



the balmain
association
incorporated
news sheet

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Bays Precinct Community Meeting Report

The purpose of this meeting, held at Wentworth Park on July 7th was to bring to the community the results of the Community Reference Group's meetings of the past nine months in a campaign to prevent ill-considered and ad hoc development in the Bays precinct.

The Community Reference Group (CRG) was established to give advice, through Sydney Harbour Foreshores Authority (SHFA), to the government's Task Force as the first phase of planning for the future of the Bays Precinct which includes Blackwattle, Rozelle and White Bays. As reported previously, the reference group got off to a poor start primarily due to the limited terms of reference and the fact that the government was making decisions about developments prior to any strategic planning. From about October to March last, however, the majority of community groups involved, worked to form an alliance and develop the principles about development in the Bays as we move further into the 'post industrial' phase.

A number of development decisions have already been 'announced' but not further progressed - these include the Cruise Passenger Terminal, & Bailey's in White Bay, B1 & B2 at Blackwattle Bay, the Fishmarkets and Banks Street. We are hopeful that we may also be able to influence the final outcome of these developments by pressing the government to adhere to the principles.

There were presentations at the meeting of the agreed principles from Lesley Lynch of the Glebe Society, from Jane Spring, recreation (Sydney University Rowers) and Mal Hiley from Sydney Harbour Maritime Forum representing commercial port users. There was support expressed for ensuring continuing commercial port use within the precinct as long as

it exists for good economic reasons (Commercial Port activities undertaken at #7 & #8 Glebe Island (White Bay) have at least 10 years to run and we were shown that they deliver products very close to their end destination and in doing so take many trucks from the roads.).



It was stated at the meeting that this is the first time many of the community groups have worked together: groups from Glebe, Pyrmont, Ultimo and Blackwattle Bay, including Friends of Barangaroo. We aim to get all community groups in the Bays area to work together to put pressure on the government. It appears that the Task Force is to meet shortly.

The meeting was well attended and resolved the following:

- It is important that this, or any future government,*
- i) *adopt these Objectives and Principles as the basis for an integrated strategic plan for the future of the Bays Precinct*
 - ii) *put a halt to one off ad hoc planning/development decisions in the Bays Precinct pending the development of this strategic plan and ensure that these Objectives and Principles shape the implementation of already announced one-off developments*
 - iii) *overcome current fragmentation of responsibilities by establishing a dedicated Bays Renewal Authority. This authority is to include relevant expertise and strong community representation*

and to be publicly accountable and subject to relevant planning, heritage and environmental legislation

- iv) *act on its promise to set up a second stage of the Bays Precinct Consultation process to finalise the development of an integrated strategic plan for the Precinct in 2010. This process must include a formal and adequately supported community advisory committee with balanced representation from the precinct as a key player in this consultation process. There must be direct and effective linkage between this committee and the Bays Precinct Task Force.*

The meeting calls upon the Premier, Kristina Keneally, and relevant Ministers and the Leader of the Opposition and relevant shadow Ministers to meet with the CRG members to discuss the CRG advice and the way forward.

The meeting also registered its concern that current and future governments would not respect the Objective and Principles protecting the remaining publicly owned foreshore land and harbour waters from further alienation, even if they were incorporated into future planning documents. It therefore decided to explore ways in which this public ownership could be more effectively protected. Proposals relating to this aspect will be the subject of further community discussion.

Carolyn Allen

(Copies of the executive summary of the CRG are available at the Watch House)

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MICHAEL SNAPE



In the exhibition of photographs by David Liddle and Barbara Hamilton of Balmain people and places held in the Watch House, 9 December 2009 to 23 January 2010 each subject was asked to supply a short autobiography. Michael Snape, sculptor and storyteller, gave a longer account of his life than could be included in the exhibition. The full version is below:

I first came to Balmain in 1976 after my vessel capsized off Peacock Point. I had been steadily making my way around to realising my dreams when my idealism came upon the rocks which were concealed by the high tide. I had heard that Balmain offered refugee status to those souls who were lost in their thoughts so I was welcomed here.

I was given a lease of good land and set up camp up on the ridge where I had good vantage point of the harbour. From here I was able to make raids into the local culture, subverting the rigid structures that were sprouting across the neighbouring hills and risking the good health of the local spirit.

Armed with my anvil and my navel I set about bringing about change and stillness. While the world is not transformed after my 33 year incarceration here, neither have I destroyed it and the trees I planted have grown to cast an easy shade.

Balmain is not quite an island as much as Victoria Road squeezes the end of it to limit its breath. It is fixed at one end but flails across the harbour like a balloon that has had its air released. Being both isolated and wild it functions as an asylum may have once functioned. It is largely left to its own devices and the wider community is able to get on with the business of establishing the colony.

