



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

Vol 43 No 1 Issue 306

Founded November 1965

March 2008

IT'S TIME

The most outstanding group of buildings in Balmain, in more ways than one, comprises the Post Office, Court House and Town Hall. This "Civic Group", which was completed in 1888, was designed by Edmund Blackett (Post Office and Court House) and Edward Buchanan (Town Hall). The Architectural style of the buildings is Late Victorian Classical.

Blackett was the Government Architect and Buchanan was, at the time of the opening of the Town Hall, the 29-year-old Mayor of Balmain (the youngest mayor in the colony), Alderman for the North Balmain (now Birchgrove) Ward, designer of St John's Church and Ellersie Terrace (in Ballast Point Road) and the main driving force behind the creation of Birchgrove Park.

At the time the Civic Group was completed it was just over 50 years since the first land subdivision was made of the "Gilchrist estate" (the 550 acres of the original 1800 Balmain land grant that extended from Peacock Point in the east to Callan Park and White's Creek in the west). In that time the population of Balmain had grown



Civic Group in 1906

to about 20,000 and Balmain had become the industrial heartland of Australia.

The site of the Civic Group is the highest point in Balmain, the centre of Balmain Council boundaries and was the site of Balmain Cottage Hospital and subsequently, in 1875, Balmain Council offices and the first Council Chamber (now the Meeting Room at Balmain Town Hall) in 1881.

Since 1888 there have been some noticeable changes to the Civic Group. The fence around the buildings was probably removed during WW I. The first addition was of a single storey Police Station (1920) on the western side of the Court House. (The 1854 Watch House continued to be used into the 1930s when it became the residence for a constable's family.) This first addition was in sympathy with the original design.

The second major change was the removal of the octagonal dome from the eastern side of the Town Hall in 1942. It has been said that this was done because the dome presented a clear visual marker for Japanese bomber pilots but the more likely

reason is that the framework for the dome rotted making the dome unsafe.

After WW II the glass house was built in to supply flowers for the Town Hall. Shortly afterwards Balmain Council was incorporated into Leichhardt Council. In 1953 an unsympathetic first floor was added to the Police Station. The 50s also saw the Darling Street part of the Balmain Telephone Exchange excrescence built on the park beside the PO in 1957 and the steeple on the PO tower removed.

In 1972 the telephone exchange was enlarged by adding the taller building behind the 1957 one creating an even greater monstrosity. The softener for this egregious extension was the replacement of the steeple on the PO tower in 1978.

There have been other changes to the Town Hall, mainly to the interior, and there is a planned extension to the rear of the Town Hall to accommodate an enlarged library. Nothing appears



Civic Group in 2007

to be planned for the Telephone Exchange. The building is owned by Telstra Corporation. Its exchange function could be fitted into a small room but Sydney County Council (now Energy Australia) has a lease on the building for a sub-station until 2018.

Surely it is time to consider returning the Civic Group to its former glory by removing the front of the Telephone Exchange and replacing it with a small square or plaza with fountain, rebuilding the Town Hall dome, and perhaps also removing the first floor of the Police Station.

IN THIS ISSUE

Page	
1	The Civic Group
2	Balmain's Religious Heritage
3	Callan Park
4	White Bay, Telephone X
5	Nature, Ballast Point, Lionel
6	Living Loving and Loathing in Balmain. Dunny Update
7	Is Balmain Part of Australia?
8	What's on in the Watch House.

BALMAIN'S RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Several Christian churches and their adjunct buildings collectively form a large portion of the Balmain peninsula's historical "buildings of public assembly". When viewed from Sydney's North Shore, it's the tapered roof of the tower of St Augustine of Hippo's Catholic Church, together with the steeples of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches, which makes the skyline of the eastern peninsula unique. These landmarks distinguish Balmain's townscape from those of other suburbs and their removal would annihilate the peninsula's Victorian character.

There are prominent names associated with the architecture of a number of churches. Edmund Thomas Blackett (1817 - 83) is linked to two Anglican churches (St Mary's, Balmain East - including the former parochial school hall and St Thomas's, Rozelle - including the rectory), as well as to Jane Street's former Convent of the Immaculate Conception. Next to the present St Augustine's, there stands the original church (without its steeple), likely built from a design of Augustus Welby Northbourne Pugin (1812-52), who led 19th century England's Gothic revival.

Of the three peninsular churches that local alderman and architect James McDonald (*ob.* 1902) designed, only the Presbyterian in Campbell Street survives. Edward John Bowen (1866-1926), also a local alderman and architect, oversaw the design and construction of Rozelle's second St Paul's Presbyterian Church. A third local alderman and architect, Edward Harman Buchanan (1859-1943), designed St John's Anglican Church.

The abundance of memorial inscription in and around these buildings narrates the depth to which religious beliefs and institutions once influenced and enlivened the everyday individual, domestic and communal experiences of earlier generations. Splendid organs housed in some churches display the centrality of music to formal worship of those eras.

