



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

The Peninsula OBSERVER

Vol 44 No 1 Issue 310

Founded November 1965

March 2009

Ballast Point Park Approaches Bright Future

After more than six years of careful planning, community consultation and design, work to turn the Ballast Point site into a contemporary park is nearing completion.

Sydney Harbour Foreshore authority's CEO, Robert Domm says that transforming the former industrial site into 2.6 hectares of public open green space was a remarkable opportunity.

"Ballast Point was acquired by the NSW Government in 2002 to create a major new harbourside park for Sydneysiders and visitors.

"Between 2003 and 2005, the Authority consulted extensively with the local community to ensure their input into the park's design.

"Community feedback directly shaped the park's master plan, which was later recognised with an Australian Institute of Landscape Architects Award for Excellence," Mr Domm said.

The much-anticipated park will feature foreshore walks, cycle paths and picnic spaces, as well as heritage interpretation and public art.

Two works, *Delicate Balance* (see 'Ballast Point Public Art') and *Tank 101*, have recently been installed at the park to reflect its rich history.



New, Tank 101, under construction

"Through poetry, installations and signage, visitors will discover stories of the park's aboriginal occupation, its association with Sydney's early maritime activities and its long use as an oil processing plant," Mr Domm said.



Tank 101 completed

"The park will soon provide an impressive new place for inner-west residents to play, relax and take in some amazing harbour views," he said. Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority is completing works in the park over the next few months, which will include native plantings, and constructing paths and retaining walls.

All plants that will be planted at the site have been grown from locally collected seed and are expected to attract native birds, frogs and insects.

The Authority will keep the community informed of when the park will be opened, which is expected in April 2009.

Tom Kennedy, Project Manager

Tel 9240 8500 for further info.

Additional information is available at www.shfa.nsw.gov.au

Note: There are state-of-the art wind turbines on the top structure which are expected to provide all the power needed for the site.

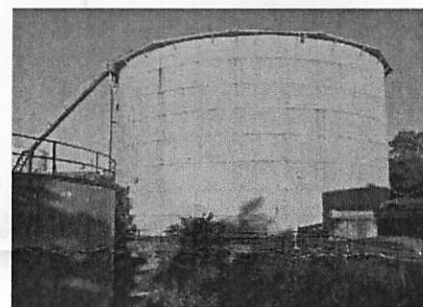
In 1909 - 100 years ago

Constable George W Poole resided at the Watch House. The Balmain Observer was a weekly and cost 1d.

To let: 4 rooms plus washhouse, copper, gas, water. Rent 7/6 week. 21 Pashley St

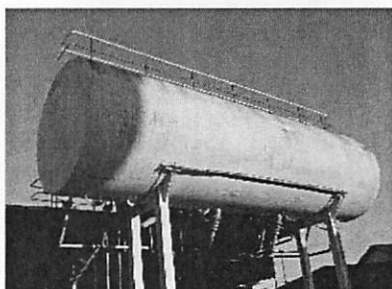
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Old

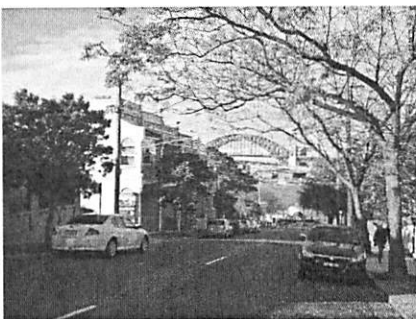
Judges stated that the master plan was an excellent planning model for sites with industrial heritage and regional importance, effectively balancing the needs of the local community, neighbours and the city as a whole.



Editorial:

Hello, I am your new editor, Christina Ritchie. I have lived in the fascinating, historical suburb of Balmain for about eight years. They have been eventful years for the area, and the Association has been active in numerous community campaigns. Members have worked hard to help preserve the Heritage and Historical character of the area and held many interesting and enjoyable events throughout each year. I am told that life is never uneventful if one wishes to become involved in the activities of the Balmain Association. This is not my first attempt at writing for the journal but it is my first time as Editor. I hope when you read the content you will enjoy it. The previous editor, Fergus Fricke is a hard act to follow. Happily we have not seen the last of his contribution. Any suggestions for future editions, please email them to the address on the back page.

Our Life on the Peninsula, 2009



I wish all readers a very happy, healthy and prosperous 2009. The past year was notable for a dramatic turnaround in the financial sector of most major countries around the world, and Australia did not miss out. The RBA did a complete about-turn from raising interest rates in fear of inflation to lowering them just a few short weeks later in fear of a recession. In financial terms we may be somewhat poorer than we were this time last year. It is said the world acts and reacts as a result of fear and greed, but what is life worth to us here, living on our wonderful peninsula, or connected to it in some way? Will we take time in 2009 to enjoy what our lifestyle can offer us? Will we take time to realize that our lives are worth so much more than we are worth in financial terms? Let's take a moment to enjoy the beautiful harbour at our doorstep, the city vistas with their evening reflections moving through a glowing spectrum. Take a moment to say hello or smile to a friend, relative or visitor and share a coffee or tea and chat at a Darling St café or two. Lend a helping hand when someone's need beckons. Marvel at the sandstone and wrought ironwork of our forefathers and appreciate the brightness of a glass vista from a modern window on the world. Let's cherish the best of them, preserve what matters from our history, speak out for a cleaner, greener environment and access to our public harbour foreshore. Let's preserve and enjoy the benefits of our special village lifestyle. Live it, love it, in 2009.

