



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

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Balmain Town Hall Refurbished

The heritage listed Balmain Town Hall has been extended and refurbished to improve accessibility and to provide modern library facilities, whilst retaining heritage features. The Town Hall was built in 1887-1888, as part of the Balmain Civic group of buildings. The architect was EH Buchanan who was also an alderman on the Balmain Council. The main structure is a two-storey Victorian Italianate building of brick and stucco with plaster decorations. The corner tower used to have a large dome which was taken down during World War II for safety reasons.

Balmain ceased being a municipality in 1948 when it was amalgamated into Leichhardt Municipality. The last Mayor to preside over Balmain Council was Richard M O'Connor. On 10 Dec 1948 the Balmain Council held its farewell ball, the proceeds of which went to the Red Cross and 'The Miss Australia Quest'.



Newly refurbished Town Hall

Leichhardt Council undertook to refurbish the Town Hall in 2008 with a plan of undertaking work in two stages. The first stage of work was the extension and refurbishment of the library, provision of a lift to the main hall on the first floor, upgrade of the Meeting Room and installation of toilets with disabled access. Exterior painting was also included. Landscaping work has been completed

to the front and side of the building. The large fig trees have been retained and there is now a shaded courtyard area accessible from Darling Street and from the Library.

Stage 1 has now been completed and the official opening by the Mayor of Leichhardt Council took place on Mon 16 March 2009.

Attendees were taken on a tour of the new library and meeting rooms followed by morning tea. As well as the usual library facilities, there is now a computerised history section, a new meeting/reading room for teenagers and a new storage room on the first floor.



Official opening

Comments so far on the renovations have been positive. There was particular interest in the modern artwork windows in the new children's area. Council is to be congratulated on the fine results. Community response to the colour scheme, changes to the library and foyer has been enthusiastic and as use of the facilities increases, full appreciation of the improvements will be possible. Already a number of meetings and other events have taken place in the renovated building, including the March Ordinary Council meeting, the first Council meeting to take place at the Balmain Town Hall since the refurbishment.

The second stage of the refurbishment includes maintenance for the main hall. It needs urgent attention so that the venue can realise its full potential.



Inside the 'new' Library

Resources have been expanded with the purchase and installation of a public address system, projector and screen. To support improved sound, advice was sought from an acoustic specialist. His recommendation for curtains to reduce and control distortion has been implemented. For the main hall to be functional, further work needs to be undertaken. Balmain Town Hall Committee has received a request from the Mayor, Councillor Jamie Parker, for a list of urgent items to be submitted to Council for consideration as funding for Stage Two is not available. He expressed support for an upgrade of facilities to complement the work that has already been undertaken. **Editor**

In 1909 - 100 years ago



Montague South from Post Office Tower

IN THIS ISSUE

Page	
1	Balmain Town Hall
2 & 3	Rozelle Heritage, Metro and Development Update
4	Sydney Heritage Fleet
5	John Booth
6 & 7	Heritage Walk 1, Editorial
8	What's on at the Watch House

Heritage Rozelle Neighbourhood

Metro to Terminate History?

A Metro station is proposed by the State Government for Rozelle Junction, Darling Street and Victoria Road. There is a cluster of heritage buildings in that location that should be preserved. In the mid-1950s, to enable the widening of Victoria Road, Rozelle lost a swag of built heritage that stood between Darling Street and Terry Street and faced Victoria Road. The landmark White Bay Hotel was destroyed by fire last year. What remains of the built heritage should be retained.

When, in 1914, Dr J J C Bradfield planned a rail link connecting Millers Point to Petersham, via the Balmain Peninsula, the "Weston [Victoria] Road" station was to be located near the Belmore and Whitcombe Streets' intersection, adjacent to the former tramways electrical substation in Hancock Street. Notifications of planned resumptions were issued to affected freeholders at that time. A second station, "Callan Park", was planned for Rozelle's border with Lilyfield.