The contemporary religious scene is immeasurably different. The 2006 census counted 21,584 persons resident on the Balmain peninsula. Of these, almost 43 percent either ignored the religious question or stated "no religion". This figure was an eight percent increase over that of 2001.

Faltering attendances at Sunday worship, compounded by progressive aging of parishioners and clergy, have economic corollaries. Thus, in 2007, a professional property consultant to Sydney Anglican Diocese made a commercial analysis of properties held by 16 parishes sampled in Sydney's older suburbs. This revealed that maintenance and repair costs, together with heritage protection, generally rendered churches as



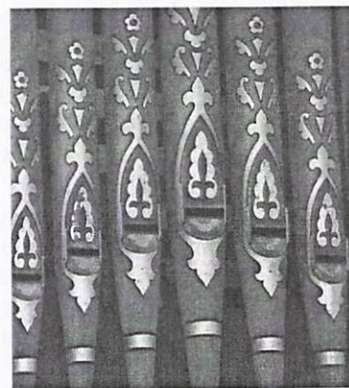
liabilities, with their actual realizable value, in almost all instances, being significantly below insurance value. The consultant calculated that, first, the more a church is designed for special use, the greater is the loss of the capital spent on its construction. Secondly, past and present generations of parishioners are unlikely to have contributed anywhere near the costs of adequate property maintenance, repair and replacement. Significantly, the analysis ignored climate change and the consequential costs of upgraded weatherproofing, improved lightning conduction, and flood-plan implementation.

Conservation of religious heritage in Australia has evolved as an issue that is no less pastorally complex as it is commercially and politically volatile. Exactly a decade ago, sensing that religious heritage conservation in New South Wales is approaching crisis, a perspicacious Heritage Council hosted an

excellent conference on the subject (appositely at Manly's former St Patrick's seminary). In a keynote address to that conference, Jennifer Clark, scholar of religious history at New England University, candidly described the transformation that Australia's historical Christian denominations face:

Congregations belonging to mainstream Protestant denominations in the inner cities and rural areas of Australia are dwindling in size. When this process continues to the point where maintenance of the building and the servicing of the congregation can no longer be financially justified, the building is usually sold and the congregation disbanded. What was often a distinctive church building is then used for a different purpose, perhaps a restaurant, commercial offices or a private home. In the transfer from religious to secular use, ecclesiastical features associated with the building also shift ownership. No longer being the prerogative of the church, these features become secularised into the vocabulary of popular culture through the appeal of preserving national heritage.

Dr Clark's research indicates that, overall, the response of Australian Churches to the impact which demographic and other social change continues to make on the utility and upkeep of their heritage deposits has been pitifully confused. This is in contrast to the United Kingdom, where comprehensive and sophisticated policies, in combination with organizational structures and procedures, have evolved within mainstream denominations, especially the Church of England. In combination, these guide and regulate not only redundancy, but also widespread adaptation and reuse of heritage church buildings.



For widely canvassed and debated doctrinal reasons, the Church of England's initiatives have ensured that key elements of conservation policy and practice are firmly under ecclesiastical control. The Church of England manages some 900 pastorally redundant churches in any given year, many of these being landmark buildings. In formulating its macro-policy on redundancy, the Church of England has considered issues such as:

- the range of alternative uses that can be considered for these churches;
- if continuation as places of worship is appropriate, should the worship be Christian or non-Christian;
- priority of public ownership and use of these churches over private.

According to Dr Clark, "Unless well-managed, [church] closure can [and continues to] be a divisive and bitter experience". This is to be expected in an age of rapid demographic change, in which a local church may survive as the sole icon of a community's identity and sole repository of its memory.

While the provisions of Leichhardt Environmental Plan 2000 are the key administrative framework for the conservation of peninsular churches, no LEP can guarantee their adequate upkeep for the purpose for which they were originally constructed. Unless trustees of these sites begin generating their own contingency plans, it may be timely for the Balmain Association to appraise needs and formulate strategies to secure not only proper conservation of these sites but, where possible, continued public access and enjoyment.

John Williams

The author is a local resident, a parishioner of St John's Anglican Church, Balmain, and an enthusiast of religious history.

CALLAN PARK

The eviction before Christmas of the last veterans with war-related mental illnesses from Callan Park to make way for an oval for elite university sportsmen sums up in a nutshell what the government is trying to do at Callan Park.

The closing of Rozelle Psychiatric Hospital will be at the expense of some of our most vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens.

The new mental health wing at Concord is just not a replacement – seven years ago there were nearly 300 mental health beds available at Rozelle and Concord; the new wing out there will have 174. On top of that reduction is the relative inaccessibility of that new facility for people in the inner-west.

Besides we need more beds, not just a relocation of existing beds. At the opening of the law year on January 28 the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Peter Jensen, appealed for an end to the jailing of people with a mental illness. The government's own research (in 2003) revealed that nearly 700 of the state's 9000 prisoners suffered from a psychotic illness – and many more from less serious mental illnesses.