Development Proposals Update

Callan Park: In October 2008 the State Government promised to hand over the management of 40 hectares of Callan Park to Leichhardt Council. This is great news for the 'Friends of Callan Park' who fought long and hard to prevent the overturn of the Callan Park Act and stop the Sydney University proposed development. Will there be facilities for the mentally ill in the new Callan Park? To have your say and be kept up-to-date on progress toward the planning and maintenance of Callan Park see the link (Callan Park – register your interest) on the Leichhardt Council website (www.lmc.nsw.gov.au) or phone Leichhardt Council (Tel 02 93679222).

Tigers redevelopment: Will the Tigers still prowl in our area a few years from now? Whether the development proposed for their site goes ahead or not, rumours are rife that the Wests Tigers will depart their lair in the not-too-distant future. As the development proposal stands the club area will not be increased. Unfavourable economic times may see this development deferred or shelved.

Multiplex site: Multiplex has withdrawn its development plan for the former 'Carrier' site and surrounds after traffic management became a contentious issue. Rumours have it that the site may be sold to a residential developer soon. Development height, density, traffic and amenity are issues that need to be considered whatever is proposed for this large peninsula site.

White Bay/Glebe Island: The last car carrier has been and gone so why are there still large numbers of cars sitting on Glebe Island and White Bay wharfs? It appears that due to the economic downturn there is no room in the car saleyards for the new vehicles. So they are being trucked back into the area to be 'stored' temporarily on the waterfront. Meanwhile whatever happened to the new Masterplan with community input promised for White Bay/Glebe Island? There has been no 'progress' to date, just more ad-hoc proposals, the latest being for the relocation from East Darling Harbour to White Bay of the Cruise Ship Passenger Terminal with associated Events Centre and Exhibition Space. The proposed multi-function refuelling and industrial facility for Wharf 6 is still officially under assessment, despite the Expert Panel's recommendation to defer it.

Ballast Point: The good news is that the headland public park is progressing well (refer articles Pgs 1,3) and the hard work put in by Balmain Association members and others has reaped rewards for our area. We look forward to its opening, expected in April.

Iron Cove Bridge: The fight continues by local Councils and residents of Rozelle and Drummoyne to have the proposed additional road bridge shelved in favour of better inner-west transport management, a possible pedestrian and cycle-only addition and the retention of the foreshore parkland that would be lost under the RTA proposal. See Leichhardt Council website and local newspapers for further information.

Bells Foreshore: The upgrade of this area including much-needed work on the sea wall is progressing. Stage 1 is well underway. The two public park areas of Illoura Reserve and Thornton Park are now connected by a foreshore walkway via the entrance to the Balmain East Wharf. The 1960's office building has been demolished and work on the public space on and around the site is in progress.

Town Hall/Library: The good news is the Town Hall Stage 1 refurbishment is almost complete and the new improved Library will soon be open for 'business'. All the fig trees have been retained and it is hoped they will not pose a problem to the Heritage-listed Town Hall building. Frequent monitoring of the trees has been promised by Council. A new lift has been installed to meet disabled access requirements for the upper hall.

Metro mania: The much-heralded Sydney Metro line to connect the large population of the outer Western and North-Western suburbs, currently largely devoid of public transport, to the city, has been scrapped soon after its announcement. In its place the State Government has proposed a 'mini-metro', at enormous expense and disruption, from the CBD to a large transport hub in Rozelle, with associated high-rise development. There would seem to be cheaper and more environmentally friendly alternatives such as light rail extension, ferries and improved bus services? Meanwhile our roads and railways fall ever further into a dangerous state of disrepair.

Christina Ritchie

Ballast Point Park Public Art

Ballast Point is one of Sydney's most significant headlands. The redevelopment of the site into an appealing park that reveals rich layers of history, a unique topography and exceptional setting is a rare opportunity for the Foreshore Authority and NSW Government.

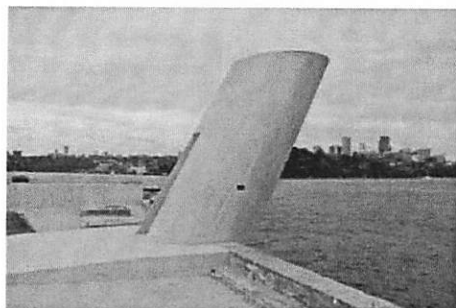
In returning this recently industrial landscape to the community, the Foreshore Authority have aspired to create a strong sense of place that offers a variety of social and recreational opportunities. In this quest they have commissioned a major public artwork by one of Australia's leading contemporary artists Robyn Backen.

