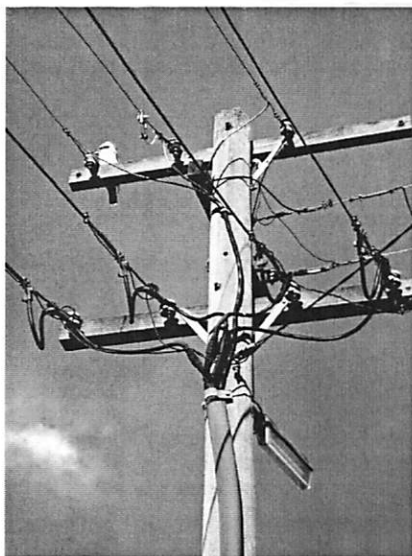


CARBON OFF-CUTS FOR POWER SUPPLY SAVING

We hear much about carbon off-sets and carbon trading and green power where electricity generation is involved but a lot less these days about carbon off-cuts in the name of power supply. In July and August Balmain was visited by trimmer/lopper employees of Active Tree Services, a contractor for Energy Australia. They were intent on reversing the greening of Balmain in the name of ensuring that electricity supplies are safe from the green terrorists, otherwise known as trees.



A hybrid "bureaucratree"



Where the power lines go underground in Ballast Point Road (above) and an example of bundled cables in Cameron Street (below)..



For many years there has been talk of underground power supplies and in some cases, notably the Mort Bay housing development, underground power distribution was indeed used. In existing

residential areas however the cost is considered unacceptable. We don't know what the cost would be (the last estimate a few years ago was about \$4000 per residence) and we don't know how much residents would be prepared to pay for the electricity supply to be put underground in parts of Balmain. Nor do we know what savings might be achieved by doing this. It seems that it is time to review the situation and consider other possible options such as partial underground supply (which has already been done in parts of Balmain eg the western end of Ballast Point Road and the Mort Bay development) or, in some situations, running the cables over the centre of streets or attached to buildings rather than power poles, as is done in some other countries.

While running the electrical supply above the centre of roads may mean the cost of extra power poles (one pole each side of the street would be needed unless the support cables could be anchored on buildings), in the long run this may be cheaper than slashing trees every two or three years and it would help lock up some extra carbon as well. In some streets it may just be sufficient to run the supply lines from one side of the street to the other in a few places to avoid some significant trees and in other cases it may be necessary to put the cables underground in places to avoid some serious and unsightly lopping. Let us at least have a cost benefit analysis on these concepts for some streets, or parts of streets, to see whether it would be possible and whether residents want changes and what they are prepared to pay for them. And let the cost of serious apoplexy amongst residents be factored in.

Failing that, or perhaps instead of such a survey, or together with it, let us have a street-planting scheme that gives us some large trees where they won't interfere with electricity supplies, and other infrastructure and smaller planting where this is not possible.

In many parts of Sydney and now in parts of Balmain the insulated cables are bundled together and strung through trees as such arrangements are less sensitive to damage and therefore do not require brutal hacking. There are also short stretch examples of this in Balmain. Perhaps one should ask, how often is there a power failure in Balmain because of falling branches? OK this is because the trees are pruned or tortured before they can threaten our precious power supplies! But if they are so important perhaps they need to be put underground out of harm's way and where motorists can't run into power poles.

The requirements of Energy Australia for the tree trimming are that no part of a tree must be within 1.5 m of a bare 240 volt power line at any time. For bundled cables the requirement is that the cable must have a vegetation clearance of 0.5 m but the vegetation is allowed to touch the cables intermittently.

Contractors are required to ensure that Energy Australia's policies are complied with but the contractors are not permitted to undertake any cutting outside the limits set by Energy Australia and so they cannot undertake cosmetic or remedial tree surgery (that is Council's responsibility). Hence the absurd looking results in some cases (see photo above).

The cost of installing bundled cables is between \$3000 and \$5000 per span (from one pole to another). The cost of maintaining the Energy Australia requirements in Balmain appears to be of the order of \$50,000 per year, so cutting trees is a cheaper option than replacing bare cables with bundled cables in the short term. Unless we get serious as a community or Council about making a contribution or the Federal or State government gets serious about carbon off-cuts as well as off-sets, trees will continue to be mutilated.

An alternative might be to install some plastic foliage on the existing power poles or employ artists to make sculptures out of them or decorate them or produce totem poles. Perhaps Leichhardt Council and Energy Australia could agree to investigate these possibilities further.