The following is an extract from my online Dictionary of Sydney entry on Rozelle. With the exception of St Joseph's Catholic Church and Presbytery, together with the former Masonic hall, all other items are clustered around the area where a Rozelle Metro station would likely be located. The online entry reads:

In spite of the stigma of an ugly slum, Rozelle was blessed with a small but remarkable collection of public buildings. The oldest of these is St Thomas's Church of England, designed by Blacket and Sons in 1874. This was built, and later extended, in an early

English Gothic style. The same firm also designed the adjacent rectory that was constructed in 1882 in Victorian filigree style.



Rozelle Post Office

A spacious 1906 St Joseph's Catholic Church with its distinctive French-inspired fleche dominates the southeastern side of Victoria Road. St Joseph's presbytery in nearby Quirk Street is styled in free Victorian Gothic, possibly by local architect and alderman, James McDonald. The Anglican rectory and Catholic presbytery are two of the few outstanding residences erected in Rozelle during the late colonial period that have escaped demolition or alteration.

The public school which John Horbury Hunt was invited to design opened in 1878. William Edmund Kemp extended the original wing in 1884 and, under the hand of James Sven Wigram, it was extended again in 1901. In 1961, the school's Horbury Hunt wing survived an arson attack that destroyed much of the building's roof and flooring but left its fabric and structure undamaged. Using a free medieval style, local alderman and architect Edward John Bowen designed

the adjoining St Paul's Presbyterian Church, which opened in 1904.

Rozelle still has a Masonic hall, erected in Victorian classical style in 1888. The hall's elaborate facade includes a canopied life-size statue of Minerva, whose left hand holds up the beacon of learning for the enlightenment of nearby residents and the bustling pedestrians of Darling Street's northern thoroughfare. On the southwest side of Darling Street there stands the former fire station designed by Walter Liberty Vernon in a style that evokes the domestic arts and crafts movement for which Vernon is famed.

The 2008 rebirth of the former Mechanics Institute in Victoria Road as a conservatorium of music is a welcome return to original edifying purpose of this 1907 building, which was the advancement of useful arts. The building's previous life was mostly as a haven to a mouldy circulating library which was housed downstairs and shady habitués who patronized the upstairs poolrooms.

Other of Rozelle's historical buildings have not survived. The early 20th century rail-sidings and wheat silos constructed on the Glebe Island reclamation displaced the Edmund Blacket-designed abattoirs, which were demolished in 1915. The removal in the mid-1950s of an entire row of imposing heritage buildings on the northwest side of Victoria Road for a wider carriageway took the ornate towered Rozelle Post Office, designed by Vernon and built in 1893-4, the original weatherboard St Paul's (1876), designed by McDonald, Alexander Elphinstone's 1882 manse for St Paul's, and the original Bridge Hotel.

The White Bay Hotel, which dated from 1907, became a Glebe Island landmark. It was famed as Rozelle's sole "earlier opener", with its public bar opening on weekdays at 06:00am. After patronage evaporated in the wake of the closure or relocation of local heavy industry, the hotel ceased trading. By dawn on Saturday September 6 2008, a fire that began the night before had completely razed the hotel, and thus another of Rozelle's iconic buildings was removed from the townscape.

The METRO plan:

The maps for the Rozelle portion of the Metro have areas at the Darling Street and Victoria Road junction marked as sites for "surface works". "Surface works" may mean that the relevant land is required for tunnel excavation and extraction of spoil, or for locating heavy construction machinery, or for tunnel or station ventilators, or for Rozelle station access, or for bus access, or for a combination of purposes). At this stage, Metro planners can't be specific but I have determined the following:

On the north-western corner, the land between Victoria Road and the former Presbyterian Church is affected, together with the open space on the Victoria Road side of Rozelle Public School and the open space behind the Presbyterian Church (where the weatherboard James Macdonald church of 1874 was later re-erected). The 1904 Edward Bowen church itself is not affected, nor is the early 1920's hall behind it. None of the Rozelle School buildings is affected. The row of shops that stands between Victoria Road and the church, facing Darling Street, is affected.

On the north-eastern corner, neither St Thomas' Church nor the adjacent Rectory (both Blacket and Sons) is affected but the hall with the window facing Victoria Road, where the pre-school is now located, certainly is. The rows of shops that stand between Victoria Road and the church, facing Darling Street and Victoria Road, are affected.