Robyn Backen's proposal was selected from a number of artists who responded to a brief requesting the art "provide a memorable cultural experience of the park, be of high quality yet innovative and culturally relevant, draw reference from the site's location, landscape, indigenous, colonial and modern history and add a poetic dimension to the park".

The resultant work, *Delicate Balance*, is intriguing and interactive, enticing visitors into its core to experience the natural surroundings in quiet contemplation. It frames and contains the immensity of ocean, nature and sky within an intimate and solitary space.

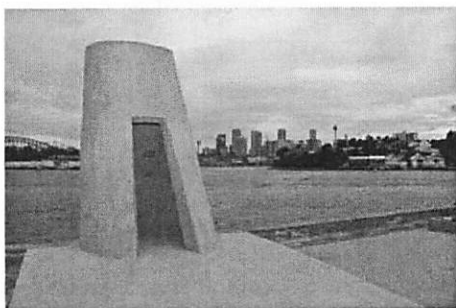
Delicate Balance hovers over the waters edge on the southern side of Ballast Point directly in front of the Ballast Garden. The artwork has an extraordinary form, its tall and tapered cylindrical shape leaning out over the sea wall. Although moored to the promenade it almost takes the appearance of an object in transit, about to depart. The artist explains, "It can be entered into suggesting the entrance to a jetty or a lighthouse, and once inside a series of cutouts offer glimpses capturing the harbour, city, sky and park. The ocean viewed through a metal grate in the floor reverberates through the artwork,

like the secret of listening to the sea in a shell held in the palm of a hand".



Delicate Balance

The sensorial experience of viewing, smelling and listening helps to heighten ones awareness of the surrounding natural environment. Indeed the elements of sound, light and water are important ingredients in the artwork. In the artists words "water lends itself to a multitude of possibilities (...) It can suggest strong emotion or the more delicate and poignant ripples of feeling".



In both appearance and content the artwork draws upon the history of the site as a place for mining sandstone, and as a repository for petroleum in the modern years. In concept it is primarily about balance. Viewed from many vantage points – ferries and boats, the promenade and park, surrounding parks and residents across the bay – *Delicate Balance* will no doubt become one of Sydney harbour's most signature public artworks.

Robyn Backen has exhibited widely in galleries and museums throughout Australia, Europe and Asia. Having studied in Amsterdam and Salzburg she has since received numerous major

public art commissions in Sydney, Liverpool, Brisbane and Canberra, the most recent being a light sound artwork for Old Parliament House in Canberra.

Amanda Sharrad
Public Art Curator

Artwork details:

Commissioning process: Process and brief written and managed by Amanda Sharrad, Public Art Consultant. Artist Brief sent to artists recommended by consultant. Robyn Backen's work was selected by the Foreshore Authority under recommendation from an Art Advisory Panel in July 2006.

Materials & fabrication method: Detailed design was developed over a twelve month period by the artist and public art team. A unique wooden form was created for the artwork shape, concrete was cast and cured, and the form transported to the site. (*A high level of expertise to produce fine formwork and concrete casting for a relatively small object in the field of construction was required of Obnova Concrete.) The leaning structure is supported and balanced by a large concrete slab beneath the surface of the artwork foreground. The sea water beneath the heritage sea wall can be viewed through a stainless steel grate in the floor at the front overhanging section of the cylindrical form.
Dimensions: 400cm x 250cm x 250cm

Timeframe: The artist was commissioned in August 2006. The artwork proposal was worked up to detailed design stage over twelve months from 2006 to end 2007 with architectural design drawings, structural engineering, fabrication and installation input and expertise by the public art team. Fabrication was completed in 4 months in 2008. Construction commenced on Ballast Point Park in February 2008 and the artwork installation took place over a 10 day period in October 2008.

Heritage Management – Projects, Leichhardt Council

Below is an update on Leichhardt Council's 2009 Heritage training, research and information projects:

1. Heritage Research & Provision of Information to the Public:

In 2006 Leichhardt Council sanctioned three (3) major heritage information projects to be completed by consultants during 2007 & 2008. Two of the projects have been completed (Heritage Review Project No.1 – LGA Wide Heritage Assessment & Heritage Review Project No.3 – Building Typologies). The third remaining project, Heritage Review Project No.2 – Revised Heritage Inventory Sheets is to be commenced in 2009:



1.1 LGA Wide Heritage Assessment Project (Heritage Review Project No.1)

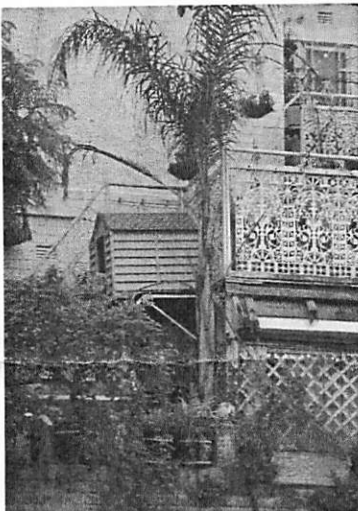
In October 2007, HBO + EMTB Heritage Consultants were engaged by Leichhardt Council to carry out this heritage information project on Council's behalf. This major work required most of 2008 to complete.