Basket Weavers and True Believers

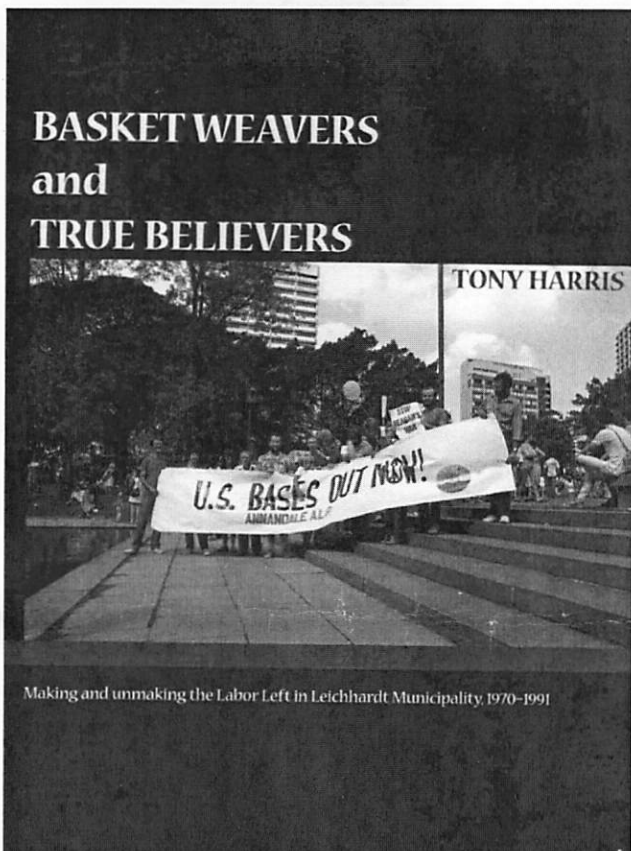
By Tony Harris
Leftbank Publishing, 2007

Tony's book was launched at Gleebooks on 15th September, 2007, by Meredith Burgmann, ex-President of the NSW Upper House, and introduced by Professor Bruce Scates.

It is an important addition to the recorded history of politics in the Leichhardt Municipality, and with special emphasis on left, right and centre attitudes in the ALP branches, while taking account of the independents who played such a determining role in shaping the direction of local politics.

The choice of the name for the book gives some indication of what is recorded, bearing in mind Keating's sneering appellation of "basket weavers" for all the forward-looking elements in and outside the ALP versus the so-called "true believers" who hated any sort of change.

This work is an excellent portrayal of the period of the nineteen-seventies to the nineteen-nineties, calling to mind the many issues which confronted the people of the municipality and caused many divisions among the left, right and centre in local politics.



One element in the development of the leftward tendency in the ALP however, calls for more emphasis than is given in Tony's work. This concerns what can only be regarded as the essential cause for that development: the fight in the Balmain Branch of the Party over the proposal to establish a chemical tank farm in a residential area in Balmain.

In standing up for the residents' serious concerns about the issue, the bulk of the membership of the Branch, including the Balmain Ward Aldermen (Origlass and Wyner), were expelled from the Party in 1968. This was the spark that ran like wildfire through the ALP in the Municipality, and produced the open council of 7 independents and 5 ALPers. It also saw

leftward leaning members moving to take over the Branches as Tony Harris shows.

Some day, this aspect of politics in Leichhardt, especially a clear spelling out of the meaning and description of "open council", should be fully researched and recorded as a basic element of democracy and transparency in government.

Meanwhile, Tony Harris is to be congratulated on his research and documentation of much of the ALP's history in the Leichhardt Municipality.

Issy Wyner

Treasurer's Report for 2006-7

Another pleasing year financially with a surplus again. Our assets keep accumulating because we are still negotiating with the Public Works to restore the Watch House sandstone. Some essential plumbing, electrical and roofing work was achieved. Below is a short version of the audited Operating Statement for the year ended 30 June 2007. The full statement is available on request.

Val Hamey

The Balmain Association Inc (Incorporated under the Association Act 1984 – ABN15181806487)

Statement of Financial Position at June 30

Current Assets	2006	2007
Bank Balance	\$35588.27	\$29391.65
Term Deposit	\$50000.00	\$77000.00
Cash in hand	\$7.85	\$9.10
Total Cash & Bank	\$85596.12	\$106400.75
Interest Accrual	\$176.44	\$1388.72
Sundry Debtors	\$90.00	\$120.00
Total Assets	\$85862.56	\$107909.47

Current Liabilities

Creditors (Subscriptions in advance)	\$900.00	\$720.00
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Members Funds	\$84962.56	\$107189.47
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Vancouver, BC, Canada shows the way: notices for dogs as well as notices about dogs.