I have two priority concerns:

1. The St Thomas' Anglican Church hall – this shares a style similar to the hall at All Souls Leichhardt, which faces Marion Street. Both buildings are contemporaneous.
2. The corner building on Victoria Road, adjacent to the Leagues Club (where the all night chemist used to operate) has features which could possibly be associated with James Macdonald – the blend of Gothic and classical motifs.

Mr Phillips, Heritage officer for the Metro team, urged that the whole St Thomas' site (including the hall) be put to heritage assessment before Metro planning is too far advanced.

Before its demolition c 1955 Rozelle Post Office (see photo previous page) stood as a splendid example of high Victorian public architecture that came out of the colonial architect's office. To assuage residents' hostility to the postal name "Rozelle, Sydney", Sir George Reid's Postmaster-General (later Federal Prime Minister), Joseph Cook, changed it to "Rozelle, Balmain".

John Williams



St Thomas' Church

A high-demand pre-school operates in the Anglican hall (and has done for over half-a-century), so use of this portion of land for a surface works site would be highly contentious. The parents of the pre-schoolers have publicised their concerns already in local newspapers.

John Williams

Metro and other developments update:

Opposition to the CBD Metro plan, terminating at Rozelle, has been expressed strongly by local residents and Leichhardt Council. The plan has already received much criticism from various sources including Infrastructure Australia. The estimated cost has already blown out to \$5.3billion. The latest budget blowout comes as the Government begins only now to properly test the project's viability.

The RTA appears to be still pushing ahead with the duplication of the Iron Cove Bridge despite strong opposition from communities and Councils on both sides of the crossing. Sydney Rowers are looking into legally challenging the new bridge as it would prevent them being able to use what they claim is the only suitable calm waterway in the area. Opponents of the RTA plans say the duplication is costly, would not alleviate traffic congestion problems and would cause greater difficulty for traffic entering and leaving Victoria Rd in Rozelle.

Leichhardt Council and community groups have taken up the running on community involvement in the planning of White Bay. After more than 2 years of promises of proper planning with full community consultation, nothing has happened other than continued ad-hoc inappropriate proposals put forward by State Government. The community has been kept in the dark about any Taskforce meetings and no information has been forthcoming on any proper planning of the foreshore.

Editor

Sydney Heritage Fleet

The forerunner of the Sydney Heritage Fleet, was founded in 1965 by a group of public-spirited individuals to preserve Sydney's 1902 VIP steam yacht Lady Hopetoun. The organisation later became known as the Sydney Maritime Museum Limited and then in 1998 the trading name Sydney Heritage Fleet was adopted. The Fleet now comprises 8 operational historical vessels, one of the largest such collections in the world.

A community-based non-profit organisation, the Fleet's mission is to: build and maintain an internationally recognised centre of excellence in maritime heritage for the benefit of all Australians by presenting through research, acquisition, conservation, restoration, education and operation, our continuing maritime history. The Fleet is funded through donations, membership subscriptions and income from vessel charters and tours. The Fleet receives no federal or state government funding.



1874 barque James Craig

The Fleet's 1200 strong membership and 550 dedicated volunteer workers restore, operate and maintain the fleet of vintage vessels while preserving traditional technical methods and skills.

The Fleet's oldest vessel, the 1874 iron barque James Craig has been fully restored and sails regularly. The Fleet recruits and trains her crew of 45 and runs regular square rig sail training courses for all comers, the courses cost \$105 and upon graduating deck trainees can sign on as crew for day sails and annual trips to Hobart, Newcastle and Melbourne. The Fleet also operates three of the most historically significant vessels on Sydney Harbour: the 1902 steam tug Waratah, the 1902 VIP steam launch Lady Hopetoun and the 1903 schooner Boomerang. To supplement the dying band of steam engineers the Fleet runs its own accredited course for Marine Engine Drivers (steam) the only organisation in the world to do so. Other operational vessels include workboats and a 1950's wooden speedboat. Restoration is currently

taking place on the 1912 ferry Kanangra and the 1927 relief pilot vessel John Oxley, both of which are located at the heritage shipyard off James Craig Rd, Rozelle Bay. Restoring a 1000 ton ship with a volunteer workforce is necessarily a long term proposition, the recovery and restoration of the James Craig from her resting place in Recherche Bay, Tasmania took 30 years and cost approximately \$25 million.