The project involved:

The identification of all contributory heritage* within Council's existing and proposed conservation areas, assessing over 15,000 individual properties over a number of months;
assessment of the appropriateness of the proposed conservation area boundaries as recommended by Godden Mackay Logan in their 2004 Stage 2 Heritage Review Report for Leichhardt Council;
the identification of all potential heritage items within that part of the suburb of Rozelle, which is not included within any existing or proposed heritage conservation area, to assist information gathering for part of the new comprehensive Local Environmental Plan (LEP) for the Leichhardt LGA. (comprehensive LEPs are required to be prepared for all LGA's within the State, using a standard template, under the NSW Government Planning Reforms)

* Note: Contributory heritage is defined as: "Structures or features within a conservation area which contribute to the heritage significance of the area. These items are not individually listed, but by

virtue of their age, scale, materials, details, design, style or intactness are consistent with the conservation area, and therefore reinforce its heritage significance. They have collective significance and their loss or demolition would erode the heritage significance of the area as a whole."



All of the survey data is now on Council's computer system. The receipt of a final amended report, from the consultants, is now pending. Consideration is currently being given to the use of the information within Council's existing development control framework. In the interim, though, the results of the project will be supplied to the consultants who will undertake Heritage Review Project No.2, for Council, which is described below.

1.2 Revised Heritage Inventory Sheets (Heritage Review Project No.2)

Heritage Project No. 2 involves the review of all existing heritage items within the Leichhardt LGA and all previously identified potential heritage items (including those identified by HBO + EMTB in Heritage Review Project No.1).

This project will provide critical information to Council's new comprehensive LEP. All heritage items within the LEP are required to be linked to a clear and concise statement of heritage significance within a heritage inventory sheet. A brief is to be prepared for the project, with a view to engaging an appropriate heritage consultant(s) to undertake the work on Council's behalf within 2009.

1.3 Building Typologies Project (Heritage Review Project No.3)

The purpose of this project was to identify and prepare guidelines for the main building typologies within the LGA that contribute to the heritage significance of the area. HBO + EMTB were also engaged to undertake this work on

Council's behalf. This project has been completed.

The results of this project are to be utilised in the development of controls for Council's new draft Development Control Plan (DCP) for the Leichhardt LGA, which is currently being progressed.



2. Heritage Training

Heritage training for Leichhardt Municipality property owners is to occur throughout the 2009.

2.1 Heritage Conservation in the Leichhardt Council Area - The Principles of Good Practice – An Introductory Talk

A free talk on Heritage Management in Leichhardt – Understanding the Basic Principles – by well known local author and heritage consultant Meredith Walker is scheduled for Thurs 26 Feb 2009 at Leichhardt Town Hall.

2.2 Heritage Focussed Development Information Seminars

Development Application Information Seminars for the Leichhardt LGA, now specifically includes property owners who need to consider the heritage significance of their area, or the individual heritage significance of their dwelling, as part of their development proposal. The seminars are intended to assist potential applicants to understand the planning assessment process and an applicant's and Council's responsibilities, relating to heritage related development applications.

Godden Mackay Logan Pty Ltd, Heritage Consultants, will undertake these seminars in 2009. The first seminar, which is free, will be taken by David Logan, Partner of Godden Mackay Logan. David has over 25 years experience in heritage management, in both the public and private sectors. Council officers will also be present at the seminar to assist with enquiries and to briefly talk on Council's existing heritage related controls. The seminar will be held at Leichhardt Town Hall, 6.30pm, Thurs 5 March. Refreshments will be provided. RSVP essential. Tel 02 9367 9222.

**Christopher Reeves,
Heritage Officer, LMC**

BALMAIN IN FOCUS

A Special Photographic Exhibition Event

The Balmain Association's photographic exhibition, *Balmain in Focus*, was opened by Verity Firth, State member for Balmain and Minister for Education, on Wednesday 10 December 2008 in the presence of about 70 members of the Association, the History Group of Leichhardt district, photographers and friends.

In the previous two years the Balmain Association organized exhibitions of photographs of Balmain taken by primary and secondary school students in Balmain. These exhibitions gave fascinating views of Balmain as seen by the "younger generation". This year the Association decided to look at Balmain through "more mature" eyes.