What's on at the Watch House

For further information see <http://balmainassociation.org.au>

DECEMBER/JANUARY

Friday, November 30, Saturday 1, Sunday 2 and Wednesday 5 to Sunday 9 December 12 – 6pm.

30:30 Vision

The Mosaic Association of Australia and New Zealand is holding its annual exhibition, 30:30 Vision. This Touring Exhibition begins its journey here at the Balmain Watch House. From this collection of works only 16 will be chosen to tour Australia's Regional Galleries. Our theme this year is 'INSECTS' either whole or part thereof. Works from around Australia & New Zealand will be on sale. Come and see where the new wave of artistic mosaicing is heading.

Wednesday 12 December, 6:00 pm. Balmain Association's Christmas Bash and opening of the *Living, Loving and Loathing* photographic exhibition by Carolyn Allen, Mayor of Leichhardt.

Please notify Kathleen (9818 4954) or June (9810 6885) if you intend to attend.

Saturdays 11:30 am to 3:30 pm from 15 December 2007 to 26 January 2008.

Living, Loving and Loathing in Balmain Photographic Exhibition

Last year two schools participated in the highly successful *Balmain Through Younger Eyes* photographic exhibition organized by the Balmain Association. The participants in *Living, Loving and Loathing in Balmain*, this year's photographic exhibition, are Nicholson Street Public School students, Sydney Secondary College, Balmain Campus students and Balmain photographer, David Liddle.

FEBRUARY 08

Saturday 9, Sunday, 10

10am to 4pm

Balmain for Refugees and Bridge for Asylum Seekers

Opening Friday 8th Feb. 6 – 9pm

Admission free but donations to Balmain for Refugees and Bridge for Asylum Seekers welcomed.

An exhibition of art works by detainees at the Villawood Immigration Detention Centre. Works include those by a talented young Tanzanian former detainee an equally talented Russian still in detention. The Croatian who exhibited last year has more paintings. As well there will be works donated by other artists.

Proceeds from sales of asylum seeker work will be given to the artists. Proceeds from sales of donated works will be used by Balmain for Refugees, recipients of 2006 Law and Justice Foundation Volunteer Award, for their work with asylum seekers from countries such as Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Algeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Nigeria, Nepal, Burma, Aceh, and China.

Saturday 16, Sunday 17

Serendipity

a joint exhibition of paintings by Shona Liney and prints by Steven Liney.

Saturday 23, Sunday 24

10am to 4pm

Balmain Peninsula Park Painters are holding their Annual Exhibition in the Balmain Watch House with a wine and cheese Opening on Friday evening 22 February from 6 until 8 pm, open to all interested.

The artists exhibiting are Susan Grant, Barbara Hamilton, Mary Cullen, Jenny Saunders Thompson and Pamela Neville. Their works often started as sketches or watercolours in the parks of Balmain and reflect their various interpretations of our local waterfront and historic built environment, as well as inspirations from travels in Australia and overseas. This year's exhibition has an additional focus on different interpretations of the **Tugs of Balmain**. The watercolour, acrylic and oil paintings are offered at very reasonable prices.

Living, Loving and Loathing in Balmain

An exhibition of photographs by students from Nicholson Public School, Sydney Secondary College (Balmain Campus) and photographer David Liddle.

Venue: Balmain Watch House

Open: Saturdays 15 December 07 to 26 January 08

Time: 11:30 am to 3:30 pm

Admission: free

The Balmain Association

<http://balmainassociation.org.au>

Heritage Week

National Trust Heritage Festival April 2008

Theme "Our Place"

Our event will be "*Our Place – Balmain*": a photographic exhibition featuring work by students from local primary schools, Sydney Secondary College (Balmain Campus), photographer David Liddle as well as photographs from our archives.

There will be more information in the next newsletter.

The Balmain Association Inc Representing Balmain, Birchgrove and 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 realization 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 12:00 – 3:00pm.

Our editorial contacts:
phone/fax is 02 9810 1179
Email ferg@arch.usyd.edu.au
Postal: PO Box 57 Balmain 2041

Our Web site:
<http://balmainassociation.org.au>
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