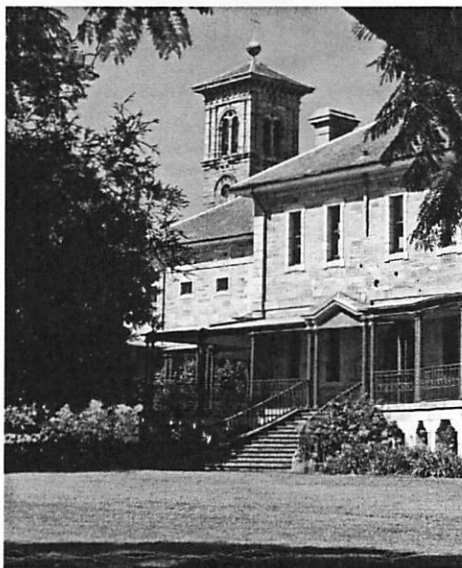
The archbishop did not mention Callan Park by name as part of the solution, but the next day Sue Steedman, the director of the homeless support centre, Our Place, did. Responding to the new PM Kevin Rudd's call for action to reduce homelessness, Steedman, in a strongly featured letter to *The Sydney Morning Herald*, emphasised the part that Callan Park could play in overcoming the problem of homelessness. She wrote:

The problems are systemic and complex, and a "one size fits all" solution focusing on education and employment assistance is not enough. One obvious and productive step would be to re-examine whether the best use of a facility such as Callan Park is for student accommodation, as is planned.

It could be, as was once intended, a safe haven for the mentally ill and addicted: a one-stop shop where government and private mental health facilities and professionals could exist alongside residential support programs for these most vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

We know too from the meticulous but little known reports of the Sentinel Events Review Committee (an expert committee set up by the state government) that the lack of mental health beds is one of the factors behind the climbing suicide rate among people with a mental illness. To put it starkly, because of the shortage of hospital beds seriously ill patients are discharged, or even refused admission, and go home and kill themselves – by poisoning in the case of women and violently in the case of men. Most of them are relatively young.

The takeover of the bulk of Callan Park by the University of Sydney will mean that Callan Park will no longer be able to be that "safe haven" that Sue Steedman points out is so desperately needed.



This is the challenge that now faces the residents of Balmain and Leichhardt Municipality – the saving of that safe haven. The heartening news is that Council's survey of last August found 73% supported retaining the hospital with only 10% supporting its closure. Even if Rozelle Hospital is closed as the government intends, the point will be to preserve the grounds and the buildings (many of which were built in the 1990s and 1960s) for the benefit of people with a mental illness. For all the talk of how ancient the Rozelle Hospital buildings are, it is in fact the more modern buildings (some, I repeat, built only 15 years ago) that

would be demolished if the University of Sydney takeover was to happen. But isn't the handover to the University a done deal?

This is the impression that the state government wants to give but the memorandum of agreement signed between the two parties is "non-binding". Besides the University is looking at two other sites for expansion – the old Everleigh workshops in Redfern and Harold Park, both of which are closer to the main campus. The word from within the University is that no decision will be made until the new vice-chancellor arrives in June. At present the University plans are very vague. In the meeting the Friends had with some University executives last July it was obvious the only interest they had in Callan Park then was the sporting ovals (one of which they aim to build on the site of the veterans wards). Even then they added that the University would not be interested in Callan Park if it involved "a dog fight" with the community.

On the other side of the deal, we know that when it comes to Callan Park the state government is driven by money and malice – to use the words of Councillor Jamie Parker. But it is a government with little moral credit at present and, more importantly, without a majority in the upper house. This is important because any deal with the University will require significant changes to the Callan Park (Special Provisions) Act 2002. Limits on development in that Act would have to be abolished if the University was to take over the site.

When the deal collapses it will pose again the future of this iconic site. The Friends of Callan Park and Leichhardt Council support a major mental health facility continuing on the site and the whole of the parklands being managed by a Trust – and all indications are that the community shares this vision. That just leaves the question of ownership. Perhaps just as the Whitlam government stepped in to buy the Glebe Estate in 1973 (Balmain resident and legend Tom Uren was the minister responsible for this landmark decision) the Rudd government can do the same for Callan Park.

Hall Greenland
President
Friends of Callan Park

Whitewashing White Bay

On 13 March 2007, just prior to the last NSW State Government election, the Premier announced that the 'State Government had agreed to establish a community reference panel to initiate the White Bay Master Planning process'. This followed an announcement in December 2006 that the State Government would draw up a new Masterplan for White Bay/Glebe Island in consultation with the local community.

As of the end of January 2008 no community reference panel has been established. Instead, a 'Bays Taskforce', consisting of representatives from a number of government authorities, was set up and planned to meet in late 2007, without consultation with the community, to prepare a preliminary land use review of the 'Bays'. These 'bays' include White Bay, Glebe Island, Rozelle Bay, Blackwattle Bay and the Rozelle marshalling yards. No information has been forthcoming regarding the outcome of such a meeting and there has been no further public communication. One may ask what happened to the community involvement to initiate the planning process and the continued community involvement throughout, as promised by our local member Ms Firth.