The restoration of the John Oxley is of considerable historic significance nationally and internationally. One of the few Clyde built steam ships still around she is typical of the fleet of coastal steamers that played such a huge part in the economic and social development of Australia, she is the last surviving example of such a vessel.

The John Oxley is a familiar site to all who cross the Anzac bridge westbound, her tall steamer's funnel is unmistakable as she sits on the fleet's slave dock at our heritage shipyard site in Rozelle. Over the last four years we have just about completed the restoration of the hull replacing and re-riveting nearly a hundred steel plates of about a tonne a piece. The project is being lead by Barry Jones the 84 year old ex chief engineer of Garden and Cockatoo Island dockyards. We hope to re-float her in the next two years though the ship's interior will require at least another 5 years work. Once restored, she will be exhibited and steamed within the harbour and along the NSW coast.



1902 Steam Tug Waratah

The Fleet also has 55 small heritage boats and one of the largest collections of marine engines in Australia which are being restored and conserved. The Fleet's collection includes over fifty model ships including models of some of the Fleet's own vessels. The Fleet's Maritime Records and Research Centre maintains a comprehensive research library and archive which includes photographs, ships' plans, diaries, logs and journals.

The Sydney Heritage Fleet also made significant contributions towards the establishment of the Australian National Maritime Museum which opened at Darling Harbour in 1991. The two organisations play complementary roles, the Sydney Heritage Fleet placing an emphasis on restoration and operation of heritage vessels rather than preservation and conservation.



A volunteer painting the rails

The fleet relies on the volunteers to carry out much of the work. Volunteers can be of any age over 16 yrs, and any background, from carpenter and welder to research assistant or artist. Recently, in conjunction with the Australian Society of Marine Artists, local artist David Wilshire was invited to be an artist-in-residence on the Kanangra for 5 mths during which time he produced over 40 paintings and drawings inspired by his surroundings which were on exhibition to the public at the end of March. The Fleet is not just a bunch of old men restoring ships there are also a variety of courses run with local schools in particular Sydney Secondary College at Blackwattle, Leichhardt and Balmain and Canterbury High School. The courses cover everything from "Messing about in boats" to commercial seaman's courses and a project to build a 28ft diesel hard chine fishing boat.

The fleet needs water front facilities to undertake the restoration projects and to run ship charters. Water front land is increasingly under pressure in the Harbour. The Fleet has an excellent relationship with NSW Maritime and is negotiating with the NSW Govt for a permanent shipyard site and fleet operating base. Goat Island has been suggested.

Christina Ritchie

Thanks to Jon Simpson, General Manager, SHF, for his assistance in writing this article.

JOHN BOOTH

Local Historical Identity, Balmain's First Mayor

Most sources portray John Booth as an important 19th century figure in Balmain and in NSW. Circumstantial evidence confirms Booth's reputation (there is a Booth Street in Balmain as well as in Annandale). Some biographical details on Booth are missing (his mother's name and family for instance) and given the verbose vagueness of his entry in *Australian Men of Mark* (published, when Booth was still alive, to celebrate the centenary of British settlement in Australia), it could be inferred that his family, euphemistically termed "uneducated", though not convicts, were from the wrong class. It seems the NSW colony was not the egalitarian society that Australia was portrayed as later and indicates that Booth had to contend with more than a devastating fire, to make the contribution he did.

Below is the entry on Booth in *Australian Dictionary Of Biography - Online Edition* (www.adb.online.anu.edu.au/biogs/A030184b.htm) and an extract from *Australian Man of Mark*, v 1, E. Digby (ed), Sydney, 1889. Another reference is Peter Reynolds' *John Booth of Balmain: Booths in Bermondsey, Kincumber, Balmain and on the Manning, 1800-1946*, Balmain, N.S.W.: Leichhardt Historical Journal, 1997.