Verity Firth (right) gives the opening address

The three professional Photographers involved in the exhibition this year are David Liddle, Michel Brouet and Anthony Browell. The amateur photographers include Sue Callanan, Barabara Hamilton and Fergus Fricke. The photographers were asked to focus on "their Balmain" with an emphasis on people as well as places. The result is an extraordinary variety of photographs that, like most works of art, give valuable insights into our own values, observations and thoughts, the subjects photographed and the personalities of the photographers, amongst other things.

Jane Ward introduced Verity and later presented her with a copy of Issy Wyner's book, "Open Council". In opening the exhibition Verity acknowledged the original owners of the land and spoke about the changes in Balmain that have taken place over time and the importance of recording these changes. One of the most notable changes has been in the demographics. The Balmain electoral area now has the

highest birthrate in NSW, which augurs well for the future of current recordings and historical records, including photos. The only issue as far as the Association is concerned is the space to store the records, and especially the photographs. While the Association has taken some tentative steps towards the digital age there is obviously much more to be done.



Fergus Fricke, Anthony Browell, Marjorie Hystek

Verity also spoke of the backgrounds of the three professional photographers: David Liddle, who was born and reared in Sydney, needs little introduction as he has exhibited in Balmain, and his photography has illustrated many books including three of his own. Of particular relevance to this exhibition is his classic "*The Balmain Book*" published in 1985, where he captured Balmain's denizens in their natural habitats, many of which have now disappeared. His specialties include aerial photography and portraits. David has a particular interest in Heritage photography.

Michel Brouet is also Sydney born and trained, but his French heritage influences his cultural and stylistic perspective. Michel is at ease in both the disciplined retail and commercial world and in the freer creative art world. Over 25 years he has travelled widely, earning a living through the business of photography, while exhibiting frequently. In that time he has won a number of awards and attracted numerous commissions. He photographs in black and white and colour with subjects from portraiture to landscape. He is adept at observing the daily nuances of life in Australia and Balmain.

Anthony Browell was born and trained in England. He emigrated to Australia

in 1969 and has lived in Balmain ever since. He has worked in editorial photography for 30 years as well as long and enjoyable stints doing applied illustrative photography, portraiture and architectural assignments. He has an enviable reputation as a photographer of new buildings, including the work of Glen Murcutt. Anthony has held many exhibitions of his work and much of it is in public and private collections. In 2000 he began taking his first non-commissioned photos in many years. These formed his "Waterfront" series, some of which are in this exhibition. More recently he has discovered the "pinhole" camera and made it into an art-form.



Michel Brouet, June Lunsmann and David Liddle

The photographs taken by Sue Callanan, Barabara Hamilton, Steve Christo, Fergus Fricke and an unknown photographer spoke volumes for themselves, their subjects and their creators.

The appreciation of the exhibition on the opening night was helped considerably by ample and tasty food and drink organized by June Lunsmann and contributed to by many of those present.

Fergus Fricke

Treasurer's Report -2008

Financial statement summary

	2007	2008
Total Income	38146.47	37850.95
Total Expenditure	<u>15919.56</u>	<u>24539.93</u>
Op. Surplus for yr.	22226.91	13311.02
Prev. Op. Surplus	<u>84962.56</u>	<u>107189.47</u>
Total Op. Surplus	<u>\$107189.47</u>	<u>\$120500.49</u>

The full statement is available on request.

Two More New Boys in Council – Wangal/Rozelle ward

1. Christina Ritchie talks with Darcy Byrne (ALP)

CR: Tell me a bit about yourself

DB: I am a lifelong member of the Rozelle/Balmain community. My parents moved here in the 1960's. I work professionally, for Sydney City Council, with disadvantaged young people in Woolloomooloo. There are two sides to that area, the wharf area where well-known personalities live and the housing estate where there are a large number of disadvantaged people. The recent television documentary about the disadvantaged in that area was actually a more positive piece than usual. Many of the young people who featured in that program are my clients. Both of my parents were school teachers. Like them I have dedicated myself to working voluntarily for the community. From the age of 18 I worked as an after-school care worker in Glebe for about 5 yrs. After that I worked in Balmain High School as a teacher's aid. I am married now and we live in the municipality. I don't see enough of my wife these days. As a new Councillor there is much to learn and do and I didn't have a break after the election campaign.

CR: What do you like about the area?

DB: There is a good social mix that you don't find in other areas. The gentrification is ongoing but I find that new people still move here for that sense of community. We need to build on that culture and get more people involved in the community. There is a fantastic range of skills among local people. We must find ways of tapping into the social networks that already exist. People are time poor so it is a challenge. We need to make it easier for people to get involved.

CR: What don't you like about the area? What irks you?

DB: The parking system is a shambles. It creates so much angst. We only recently introduced parking meters but a review is needed throughout the municipality. Council needs to become more involved in the community. It has tended to focus on 'worldly' issues and not on core local issues.

CR: What is your favourite local place?

DB: Oh, Callan Park. It is an oasis in an urban area. Also the Dawn Fraser swimming pool. I spent a lot of time there as a kid.