The removal of the car transport terminal that currently takes up the major part of Glebe Island and wharves 4-6 of White Bay is still expected to take place later this year. This means that now is the most opportune time to properly plan the future of this valuable harbour foreshore land.

The IC&L proposal for a cement terminal on Wharves 2&3, White Bay, has been withdrawn but also stated as deferred in the Sydney Ports Annual report. Past experience has shown that residents need to be concerned about Sydney Ports' apparent lack of concern for our fast-growing community.

Meanwhile the Baileys Marine and Industrial Development Proposal for Wharf 6 at White Bay is still being assessed. After a meeting of stakeholders, including community representatives, with the Minister for Planning Mr Sartor, responsibility for further assessment was passed to an 'independent' panel consisting of former Labor Government Minister for Planning Andrew Refshauge (Chair), former CEO of NSW Maritime Authority Matthew Taylor and John Wasserman of noise consultants Wilkinson Murray. A public hearing took place on 4, 5 Feb 2008 at Leichhardt Town Hall to be heard by the panel of 'experts'. Why is this development being assessed in isolation when it is proposed for a location that is part of a harbour foreshore area under review?

The Balmain Association presented a written submission at the hearing. The submission expressed a number of concerns and suggestions with regard to the proposed development. These include:

- No development should be assessed for this strategic foreshore site before the new plan, with full community input, for White Bay/Glebe Island is in place.
- The proposed facility, which involves numerous operations, will be noisy, presents environmental hazards, boat collision risks, closes off the foreshore from the public and intends to operate 24 hrs per day immediately next to a growing residential area.
- It has not been shown that this facility needs to be in this location or that, in its entirety, it is needed at all. In fact much information points to this site as unsuitable and inappropriate due to undesirable environmental impact and lack of benefit to the public. (This is publicly owned land).
- There is concern that other convenient refuelling points will be closed if Baileys' large commercial refuelling facility goes ahead.

Other presentations at the hearing included those from the White Bay Precinct, Balmain East Precinct, the Strata bodies for 1 Grafton St, 14 Hosking St, 16 Hosking St, the White Bay Joint Steering Committee, Leichhardt Council, the Sydney Ports Liaison Group, members of the local branch of the ALP, and other concerned residents and businesses, including presentations by traffic and acoustics experts. All of the above were opposed to the proposed development. There were three presentations from Boating /Maritime organizations/businesses in favour of the proposal.

Some local residents have been recently notified that a 24 hr per day use of Wharf 2 is about to take place, directly in front of residential apartments, for the purposes of Harbour bridge maintenance, with acknowledged noise and other environmental impact on the immediate residential area for a period of at least 18 months. No prior community consultation took place re this further industrial use of White Bay adjacent to a large number of residences.

It must be of concern to the community that continued industrial use of prime harbour foreshore land is taking place, and future industrial use being considered in an ad hoc fashion, in a fast-growing residential environment next to the CBD. This is despite State Government promises of a review of the use of White Bay/Glebe Island and a new masterplan with community input in place by late 2007.

Christina Ritchie

Balmain Telephone Exchange

Five questions were put to Telstra by The Observer in January this year. The questions were:

- 1 Does Telstra own the exchange and if not who does?
- 2 What is the exchange used for, if anything, besides being a telephone exchange?
- 3 What is the future of the exchange?
- 4 Can a representative of The Observer see over the exchange?
- 5 If the Darling Street facade of the exchange was altered and set back 10 metres, would this still give enough room for the exchange to function given that the exchange was built in the "cross-bar" era and exchange equipment has been miniaturized since then?

The answer from Telstra in January was:

"Please attribute the following response to a Telstra spokesperson."

Telstra owns the Balmain Telephone Exchange which currently provides fixed phone line services, ADSL Broadband, business services and technologies (including IP services) to our customers. All Telstra Exchange buildings are private property and therefore generally remain restricted to public access.

Telstra's networks provide valuable communications to residents, businesses and emergency service organizations. The security and protection of our infrastructure - including our exchange buildings - is paramount to Australia and protected by Federal law. Due to the nature and complexity of our equipment, any equipment or any infrastructure relocation at Balmain exchange is not possible at this point in time.

From other sources it has been established that the Telephone Exchange has been leased for 30 years to Sydney County Council (Energy Australia) since 1988 and is also used as an electricity sub-station.

It has also been indicated that while the switching takes up very little space the cable terminations take up considerably more space. Why Telstra was unable to supply this information is not clear.

We are getting a partially engaged signal. Does anyone own Telstra shares or know Sol Trujillo?

Nature in Balmain

Whether you have a large garden, a small garden or just a window box, working in your garden will keep you in touch with nature and all the benefits that flow from that. Since October last year we have been enjoying well above average rainfalls, in fact some 90 mm over the monthly averages. Naturally, our gardens have gone wild and dancing with joy; including those plants we call weeds.