BOOTH, JOHN (1822-1898), timber merchant and politician, was born on 27 February 1822 at Bermondsey, London, son of Henry Booth, corn-factor, of Surbiton. He went to sea in 1833, reached Sydney in the barque *Rajah* in 1839 and in his own words 'stopped ashore in 1840 to learn shipwrighting'. He learned the trade at Kincumber, Brisbane Water, under Jonathan Piper and in 1846 turned master builder. Business grew and about 1854 Booth moved to a more central location at Balmain (later the 'containerization' terminal). After shipbuilding for a few years he entered the timber trade and opened mills at Balmain and on the Manning River. In 1870 Booth's Balmain Sawmill, together with his Sussex Street yards, had sixty employees and an output of 60,000 feet (18,288 m) a week. In that year Booth retired, leasing his business to Taylor, Kethel & Preddy, and sailed for England. In December 1874 the mills were destroyed by fire and, as they were only partly insured, Booth's loss was heavy. They were rebuilt on a larger scale and by 1885 John Booth & Co. Ltd had doubled its number of employees and increased production to 200,000 feet (60,960 m) of timber a week. Booth's residence, Surbiton House, Donnelly Street, Balmain, was next to his nine-acre (3.6 ha) establishment; he also owned many other houses at Balmain,

a property at Cooma and 510 acres (206 ha) at Bundanoon.



Booth entered politics in February 1872, when he and Joseph Wearne, John Robertson and Joseph Raphael were elected for West Sydney. Standing as a representative of both capital and labour he claimed that he opposed injustice to the working classes and reduction of their salaries. He approved the eight-hour movement in principle and wanted more liberal land measures, 'something after the American system', as the government's land bill was in part 'very oppressive to the poor and favoured the better classes'. He was also opposed to border customs and wanted to see Sydney made a free port. He stood for the Glebe in December 1874 as a Public Schools League candidate but lost to (Sir) George Wigram Allen. He then stood in January 1875 for East Macquarie, advocating the extension of railways and new land and mining Acts, and was returned along with William Suttor junior. In 1877 he stood for the Williams electorate but was defeated by William Johnston by twenty-one votes.

Self-made and largely uneducated, Booth was an unsophisticated politician and his short parliamentary career was not very distinguished. A stocky and jovial figure, he was not in his own words 'a long-winded member in the House', where he usually sat on the cross benches; his chief interest with marine matters earned him the title 'the honourable member for the lighthouses'. In May 1874 he was examined by the select committee on wharf accommodation for the port of Sydney. He was also active in local government and other civic affairs; in 1867 he was the first mayor in Balmain and active in the School of Arts and the Working Men's Institute. Booth died at his country residence, Ferndale, Bundanoon, on 11 April 1898 and was buried in

Waverley cemetery. He was survived by his wife Susannah, née Wetherall, whom he had married at Brisbane Water in 1850, and by four sons and six of their seven daughters.

John Booth - Extract from *Australian Men of Mark*

The pioneers of the industries of New South Wales certainly deserve a place in any role of Australian men of mark. To them is due much of the material prosperity of the country. It is they who find work and wages for the artisan. Each one of those great institutions of labour - not yet half numerous enough in this colony - with their workshops ringing with the strong voice of labour, and their approaches thronged at morning and evening by coming or returning workmen, are so many monuments to the energy, capacity, and success of the men who now form the heart and brain of the industries of the country. John Booth, of Balmain, Sydney, is well-known as one of the pioneers of our early colonial industries, and his success, crowning a career of forty-eight years active work, amply entitles him to a representative place among the honourable and desirable class of colonists. He has been a representative of the people too in a more directly responsible capacity. It was substantial and useful, without being pretentious, and to be judged rather by the work performed than the noise made in doing it. His business career, from first to last, shows that energy and vigorous self-assertion which first displayed itself at an early age, when he preferred the fascination of the sea to an uneventful life on land. Another mark of his career, never absent from the lives of our pioneers, is the never-failing faculty of seizing the opportunity as it presented itself, and doing the right thing at the right time.