In David's recent photograph, you will find me attempting to navigate the roundabout at Robert and Beattie Streets. Because of the recent proliferation of snakes in the area I have taken to carrying my ladder wherever I go and as a direct result of doing this I have not lost too much ground.

The holding of the ladder in this location also works as a mill which is driven by the flow of traffic. The energy derived propels me with my ongoing projects. Also, with the ladder set up on this roundabout one can achieve a good view of White Bay and any impending peak hour. With little to lean the ladder against however, a sense of balance is required to that of a circus performer or comedian.

Inexplicably the act of doing this raises the ire of drivers who have a sense of a greater or more serious purpose.

I am particularly fond of this roundabout for its modesty, and for the memory of the silent cop which by virtue of the changing times has past into disuse.

Coming from Evans Street along Beattie Street and turning right into Mullens Street induces the driver to make an ungracious three point ninety degree right hand turn as if the driver was biting his tongue.

Born 1951. Studied East Sydney Tech, 1971 and 1972. Practised as a sculptor since then with some sidetracks of painting writing and teaching. Numerous exhibitions, commissions, prizes. Please view www.michaelsnape.com.

2010 AGM

The Balmain Association's AGM will be held in the Watch House at 7pm on the 6th October. Nominations for the committee, proxies and agenda items should be submitted to the Secretary, June Lunsman, (9810 6885) by 30 September

Ode to Barangaroo

What vision is this now that promises a vista red on grey
Larger and more dominant than a foreshore can endure
Spearing skywards, jousting with sabrecuts
Inlets and outlets of an ego's whim
The lance of fortune quivers. Greened cement
Covers the bedrock, ripping out a page of history
Repression repeated on the hungry mile

It steps, they say, so lightly on the jutting slab
But weighs ten thousand tons on heavy hearts
The bane of a tourist's friendly paradise
A waterfront of dreams drips tears on paper shapes
Prized drawings cast aside with cruising berths
The concrete terraces of costly replicas pervade
What future this when harbourfront is lost
Ships languish on our west suburban rim
And promises of public foreshore are betrayed

The heart aches for past glories of a city's pride
In human scale a show of special Sydney style
A sandstone cutting following a terraced line
Child-like the city builds its wisdom over time
Reflections on moonlit waters play the devil's game
As darkened rooms fester in powerful night
Destiny's pen-stroke delivers its purchased prize
Pin-striped shapes in the shadows whisper
'Sold' to the new winner with a favoured name

Christina Ritchie

The Balmain Association Bulletin

The Balmain Association is introducing a regular email bulletin to provide members with up to date information on the activities of the Association and events at the Watch House.

If you would like to subscribe to the Bulletin, please send your name and email address to subscribe@balmainassociation.org.au or unsubscribe@balmainassociation.org.au. You can unsubscribe at any time.

Another Lockup

Never go browsing the internet looking at real estate for your children. The danger is you may end up being the custodian of another old house. It was my close tie with the Balmain Watch House that really led me astray when the former Court House at Shellharbour now known as Woodbine Court was for sale. The similarities between Woodbine and the Balmain Watch House are quite significant. As well as their use, the histories of the settlement of the areas are similar.

Did you know that William Balmain was a friend of D'Arcy Wentworth to whom the land grant that became Shellharbour Village was made? When Balmain left Sydney in 1801, he left his friend D'Arcy Wentworth to look after his local concerns.

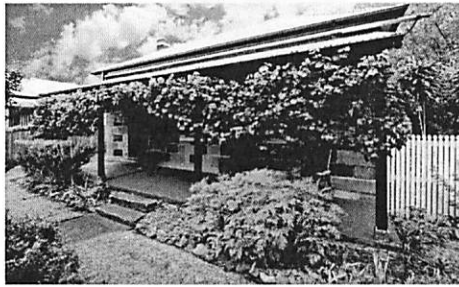
They both followed similar career paths coming out as Assistant Surgeons, Balmain arrived in January 1788 and Wentworth, somewhat under a cloud in 1790. He had been thrice charged with highway robbery, twice found not guilty and at the third hearing because he had obtained an appointment as Assistant Surgeon on the transport Neptune to Botany Bay, this charge was dismissed. Both served as Assistant Surgeons on Norfolk Island and eventually returned to Sydney as senior surgeons.

It seems that you had to be multi-skilled in those days. Balmain having been magistrate, superintendent of convicts and farmer on Norfolk Island in 1800, was placed in command of the Sydney company of the Loyal Association and praised as an 'active and spirited magistrate'.