All this rain brings problems, one of which is fungicides. In an earlier edition I mentioned Jerry Coleby-Williams' article in Gardening Australia magazine, in which he described a non-chemical solution for the control of powdery mildew, black spot and rust on roses. It was developed at Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens. I think it is well worth giving you the recipe again. How to make it? To one litre of water add two teaspoons of bicarbonate of soda, one drop of horticultural or vegetable oil and a drop of biodegradable washing up liquid. Shake well before spraying to help dissolve bicarb. How to apply? Use either an atomiser or pump spray. Spray during the cool of the morning to eliminate any chance of foliage being burned in intense sunshine before the spray dries. Wet both sides of leaves and stems to drip point. By the way this spray doesn't harm ladybirds.

I am recommending a plant that brings colour to your garden, is tough and is an old-fashioned favourite: Buddleja (also spelt Buddleia). There are some hundred species some of which are shrubby or tree like. There are some decorative cultivars, which are grown for their profuse, small and fragrant flowers that are in large panicles. My favourite is Buddleja davidii. This quick vigorous growing plant has a bushy habit, arching stems and

fragrant mauve flowers. Some of the available varieties are Black Knight, Dartmoor, Empire Blue and White Profusion. These plants need a sunny to part-shade position and will quickly fill that space.

Well all this rain has done wonders for our wildlife. I have noticed an increase in possums, birds and frogs. On the corner of Balmain Road and City West Link, the



wasteland belonging to Sydney Buses has an increased ground cover of weeds and shrubs which has become the home of several families of blue wrens. In Leichhardt and parts of Balmain, home of many concrete gardens, the possums are on the march, enjoying eating young Acer trees and magnolia buds. However, in recent times many concrete gardens are being transformed into small green oases.

Finally, the Common Koel, that bird that arrives from the Northern Territory or New Guinea in early spring and drives many people mad with its early morning call (a high pitch 'Koo-well' rising to 'wurra wurra'), will be on its way home this month.

Clive Abbott



Construction of Ballast Point Park

As you may know, the NSW Government acquired Ballast Point in 2002 to create a major new harbour-side park, with the project managed by Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority.

The Foreshore Authority undertook a substantial consultation process between 2003 and 2005 to ensure community input into the park design, which directly shaped the park's Master Plan

Following the many years of detailed planning, consultation and design, construction of Ballast Point Park is about to commence.

This is the final stage in the transformation of the former industrial site into a new harbour foreshore public park and is a significant milestone.

The Foreshore Authority has appointed Landscape Solutions to construct the approved design for the park and it is expected that construction will be

finished by the end of 2008 and the park will open in early 2009.

If you have a question about the construction activities, please contact Landscape Solutions – available 24 hours a day, seven days a week on 0425 268 007.

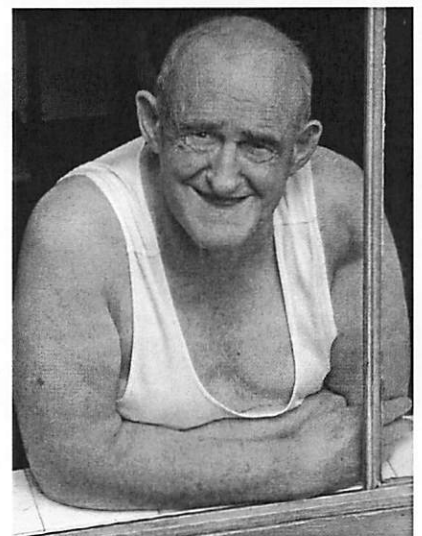
Additional information about Ballast Point Park is available on the Foreshore Authority's website at www.shfa.nsw.gov.au, or by calling Tom Kennedy on 9240 8500

Lionel

For the information of those who walk along the upper end of Rowntree Street (the end that has the higher house numbers and is further North but is lower in that it is closer to sea level than the Darling Street end and we won't bring "class" into this!), Lionel has moved. You will probably realize that Lionel has not been sitting on his seat by the front door and giving weather forecasts for some weeks. He was admitted to RPA hospital in December and is now living at Montrose, the Salvation Army hostel

for men, in Thames Street. He is unlikely to return to Rowntree Street (where he lived for over 20 years) in the near future so those of you who used to take Lionel's weather advice should take an umbrella instead to keep dry if it rains and give shade if it is sunny, or visit him at Montrose.

Lionel on a sunny day



LIVING, LOVING & LOATHING IN BALMAIN

In December 2006 the Balmain Association organized an exhibition of photographs taken by Nicholson Street and Balmain Public Schools students. The exhibition was titled *Through Younger Eyes* and was organized in part to interest young people in Balmain's heritage and environment but also to help others understand what younger people see as interesting and influence what the Balmain Association does.



Carolyn Allen and Jane Ward at the opening of the exhibition

The latest BA exhibition, which was opened by Leichhardt Mayor Carolyn Allen on December 12 and ran through until the end of January, had the theme, *Living, Loving and Loathing in Balmain*. Students from Nicholson Street Public School again took part but also participating were students from Sydney Secondary College, Balmain Campus, and Balmain photographer, David Liddle.