Fergus Fricke

DUNNIES AGAIN

The Balmain Association intends to produce a publication on dunnies and the sanitation of Balmain. We are looking for hidden dunny lanes (often the entrances to these lanes have been blocked off and they are not easy to see or photograph). Also, we would like to gather stories relating to dunnies involving, spiders, lost articles, spillages, overflows or just reminiscences about what it was like living with a backyard toilet on a stormy night with an upset tummy. If you can help please contact Fergus (Tel. 9810 117, email ferg@arch.usyd.edu.au, address 229 Rowntree Street Balmain 2041)

Balmain Association Heritage Walks

Walk 1 - Gladstone Park to the Balmain Watch House

The suburb of Balmain is named after William Balmain, a Surgeon-General, who in 1800 received a land grant (The Balmain Grant) of 550 acres (220ha) from Governor John Hunter. William Balmain was born in Perthshire, Scotland in 1762 and enlisted with the Royal Navy as a surgeon's mate, which meant he did not need to be fully qualified.

After twelve years service to the Colony of New South Wales W. Balmain returned to Britain in 1801 where he died, aged 41 years in 1803. In 1801, prior to his departure to Britain, W. Balmain sold the grant to a Dr John Gilchrist for the nominal sum of five shillings.

The suburb of Balmain could be classified as a microcosm of Australia in Political, Religious and Industrial historical aspects.

Gladstone Park – was originally known as the '*Pigeon Ground*' because pigeon shooting supposedly took place in the area during the 1850s. The State Government purchased the land in 1882 and on 5 April 1890, Gladstone Park was officially opened as a recreation area for the residents of Balmain.

Gladstone Park School – Originally known as *Pigeon Ground School* was opened in 1862 with a pupil attendance of about 250 pupils. It is now called Balmain Public School and pupils use the park as a play area.

Reservoir - Before the reservoir was built, the people of Balmain got their water from backyard wells or from pumps or water carts. After years of promises to improve the water sanitation, the announcement in 1912 that a water reservoir was to be built under the park caused a public outcry.

The Water Board reassured residents that, once the reservoir was built into the rock below, the park, complete with a new bandstand, would be restored right over the top of the concrete and steel structure. The construction of the Balmain Reservoir was completed by the Water Board in 1917. It is no longer in use.

Gladstone Park Bowling Club (GPBC) – Is one of the oldest bowling clubs, founded in 1891. Part of local folklore states that the GPBC broke away from the Balmain Bowling Club in 1891. The reason, I'm told, was the religious rivalry that occurred during that period, which resulted in one club becoming Catholic and the other a Protestant venue. This information has come from a '*word of mouth*' source; the written word on this subject is yet to be seen.



Gladstone Park Bowling Club

The club has recently reinvented itself by hiring out its venue for various social events such as birthdays, weddings etc and 'barefoot bowling' is a regular and popular occurrence.

In the early 1800's the Roman Catholic (RC) Church was somewhat restricted from constructing their establishments in the centre of towns and suburbs. To get around this hurdle their churches were built on the nearest highest ground available, and tall steeples were added that could be seen at great distances. This familiar pattern repeats itself in the older suburbs and country towns throughout Australia.



St Augustine's Church

St Augustine's Church (RC) – had early beginnings. In 1848 William Adolphus Young donated a site for a Catholic church in Balmain and on 4 September 1848 the foundation stone was laid. Funds being short and much of the labour voluntary, the church was not opened until 5 May 1851. Father J. J. Therry was its first priest and remained there until his death in 1864. In 1860 the building was extended by 12 feet and a gallery added.

As the congregation grew with the Balmain expansion, the church became too small and in 1906 the foundation stone for a new church was laid. The present church was dedicated on 1 December 1907.

Fawcett St. (Cottages) – The cottages with the overhanging balconies are pre 1880. This is similar to other older inner-city suburbs. The law was later changed so that any future balcony designs had to be inclusive within the property. Most of the older properties were built by a stonemason Timothy Fawcett in the 1860s.

Stephen St. – used to lead down to the '*Stephen St. Wharf 7*' ferry terminal in White Bay. This discontinued during the construction of the Industrial White Bay area in the 1950/60s.

Adolphus St. – named after William Adolphus Young (1814-1885), merchant and Sheriff of NSW, acquired a substantial holding in default of a mortgage foreclosure during the 1840 depression.

Balmain Bowling Club (BBC) – this club was founded in 1880 and is recognised as Australia's oldest club still playing on its original ground. This club shares a history that interacts with the above GPBC.