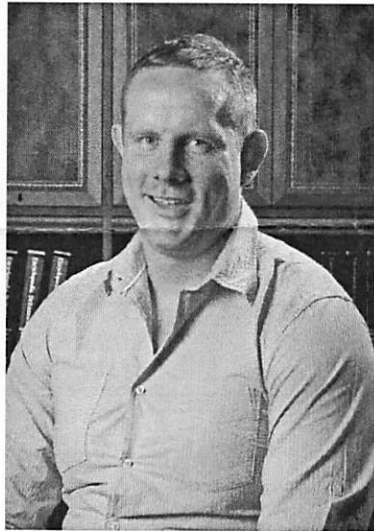
CR: What particular interests or past-times do you have?

DB: I have a particular interest in affordable housing. It's desperately needed. I was a resident of Casa Blanca in Palmer St Balmain when there was a proposal to redevelop the block which would have resulted in the vast majority of low-cost housing tenants being forced out of the area. Those flats may have been sub-standard but there was nothing to replace them. I campaigned at Council and the Land and Environment Court to have it knocked back, and the developer withdrew the application. I

learnt that you have to work collectively if you want things to change and if you want to make a genuine difference.

CR: What would you like to add re your involvement with the community?

DB: My involvement with the youth, and of course the Labor Party.



CR: So why did you join the ALP?

DB: In the history of the nation it has been the most effective force for progressive policy and equality. Early last century we introduced the women's vote. At the end of world war two we undertook a nation-building investment. We built public schools and infrastructure, then later brought in Medicare – our public health system is admired throughout the world. Recently there was Rudd's 'Sorry' speech. We take ourselves seriously enough to think our ideas through and put them into action. Some parties are more like action groups. They can criticize but have no new policies. The conservatives want to maintain the current social order. The ALP is at the heart of progress.

CR: How would you deal with any conflict that may arise between the party and your responsibilities as a councillor?

DB: As an elected representative the primary responsibility is to represent your constituents. You have to take a stand to do what you think is right. Then you work within the party to put forward the position you believe in.

CR: Why did you decide to stand for Council?

DB: I want to make a difference. I want to do positive things for the community. I have seen from the work that I do that when people work together and are organised they can achieve things. Local government allows you to do that. It is the closest to the people. I want to improve consultation between Council and the community.

CR: What would you like to achieve in your first term on Council?

DB: There is a critical shortage of playing fields. We are turning children away due to lack of facilities. The social impact is great. It is a core local government responsibility. We are inherently responsible for this. Callan Park is a real opportunity to address this shortage. While negotiating, there should be an interim agreement to upgrade existing playing fields, including the Glover St site. If space becomes available at White Bay we must pursue that vigorously too.

CR: What is your vision for the future of the area?

DB: We should work really hard so it continues to be a place where there is a wonderful social mix – a liveable and sustainable community. We must have affordable housing. We need to work with other Councils and the State Govt. to achieve this. Otherwise we face in the near future a community without bus drivers, police, nurses, bar attendants etc

CR: What will you do as a councillor to support the Balmain Association's aim to protect the Heritage and Historical character of the area?

DB: Under Council's planning strategy the preservation of Heritage must be a priority. Any proposed development must not impact negatively on the Heritage character of Balmain

CR: The BA also aims to improve the living and working conditions of the area. What will you do to assist in this regard?

DB: Parking is the most important issue. It has a tangible negative impact on the quality of life. From a local government perspective it is within our power. It was a major issue in the election campaign.

CR: Do you have any ambitions beyond local government?

DB: I'm sure most councillors will tell you the same. I am completely absorbed across a range of issues and with getting results on important issues through the Council. There are people out there who need a helping hand in society generally. We all have a responsibility to do what we can to help others in the community. There are bigger social problems to deal with. These can be dealt with as a councillor and through local activism, through voluntary programs and by contributing to the local community.

Contact details for Councillor Darcy Byrne:
Tel.0401740612.

Email: dbyrne@lmc.nsw.gov.au

Councillor Byrne is one of two ALP councillors on Leichhardt Council. The other is Lyndal Howison, another new councillor, Annandale/Leichhardt ward.

2. Christina Ritchie Talks with Tony Costantino (Liberal)

CR: Tell me a bit about yourself

TC: I am a lifelong member of the local community. I am married with three children, all girls. I own my home in Leichhardt in the same street as other family members. I am now a builder. I was a hairdresser for many years and also worked in my family's fish shop. My father passed away in 1999. I don't have brothers so I'm the one male person in the family that is called upon if there's a problem. I have a 'Ute' which is very useful to help everyone in the family.

CR: What do you like about living in the area?

TC: I still love Leichhardt even though it has changed. It's still nice though. It's more commercialised, much busier. Balmain is too. It's good that lots of young families are moving into the area. I love the old character weatherboard houses in Rozelle. I enjoy living near the water. I really like boats and the bay run. I love the strip shopping. It's part of the Heritage.