Joe the Flower Cart Man. Photograph by DJ Dower-Trindall, Nicholson Street Public School

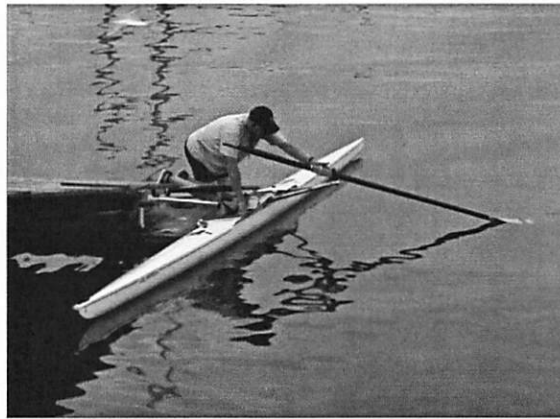


Photo by David Liddle

There was great beauty in last year's photographs but few of the photos had

people in them or had any connection with the harbour. This is not surprising and successful portrait photography is notoriously difficult and most artists tend to see and portray beauty rather than ugliness.

What of this year's photographs? The result of the *Living, Loving and Loathing in Balmain* theme was that, in these photos, we not only saw what the photographers saw but felt what they felt. The result is inspirational. The Nicholson Street Public School photos were very much of the living variety featuring portraits

of Balmain people in their workplaces. David Liddle's photos were of loving scenes of the waterfront and a remarkable collection of house entries. The Sydney Secondary College photos were more introspective, a feeling that was enhanced by the predominance of black and white photos and photos that had been manipulated. There was no "loathing" in the exhibition which suggests that either the participants don't know the word or more likely that they are able to see beauty and photograph it in anything or haven't seen the Balmain telephone exchange.

This exhibition would not have been possible without the enthusiasm, expertise and commitment of the staff and students at the Balmain Campus of the Sydney Secondary College and Nicholson Street Public School and in particular of the two teachers involved, Lynne Hearne and Tim Perkins, and the student photographers. The photographs, advice and assistance given by David Liddle are also gratefully acknowledged. The photographs now reside in the Balmain

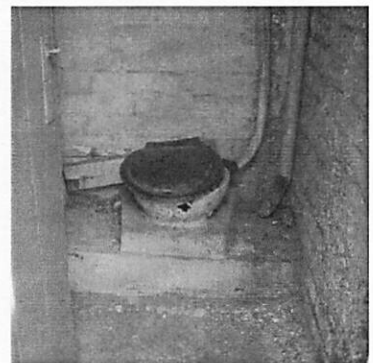
Association's collection. They are not being offered for sale but should anybody wish to purchase a copy or copies, Tim Perkins, Lynne Hearne and David Liddle have agreed to consider any requests.

How this exhibition will change the views and activities of the Balmain Association is not clear except that there will almost certainly be another exhibition of this sort in the future and the Association has already resolved to offer financial assistance to schools in Balmain for photographic and other purposes. Perhaps an exhibition, *Members Remember*, of photos by Balmain Association members should be considered. Is there any interest in this idea?

Dunny Update

In the last issue of the newsletter there was an article on the disappearing dunnies of Balmain. It had quite an impact on residents and the media and many proud owners sent information on and photos of their dunnies. The Glebe flushed out most of them in its series in December and the cause was taken up by ABC TV and 2GB.

But dunnies continue to be demolished to make way for garages and house extensions even though some residents prefer their dunnies to an inside toilet.



What was also made clear from the many dunny owners and observers was that dunny lanes had disappeared as well as the dunnies and there was an interest in preserving some of these also.

The dunnies could be preserved if some of the unwanted ones were donated to council and, with the help of a sculptor, they could be set up as an "occupied" dunny sculpture in a park or other suitable public place. It would be a graphic way of celebrating the centenary of the sewerage of Balmain and the virtual end of typhoid, cholera, diphtheria and other diseases which were rife before there was a reliable sewerage system and water supply. Alternatively the dunnies could be used to form a working public toilet.

Another possibility is for Council to encourage owners to sanctify the outdoor shrine by putting a caveat on the title deeds to prevent the removal of the one-hole saviour of our Balmain ancestors.

IS BALMAIN PART OF AUSTRALIA?

The following data was obtained from the Australian Bureau of Statistics website. The area from which the data was collected is the 2041 postal district. Most of the data is from the 2006 census but there are some data from the 2001 census for comparison. Figures in parentheses are for all of Australia.

PERSON CHARACTERISTICS

In the 2006 Census held on 8th August, there were 13,765 persons usually resident in the 2041 postal area: 48.0% (49.4%) were males and 52.0% (50.6%) were females. Of the total population, 0.6% (2.3%) was indigenous persons.

Age Group	2006 CENSUS 2041		2001 CENSUS 2041	
0-4 years	879	6.4%	682	5.0%
5-14 years	1,039	7.5%	1,059	7.7%
15-24 years	1,201	8.7%	1,382	10.1%
25-54 years	7,473	54.3%	8,022	58.4%
55-64 years	1,828	13.3%	1,354	9.9%
>64 years	1,345	9.8%	1,087	7.9%
TOTAL	13,765		13,586	

Comment: The median age of persons in 2041 was 37 years (37 years for persons in Australia also). There is a notable increase in those aged 0 – 4 despite the decrease in those aged 25-54. There is also an increasing number of persons in the higher age categories. Note that the total population of Balmain is increasing but is still only approximately what it was in 1880 when there was large-scale industrial activity in Balmain and no apartment buildings.