4 Wallace St, Clontarf Cottage - was built in 1844 by Robert Blake, a soldier, Sheriff and spec builder. In the 1980's the building became derelict and the threat of demolition stirred a *resident action group* who, by notable demonstration, helped to save it and persuade Leichhardt Council to restore the building for community use.

White Bay – named after First Fleeter, John White, Surgeon-General to the Settlement. "*Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales*", by John White, was first published in 1790. This publication included 65 magnificent colour plates of "non-descript animals, birds, serpents, curious cones of trees and other natural productions".

White Bay was developed in the 1950/60s into an industrial complex for *Lever and Kitchen*, a detergent manufacturer. This involved creating a wharf area and rail network link that covers the distance of approx 1.5 kms. The wharf area was used as a container terminal from the mid 60's until the mid 1990's. It is, at present, used for the storage of cars before delivery to retailers.



White Bay

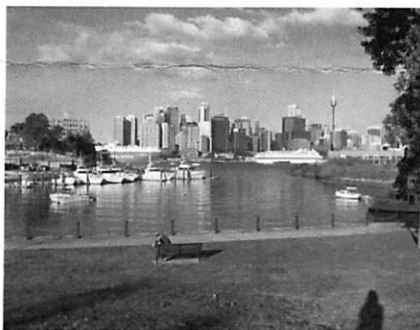
The future of White Bay depends on the outcome of a new planning process for the bay area.

The local community has been promised input into the planning of White Bay.

12b Grafton Street, Hampton

Villa – c1855. Sir Henry Parkes (1815-1896) resided here from 1888-92 while Premier of New South Wales. As an Australian statesman he became known as the "Father of Federation".

As the earliest advocate of a Federal Council of the then colonies of Australia, a precursor to the Federation of Australia, he is generally considered the most prominent of the Australian Founding Fathers.



Ewinton Park

Ewinton Park/Camerons Cove - Ewinton Park overlooks Jubilee Bay/Camerons Cove and contains one of Balmain's grand waterfront houses, Ewinton. Built in 1854 as a single story dwelling it was extended between 1862 and 1873.

It was purchased in 1911 by Henry Brisbane Swan, a timber merchant and local wharf owner. After his death it fell into disrepair but has now been meticulously restored.

Camerons Cove is also the Headquarters of the NSW Water Police (Sydney Harbour).

Balmain Watch House – Today, the Balmain Watch House is the headquarters of the Balmain Association, formed in November 1965 to preserve and promote the district. As Balmain grew in the 1850's it became a nuisance to take short term prisoners to the City for a single night and local residents requested a police force and local gaol. The building was used by the police up until 1960 when it became derelict.

The building dates back to 1855 but became a target for demolition in the early 1960's when the National Trust was asked to support an appeal, led by local residents, to save the Watch House. The BA now maintains the building which is used mainly for exhibitions and to store archival history.

George Cooper

You can contact George via the Balmain Association for information on future conducted local historical walks.

Autumn/Winter update

The cooler season is well and truly with us - a time when we can appreciate the changing colours provided by the deciduous trees in our parks and streets. It may also turn our attention to thinking about ways we can provide warmth and comfort to those less fortunate who live in cold, damp conditions or on the streets of our diverse city. Luckily Balmain/Rozelle is now a far cry from the substandard overcrowded unhealthy suburb of our not-too-distant past when dirty, noisy industry occupied the foreshores and slopes around the peninsula and the workers endured harsh working and living conditions. Traffic and parking problems are a new annoyance however and our footpaths need attention. Unfortunately too, while many of us have been carefully upgrading, renovating and extending our homes, superb examples of historical, and even heritage, architecture have disappeared for ever from our historical area. Swathes of concrete surround us in ever-increasing expanses. Parks and open spaces struggle to meet the needs of our increasing population, especially those of our new young families. We need to be vigilant and question new planning reforms that threaten to destroy not only the historical character of

the area but also its liveability. The foreshores too need our attention. Huge marinas and other inappropriate proposals continue to be assessed and approved for our harbourfront and waterways. Our health services too are under threat. The casualty services provided by Balmain Hospital have recently been reduced. There is no longer a night GP casualty service and even the day services are at risk of closure. Our residents, our special community, deserve better.