CR: What don't you like about the area? What irks you?

TC: The graffiti. I hate it. We need to do something about the dramatic increase in graffiti in the area. Newcastle is trialling a new system to deal with it and I'll be looking at that. It breaks your heart to see it just after someone has newly painted and rendered a wall. I have already discussed this with other councillors. Then there's the traffic. It's bumper to bumper sometimes. Parking is another problem.

CR: Do you have a favourite local place?

TC: I used to run a lot so I like the Bay run. I am too busy at present with three young kids, all under six, and the Council work now. I do like to go for walks around the Bay with the kids though.

CR: Do you have a particular interest or past-time?

TC: I love boats. I used to have one. I like to spend time on the water. It's relaxing. Boats are not safe for young kids so I don't have one at the moment. Also family comes first. I don't have the time now. I like talking to people too.

CR: What involvement have you had with the Community?

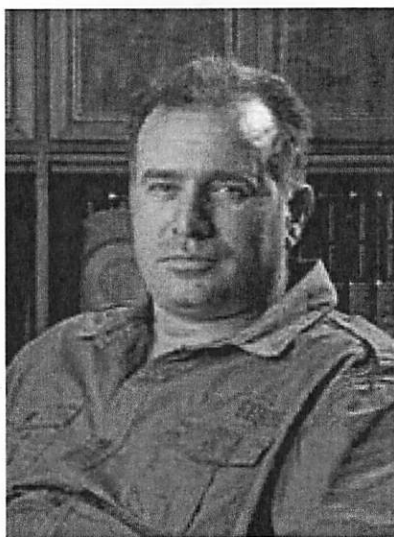
TC: My involvement is really talking to people and finding out what interests them and what is important. Before I became a Councillor I used to go to café's a lot and talked to small business owners. When I was a hairdresser, and had my own salon, I loved to talk to my customers about all sorts of things. You learn a lot about the Community from talking to people.

CR: When and why did you join the Liberal Party?

TC: I joined about 12 years ago. I liked John Howard. He has taken the country forward in the last 10-12 years. There's money in the kitty and that's important now. No other members of my family belong to a political party. They're all very hard workers and don't have time.

CR: Why did you decide to stand for Council at the last election?

TC: I stood second to Vera on her ticket the previous time. I have a lot of respect for her. She was my kindergarten teacher. We have lived in the area all our lives so we have many years of local knowledge between us. I thought that being a Councillor I can give back to the Community what they have given me. It's an honour to be the first second-generation Italian to be on Leichhardt Council. More residents should be involved in Council. Unfortunately people have to work long hours so don't have the time. It was hectic for me before Christmas but I've had a break since then so I'm ready to do all the work now.



CR: What do you want to achieve in your first term on Council?

TC: Tackling the graffiti is the first thing. The more busy the area the worse it is. Then there's the parking restructure. Half an hour free parking would help. I will try to help the shopkeepers. I don't want to see the area overdeveloped. I don't want to see strip shopping suffer any more. I'll work on that with the other Councillors. I want to see more child care centres. It's so expensive. I'd like to see more policing of commercial areas. I'll work together with my Liberal colleagues. Now there are three of us I see the party as being beneficial – there's more chance to get things done. Let's hope all councillors will work together and focus on the Community. I'm interested to see

the outcome in four years time. I'm still learning.

CR: What is your vision for the future of the area?

TC: I would like to see the area more family-oriented. I think Leichhardt Council is doing a good job. I like to see more trees in the area, but they must be the right trees. I want to see more parks like Pioneer Park for people to come together. I would like to see Carnivals again on the waterfront, festivals and community events. We need more gathering places for people. We could use the foreshore areas. We need consultation with State government and community to see what we can do at White Bay.

CR: How will you help the Balmain Association in its aim to protect the Heritage and Historical character of the area?

TC: I am a builder so I help with the site inspections for DA's. I want to keep the character of the buildings. I love the sandstone walls of the old cottages. I don't want to see these replaced with modern homes. I don't like high-rise. When Council considers DA's they need to be serious about keeping the old character. It is our Heritage. The beautiful old timber and sandstone is the historical charm of the area.

CR: What will you do to help improve the living and working conditions of people in the area?

TC: If people come to me I will help as much as I can. We must fix the parking problems. We need more public transport. The trees lifting the footpaths are the wrong trees and they have to be replaced with more suitable ones. Rates are too high for some older residents. I would like to see these reduced. We need more Council initiatives to help the poor, older people.

CR: Do you have any ambitions beyond Local Government?

TC: Not at the moment. So far it's been great being on Council. It's a new direction I'm taking. I can help people in a new way now. I can help the elderly – I have a lot of respect for the elderly. I don't do as much in the building work now so I have time for the Council work and family. I don't know what is beyond that. My interests are local. I try to help local people.