CITIZENSHIP

Those with Australian citizenship in Balmain: 79.0% (86.1%)
Persons born overseas: 27.7% (22.2%)
Visitors: 1.3% (1.0%)

COUNTRY OF BIRTH

In the 2006 Census, 63.1% (70.9%) of persons usually resident in the 2041 area stated they were born in Australia. Other countries of birth within the 2041 area were: England 9.3% (4.3%), New Zealand 3.2% (2.0%), Ireland 1.3% (0.3%), United States of America 1.2% (0.3%) and Scotland 1.2% (0.3%).

*Comment: 79% (78%) return**

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME

In the 2006 Census, English was stated as the only language spoken at home by 82.8% (78.5%) of persons usually resident in the area. The most common languages other than English spoken at home were: Italian 1.2% (1.6%), German 0.9% (0.4%), Greek 0.9% (1.3%), French 0.7% (0.2%) and Cantonese 0.6% (1.2%).

Comment: Could conclude that Balmain is popular with western Europeans but lacks multi-lingual capacity. 87% (83%) return.*

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

In the 2006 Census, the most common responses for religious affiliation for persons usually resident in the area were No Religion 29.9% (18.7%), Catholic 23.7% (25.8%), Anglican 18.5% (18.7%), Uniting Church 2.6% (5.7%) and Presbyterian and Reformed 2.5% (3.0%).

Comment: Only 77.2% (71.9%) response. What do the other quarter of the population believe in? Is it "Not telling"?

INCOME

The median weekly individual income for persons aged 15 years and over who were usual residents was \$1,033 (\$466). The median weekly household income was \$1,935, (\$1,027). The median weekly family income was \$2,643 (\$1,171).

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS

There were 3,499 families in the 2041 Postal Area: 37.6% (45.3%) were couple families with children; 47.7% (37.2%) were couple families without children; 12.5% (15.8%) were one-parent families; and 2.2% (1.7%) were other families.

Comment: 100% return so family information is not confidential.

DWELLING CHARACTERISTICS

DWELLING CHARACTERISTICS PRIVATE DWELLINGS	Number of dwellings in 2041	% of occupied private dwellings in 2041	% of occupied private dwellings in Aust.
Total private dwellings	7,056		
Occupied dwellings	6,454		
Separate house	1,797	27.8%	74.8%
Semi, row, terrace etc	2,578	39.9%	9.2%
Flat, unit, apartment	1,972	30.6%	14.2%
Other dwelling	107	1.7%	1.7%

Comment: One of the most noticeable differences in the statistics between Balmain and Australia as a whole are in matters relating to dwellings. 100% return.

DWELLING CHARACTERISTICS OCCUPIED PRIVATE DWELLINGS

DWELLING CHARACTERISTICS	2041	AUSTRALIA
Median Rent (\$/week)	380	190
Median House Loan Repayment (\$/month)	2,600	1,300
Ave. Household Size	2.1	2.6
Ave. Persons/Bedroom	1.1	1.1

Comment: Based on average household size the median rent per person per week in Balmain is \$180 (\$73) and the median house loan repayment per person per week is approximately \$280 (\$110). This might explain why some people rent accommodation.

TENURE TYPE OCCUPIED PRIVATE DWELLINGS

TENURE TYPE	Occupancy 2041	Occupancy AUSTRALIA
Fully Owned	24.8%	32.6%
Being Purchased	26.4%	32.2%
Being Rented	39.4%	27.2%
Other Tenure	0.3%	0.9%
Not Stated	9.0%	7.1%

Comment: The most notable statistic here seems to be high percentage of rental accommodation; 40% of dwellings in Balmain are rented. 100% return

HOUSEHOLD TYPE OCCUPIED PRIVATE DWELLINGS

Private dwellings in Australia Family
Family household 54.0% (67.4%)
Lone person household 30.9% (22.9%)
Group household 6.3% (3.7%)

*Comment: 91.2% (94%) return**

LANDLORD TYPE OCCUPIED PRIVATE DWELLINGS BEING RENTED

Landlord Type
Real Estate Agent 63.9% (50.5%)
State or Territory 13.7 (14.9)
Other landlord types 20.6% (31.6)
Not stated 1.7% (3.0%)

Comment: 100% return

OTHER STATISTICS

Other statistics indicate that 2041 residents are twice as likely to be professionals or managers, three times as likely to be employed in legal or accounting and one sixth as likely as other Australians to be employed as a machine operator or driver.

CONCLUSION

Balmain residents resemble Australians in some respects but do have a case for independence.