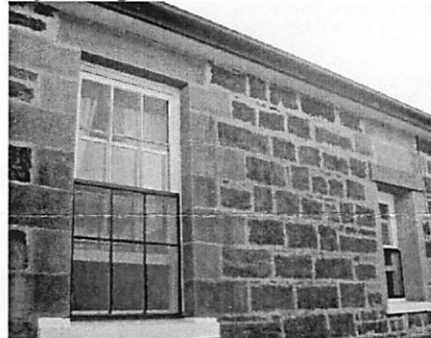
Similarly, Wentworth became a justice of the peace in 1810 and chief police magistrate in Sydney, reforming the police force for nearly a decade. He was also a farmer overseeing the many properties granted to him as was customary to supplement salaries of medical officers. It was his 1,650 acres granted at Peterborough in the Illawarra which became Shellharbour Village.

Captains Towns, Addison and Darley married Wentworth's daughters and the streets in the

village were named after his family – Towns, Wentworth, Mary, Addison, Sophia and Darley Streets.



The Balmain Watch House was completed in 1854 to cope with the increasing number of arrests mainly for drunk and disorderly behaviour. Similarly local residents of Shellharbour Village expressed concern about the unruly behaviour associated with the township's hotels and requested a policeman be appointed. The 10,000 sqm site was approved in 1859, and a temporary building completed in 1861. The existing building, in traditional Georgian domestic style constructed of coursed local basalt rubble at the sides with sandstone blocks around windows and door-frames was completed in 1877. The building served as the Watch House and District Court until February 1908 when a new courthouse was opened at Albion Park. It then became the local police station. The 2 front rooms used by the court were converted to a sitting room and bedroom the 2 cells being retained with the open corridor separating them from main residence.



In 1930 there was an extensive renovation converting one of the cells into a bathroom and the other into a bedroom. New box-framed windows were built replacing the typical small high cell windows. Fortunately one of these windows still remains in the storeroom now the laundry. A portable cell was installed in the backyard.

In 1933 the Shellharbour police station was moved around the corner to Wentworth St into a substantial weatherboard cottage which today is a well restored private

residence. The building at Mary St was rented out.

In 1938, it was sold as a private residence and then on-sold to Mr Colin Miller who named the property "Woodbine" after his property in Gerringong.

Since then the property has been sold 4 times and even though a large back room has been added many of the original features remain including a gatepost on the northern side which locals claim has a separate heritage order on it. Of particular interest is the slate step in the doorway to what was the kitchen but now a bedroom. It is totally worn down, we are led to believe, by visitors/tradesmen who would stand there talking to those working in the kitchen. When purchased by Mr Miller he said to his family not to worry he would simply turn it over to have a nice even surface. To his disappointment when he attempted this he found the step equally worn on the other side having been previously turned.

There is a separate stone building in the back yard which is thought to have been the original toilet. It has two doors, each in opposite walls and there appears to have been a partition so maybe a separate male and female facility during its lock-up period. A daughter of Mr Miller said that it was definitely used as a toilet by her family during the dunny can days of the 1950s and 60s.

Unlike the Balmain Watch House's situation in Darling St amid other Victorian buildings, the Shellharbour Court House is surrounded by unsympathetic development dating from the 1950s up to today and it's still happening. There are a few older buildings of note in the surrounding area with excellent interpretative signage provided by Shellharbour Council.

June Lunsmann

Statement of Significance, State Heritage Branch.

'Woodbine' is of exceptional local significance. This building is one of the last remaining public buildings from the Victorian period, in the Georgian style, in the area. Architecturally notable for its excellent and interesting use of local materials and stone. It is the oldest remaining courthouse in the area. Strong associations with the establishment of law

What's on at the Watch House

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

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER

History Week September 2010: *Faces in the Street*

Join us in History Week 2010 for a walk down the streets of the past and into the lives of those after whom these streets were named. Compare the streets of 1909 to those of 2010.

The Balmain Association will be presenting an exhibition titled, *"The face of your street – the person behind the name"*

As well, the panoramas taken from the Post Office tower by Kerry in 1909 and by David Liddle in 2009 will be on display. Saturdays 4, 11, 18, 25 September.

Saturday 11th September: there will be a coach tour on to explore these streets. Leaving the Watch House at 1.30 returning 3.30. Cost \$10PP places limited so bookings essential Kathleen 9818 4954.

Saturday 2 and Sunday 3

Available for hire. History Room open Sat. 11:30am to 3:00pm

Saturday 9 and Sunday 10, Opening Sat. 9 at 1pm all welcome.
Different Perspectives

An exhibition by artists Sue Gasser pastels, Cristina Frost Clayton pastels and mixed media, Cheryl Gay and Doris Rainsford mixed media, Doris ceramics and Glenn Photography.