Editorial

100 Years Ago – 1909

Electric Light and Power Supply Corporation Ltd was established to supply electricity to Balmain. Electric street lighting was installed and public buildings also received lighting.

A Garbage Destructor was built to replace the tip in Elkington Park.

What's on at the Watch House

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

JUNE

6, 7 Long weekend Watch house closed.
13, 14 and 20, 21 Available for hire otherwise Balmain Association open Saturday 11.30 to 3pm

Saturday 27, Sunday 28

10am – 6pm

hARTstART

The annual exhibition by students of hARTstART studio.

JULY

Saturdays 4, 11, 18, 25

11.30 to 3pm

Balmain Association Exhibition in conjunction with National Trust to be confirmed.

AUGUST

Saturday 1, Sunday 2

10am – 6pm

Abby Wang et al

Visit Balmain Association website for more information closer to time of exhibition

Saturday 8, Sunday 9

Available for hire
Balmain Association History Room will be open 11.30 to 3pm

Saturday 15, Sunday 16

10am to 5pm

Paper and Bones

JeffO'Kell's sculptures in hardwood based on the body; drawings of paper by Judy Castle and Georgina Castle; photographs by Lorraine Sullivan and painted landscapes by Barbara Zambrano.

Opening Friday 14th 6pm to 8.30pm - all welcome.

Saturday 22 10am – 6pm,

Sunday 23 12 noon – 4pm

Companions: People & the Landscape

Lea Kannar & Jens Lichtenberger
New works by Lea explore the changes that have been imposed on the landscape by the people who wish to reinvent what is a landscape.

Photography by Jens Lichtenberger shows you his vision of the people

who surround us everyday and those who we never see.

Friday night, 5 – 8 pm, drinks from 6pm with the artists everyone is welcome

Saturday 29, Sunday 30

10am – 4pm

Out of Hours

An artistic exhibition from the people who know the tools and materials of fine art best – after all, it's their job to sell it. The staff of Eckersley's stores around Sydney and beyond have collaborated to showcase their diverse skills, natural talent and hard-earned technical knowledge.

Opening Friday, August 28th, from 6-9pm, all welcome.

For enquires, contact Nicole Pendle on 0402059454, or Helen Alker, on 0400940036.

SEPTEMBER

History Week 2009 will take place 5-13 September. The official theme for this year is *Scandals, Crime and Corruption*. History Week 2009 will be a wild journey through the dark shadows of our past. Discover the scandals, crime and corruption that have shocked us over time and shaped our history, sometimes in unexpected ways.

Balmain boys DO *Cri..me and other Misdemeanours*

The Balmain Association will present an exhibition of Crime, scandals and corruption on **Saturdays 5, 12, 19 and 26.**

Watch House. Opening hours 11.30am - 4pm

There will be a guided tour of the Balmain Courthouse, **2pm Thurs 10 Sept. FREE.** Nos. limited

Contact: 9818 4954 & 9810 6885

OCTOBER

Saturday 3, Sunday 4

Mixed exhibition of Doris Rainsford's drawings, mixed media and sculpture; paintings and mixed media by Karen Alex and Barbara Hardy.

History Week

If anyone has items for exhibition they wish to have included for History week please contact 9818 4954 or 9810 6885

Heritage Festival

The Balmain Association participated in the 2009 National Trust Heritage Festival held 4-19 April although the photo exhibition continued all April. An item published in The Glebe about Fergus Frickie's attempt to obtain permission to take photos from the Balmain Post Office tower, attracted visitors to view the Kerry panorama taken from the tower in 1909.

Two coach tours of some former sandstone quarries in the Municipality, guided by Bob and Noel Irving and Christopher Reeves, visited our sandstone photo exhibition and Noel's quarry photo display. Noel has generously donated the exhibition to the Association.

Many tourists enjoyed their visit to the Watch House and complemented the Association on the presentation of the building and gardens.

Thank you all for assisting with the mounting and demounting of the display and the volunteering at opening times.

Looking forward to the September History Festival with a great theme, "Scandals, Crime and Corruption". Can you help here with a story, as Balmain boys DO CRIME?

Kath Hamey

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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Our Web site:

<http://balmainassociation.org.au>

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Organizations \$30

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