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Tony Costantino is one of three Liberal Councillors on Leichhardt Council. The other two are Vera-Ann Hannaford, Leichhardt/Lilyfield ward and Gordon Weiss, Balmain ward

What's on at the Watch House

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

MARCH

Saturday 7, Sunday 8, 10am – 6pm

LastINK. Impressions..... an exhibition by The Okapi Group
This is the first exhibition of the Okapi Group, displaying an exciting mix of artistic techniques with a diverse range of themes explored. These women artists are a group of printmakers, painters, photographers and sculptors who have taken their name from the beautiful rare, highly endangered African animal - the Okapi. Artworks will be for sale. (a donation will be made to the Jane Goodall Institute for Wildlife Research, Education & Conservation from the proceeds of sales). All welcome
Opening Friday 6 530 - 8.30pm with refreshments

Saturday 14, Sunday 15, 10am – 4pm

Inaugural Student Art Exhibition
Balmain Art School artists range in age from 16 to 86 and while some only took up painting this year; others have been fine-tuning their skills at the Balmain Art School for more than 14 years. This will be their inaugural art exhibition, showcasing a variety of subject matter and painting techniques in works large and small. Kate Bray
For more information Google Balmain Art School.
Opening Friday, 13, 6:00 to 9:00pm

Saturday 21, 10am to 5pm, Sunday 22, 10am - 3pm
"Diversity"

Art Angels is a group of Manning Valley artists who meet regularly to support each other in their artistic practices. This exhibition showcases the diversity of themes and media explored by Sue Finlayson; Pat Land; Anke de Reuver and Val Clark.
Opening Friday 20th March 6pm - all welcome

Saturday 28, Sunday 29, 10am – 5pm

Conundrum
"I don't understand art." I hear you say. "What's it meant to be?" Something glaringly obvious to me is swathed in obscurity to you. Art can be confusing and obscure - a conundrum. Hopefully things will become clearer after seeing the exhibition, "Conundrum", by artists Leonie Robison, Pauline Mulhearn, Carla Wettstein and Elizabeth de Sylva.
Opening Friday 27th 6 – 8pm All welcome

APRIL

Saturday 4 to Saturday 26
National Trust Heritage Festival

MAY

Friday 2, 10am – 4pm, Saturday 3 and Sunday 4, 10am – 5pm
'Seasons'. The Group 4 are back again at The Watch House to exhibit their recent artwork which includes acrylics, oil on canvas and prints in abstract, realism and surrealism genres. Group 4, comprising Pat Crawford, Yvonne Liechti, Barbara O'Ryan and Carla Wettstein present their work under the title of 'Seasons', taking the theme from the environment and local Balmain scenes. All are welcome to come and browse.

Saturday 9 and Sunday 10, 10am – 4pm

Textures and Tones
Jillyan Hill, Jan Peterson and Majella Hill are mounting their third Textures and Tones Exhibition. Jillyan practises the Max Meldrum method of tonal impressionism, working mainly in oils, as well as doing some pastels and drawings. Jan is continuing to create one-off exclusive garments made with one-of-a-kind fabrics. There are jackets in beautiful European fabrics, dresses in gorgeous fabrics not available anywhere else in Australia. There are delicate lace shirts and overdresses, and the bags are part of the look of Brindabella Eagle. Majella will feature knitted garments which use beautiful, imported yarns in eye-catching colours and texture combinations to make truly one off pieces. Her jewellery incorporates interesting combinations of stones, beads, silver and shell.
Opening 6pm to 9pm on Friday 8th May. This is Mother's day weekend and a great opportunity for people to buy something really special and original for Mum!

Saturday 16 and Sunday 17, Kepski et al

Saturday 23 and Sunday 24, 10am – 5pm
Possibilities

Rebecca Taggart White Pauline Mulhearn
Art is full of possibilities. It is wonderfully diverse, with each artist revealing facets of the possibilities beyond ourselves. Art can show us reflections of our inner life, as well as revealing multiple aspects of the world around us.
Opening Friday 22 May 6 – 8 pm

Thursday 28, Friday 29, Saturday 30, 10am – 6pm
Sunday 31, 10am – 4pm
Russel Wilder and Martin Campbell.
Two very different artists' impressions

The National Trust Festival 2009

Return of the popular sandstone photographic exhibition that will focus on the buildings and foreshore. Photographs of some Balmain pioneer men and women and display of the Kerry Balmain Panorama photographs taken from the Balmain Post Office tower, February 1909.

Watch House, 179 Darling Street. Saturdays: 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th April. Open : 11.30am to 3pm. Free entry.
Contact: 9818 4954.

In conjunction with the sandstone exhibition, the Leichhardt Council will have two coach tours of former sandstone quarries in the Leichhardt Municipality. 4th and 18th April. Limited seating. Cost: \$10. 2pm to 4pm. Bookings: 9367 9223.

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.

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Annual subscriptions: Household \$20, Concession \$10, Organizations \$30

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