Saturday 16 and Sunday 17, 10.30am to 5.30pm, Opening Friday 15, 5 - 7pm, all welcome

Group 4

Artists, Pat Crawford, Yvonne Liechti, Barbara O'Ryan and Carla Wettstein will be showing artwork in oils and acrylics and prints inspired by echoes of reality, land/seascapes, abstracts and birds. Pat, whose strength is colour harmony has focussed on floral work this year, Barbara has developed interesting abstraction of daily life, Yvonne will present water and skyscapes and Carla who prefers more realism has worked on birds and landscapes.

Saturday 23 and Sunday 24, 10am to 5pm, Opening Friday 22 from 6pm to 8.30pm All welcome
"6+"

This is an exhibition of artworks that many Inner West residents look forward to. Dianne O'Dwyer, Lynne Sung, Heather Kepski, Wendy Lowe, Roma Devjak, Harriet Loneragan & Carlie Lopez will show their latest works including paintings, drawings and prints.

Saturday 30 and Sunday 31

Wang: to be announced

NOVEMBER

Saturday 6 and Sunday 17, 10am to 5pm, Opening Friday 5 November from 6.00 – 9.00pm - all welcome

The Students of Balmain Art School (SBAS) Christmas Exhibition.

The students are excited to announce the third Balmain Art School exhibition, to be held at the Balmain Watch House. The exhibition will showcase the talent of many of the students who attend Balmain's oldest art school. All works will be for sale.

Saturday 13, 10am to 5pm and Sunday 14, 10am to 4pm, Opening Friday 12th, 6-9 pm All Welcome

"Travelling through seasons"

An exhibition by Catherine Harry, of works based on her travels in France and Italy. Catherine was recently awarded a prize at North Sydney Council Art Show.

Saturday 20 and Sunday 21, 10am to 4pm, Opening Friday night 6 to 8 pm; All welcome

Original Passion

What is your passion? Original Fine Art Group presents 9 different interpretations of what passion is. Maybe one of these is yours too!

Saturday 27 and Sunday 28, 10am – 4pm, Opening Friday 26, 6pm to 9pm

REMNANTS

In this building, at the Watch House, were the histories of its users can still be felt, the word "remnant" has a resonance. By definition, we think of physical remains, memory, vestiges, the ghosts of past things, times and people. In our modern world, where we must consciously use and reuse everything, two artists explore this notion of remnants. Annie Kennedy a local artist and Cathy Paver, an artist from Canberra, utilize this concept by taking leftover materials and imagery to create new work that embodies these traces, fragments and scraps.

DECEMBER

Saturday 4 and Sunday 5, 9am to 5pm

"Lâlezar – A Garden of Tulips"

This exhibition celebrates the beauty of the Turkish Tulip which originally grew wild in Central Asia and was then transported to Anatolia by the migrating Turkic tribes who took their beloved Tulip bulbs with them. As the favored flower of the Ottoman court, the Tulip design motif was used extensively in ceramics, fabric and other decorations. With this exhibition, Cintamani Art Group embraces the Tulip and the beautiful Turkish Tulip motif designs which have inspired us.

State Heritage Listing

Sara Ward, Maritime Archaeologist and local resident, has been given permission by the Heritage Council of NSW to gather information on former Mort's Dock, the Mort Bay park area, to consider whether to recommend the listing on the State Heritage Register in acknowledgment of its heritage significance to the people of New South Wales.

Any member of the community, owners, managers, organizations or other interested parties is invited to make a written submission regarding the proposed listing.

Submissions on the listing by interested persons are to be by the 27th August 2010.

Heritage Council of NSW, Locked Bag 5020, Parramatta 2124. Enquiries to Sara Ward 02 9873 8533. M/S Ward would be pleased to speak with former employees of Mort's Dock.

<http://heritage.nsw.gov.au/listing>.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN!!

The Balmain Spring Garden Day has been cancelled.

Although there were over 15 people contacted about opening their gardens to the public, for various reasons – away overseas, garden being renovated, garden needing work - there were not enough to make the day worthwhile.

Also, despite repeated calls in the Balmain Observer for volunteers to assist on the day, there was not one response from the general membership. This was very disappointing. The day can only go ahead with a strong volunteer force as each garden needs at least 4 volunteers during the day.

Perhaps a way of enjoying Balmain's hidden gardens from the front gates would be a self-guided tour with map and some of these treats noted.

Di Garder

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 11:30am – 3:00pm.

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