** The Bureau of Statistics states that some of the published data may have been adjusted to avoid release of confidential data and that these adjustments may have a significant impact on the calculated percentages. Presumably this is the reason why some of the percentages do not sum to 100%. It is interesting to speculate why the greatest discrepancy is in the "Religion" data.*

What's on at the Watch House

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

MARCH

Saturday 1, Sunday 2

"The Art of Black & White Photography"

Explore the beauty of Sydney and its distinct landscape as seen through the lens of photographer Raymond Horsey's camera. Raymond's passion for bridges and buildings is highly visible in this exhibition and in seeking views and different angles to extenuate their beauty in black and white, Raymond brings to life his extraordinary creative talent. His contemporary photography at its best as can be seen with his harbour bridge limited prints. **Raymond extends a warm invitation to come and meet him at the exhibition's opening on Friday, 1st March 2008 at 7 pm.**

Saturday 8, Sunday 9

10am to 4pm

Life is a Canvas

An exhibition of acrylics, oils and mixed media works by local Balmain artist, Kate Bray. Although Kate has had formal training she is by nature an intuitive artist. Her exploration of colour, texture and various mediums has created exciting works that will appeal to a broad audience. Kate's approach to her life and art is perfectly expressed by legendary actor, Danny Kaye....

"Life is a great big canvas. Throw all the paint on it you can"

Saturday 15, Sunday 16

Opening Friday 14th March and continuing Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th March 10 am to 5 pm.

"Recent Journeys"

An exhibition of prints and paintings by Jan Moore and Janet Carter. They are both printmakers. Janet will be exhibiting her etchings and Jan her collographs (many from multiple plates), monotypes as well as etchings. Some of Jan's prints are on canvas. Janet will also be exhibiting watercolours and mixed media paintings. They have both been inspired by their travels and mostly there is a landscape theme.

Enquiries: Janet Carter 94171714 or Jan Moore 94524982

Saturday 29, Sunday 30

10am to 4pm

Recent Works

Sculpture, paintings and prints by Margaret Fitzgerald, Jenni May and Peri Tobias

Opening Friday 28, 6-9pm

APRIL

Balmain Association

National Trust Heritage Festival April 2008

Theme "Our Place"

Saturdays 5, 12, 19, 26 April 11.30 – 3.00pm

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.

Official Opening 2 pm Saturday, 5th April

MAY

Friday 2, Saturday 3, Sunday 4, 10am to 4pm

***Drawn together*, Opening Thursday 1 May, 6 – 9pm.**

Pennant Hills Drawing group. This long established live drawing class presents drawings (all medias) and sculptures.

Saturday 10, Sunday 11

9am to 5pm

Windows of Perception

Diamando Koutsellis – a collection of sculpture and painting about abstract transformation, questioning traditional ideals of religious beliefs. **Opening Friday 9 May 6-9pm.**

Saturday 17, Sunday 18

10am to 5pm

"Did you see the "Easelworx" exhibition last year? If you did, you will be looking forward to the return of Lynne Sung, Heather Kepski, Dianne O'Dwyer, Harriet Loneragan, Carlie Lopez, Roma Devjak and Wendy Lowe. This dynamic group of local artists will exhibit their latest paintings, drawings, prints & sculptures. **Opening Friday, 16 May 6pm - 9pm.. All are welcome.**

Saturday 24, Sunday 25

10am – 4pm

Coming of age – 60 pieces

At the end of 2007, Rhonda Keir successfully completed Certificate IV in Fine Arts and reached her 60th year in January this year. For these reasons, she is presenting this celebratory exhibition of a variety of her works including paintings, drawings, sculpture and printmaking as well as black and white photography and digital art.

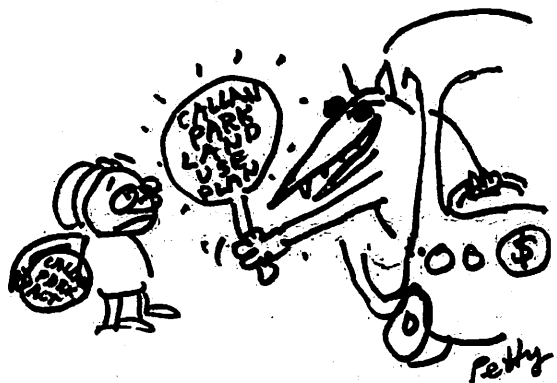
Opening Friday 23, 6-8pm.

BALMAIN IN FOCUS

Balmain Association's 2008 Photographic Exhibition

Do you have photos of Balmain, either past or present, which you have taken and would like to show in an exhibition at the Watch House in December this year and January 2009?

If you would like to submit one or two photos, in colour or black and white, please contact Fergus on 9810 1179 or ferg@arch.usyd.edu.au. PS You will be in good company: professional photographers David Liddle and Michel Brouet will also be exhibiting their work.



The closing date for submissions on the Callan Park Land Use Plan is 22 February. Comments should be sent to: Director, Urban Assessments, Department of Planning, GPO Box 39, Sydney 2001

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>

Annual subscriptions:

Household \$20, Concession \$10, Organizations \$30

Material from this newsletter is not to be reproduced without acknowledgment