

The Peninsula OBSERVER

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www.balmainassociation.org.au

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Balmain Banner & William Henry Gocher

A request for information on a local newspaper the *Balmain Banner* was made by Peter C Rickwood, Public Officer of the Blue Mountains Historical Society, who had sourced an article in the said paper called Blue Mountains Exploration. The article was written by Thomas Whitley in 1907.

No copies are held by The Balmain Association, neither has the Mitchell or National Libraries or the Leichhardt Library. If copies of the *Balmain Banner* have survived they are proving elusive.

In the Trades & Professional section of the Sands Directories, the newspaper is only listed for 1908 to 1910. As entries were submitted towards the end of the previous year it is probable that the publication existed from 1907 until 1910. The address then was 320 Darling Street, now 300 Darling Street.

Cuttings from the *Balmain Banner* of articles written by Thomas Whitley are in his scrapbooks held at the Mitchell Library with handwritten notations

to indicate that the articles were published between May and August 1907.

The first editor was William Henry Gocher then he was succeeded by Francis Tunmer. Gocher was the first cousin one removed of Thomas Whitley, which may account for how Thomas came to contribute his historical research to such an obscure publication.

Gocher, listed as artist, was living in Manly before moving to 3 Trouton Street, Balmain in 1907. While at Manly, he railed against a law preventing surf bathing but stated on which Sunday he would surf and issued a challenge to the local police to arrest him – which they duly did! He was fined £2, which did not deter him from repeating the action, and he was re-arrested. On the third Sunday hordes turned up to bathe and enforcement of the law was impossible. Subsequently Gocher was presented with a watch inscribed: *Presented with a purse of 50 sovereigns to W H Gocher Esq., the pioneer of all-day surf bathing by his manly friends.*

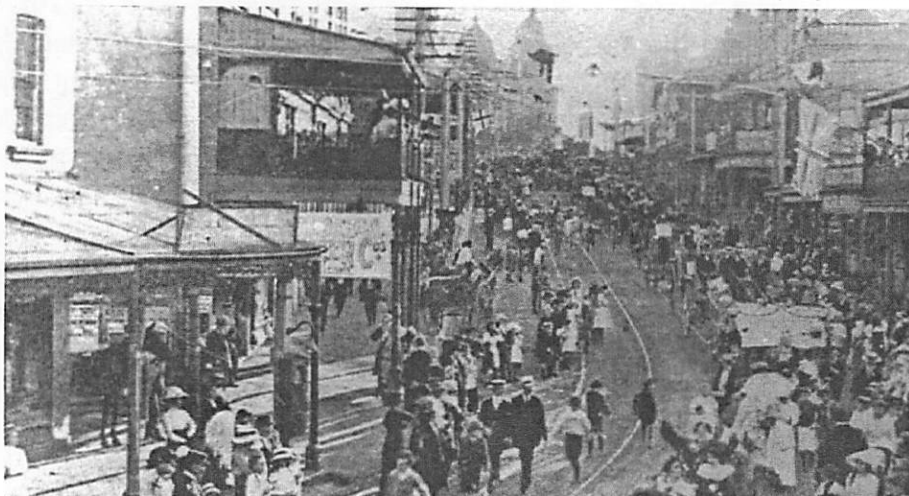
February 11, 1907.

Gocher moved frequently in Balmain with 234 Darling Street in 1908 and 18 Ennis Street in 1910. Gocher entered artist and journalist in his Sands listing on his many more addresses in Glebe and Newtown until his death in 1921.

But what of the other editor of the publication, Francis Turner. His life has not been fully researched but he was living at 3 Montague Street when the paper was founded with his profession as Balmain Business Agency. In 1910 at 39 Mullens Street and after the closure of the paper he moved to 37 Mullens Street. Subsequently, he became a noted journalist and died in 1924. With kind permission from Dr Peter Rickwood's research.

There were newspapers of long publication. The Balmain Leader at 52 Beattie Street, from approx. 1890s to 1930s. The Balmain Observer established in 1880 at 275 Darling Street and was still published in 1947 at 603 Darling Street. Some publications of the Observer are on micro film at the Mitchell Library. From 1884 to 1889 complete some copies 1902 to 1907 then a few scattered dates. Index to these copies is available at the Mitchell and Balmain Libraries. Please contact the Balmain Association if any copies of any of the above news papers are in your archives.

Kathleen Hamey



The Balmain Banner was located in the building with the balcony at left. The photo shows a Carnival Procession in June 1914..

Planning Matters

The Hawke report on the use of Garden Island for berthing and maintenance of Large Cruise ships was released in late March. It recommended that cruise ships not be permitted to berth at Garden Island as long as the Naval vessels are located there, for security reasons. There is no plan at this stage to relocate the Naval vessels outside Sydney. The decision to close the Cruise Terminal at Barangaroo and build a terminal on the Balmain Peninsula was to allow the huge proposed Lend Lease development to proceed. No proper plan for the future needs of the Cruise Industry has been considered. These inappropriate ad-hoc decisions are detrimental to Sydney, our harbourfront and the Tourism and Cruise Industry.

Meanwhile more negative impacts from the Sydney Ports White Bay Terminal plan are emerging. These include Traffic congestion and reduced parking availability in the Robert St business and residential area. The proposed internal road will not be used by any service or maintenance vehicles. Sydney Ports' idea of public access to the foreshore is a steep spiral staircase to the surrounds of the terminal and possible access between the cliff and a high barbed wire fence, somewhat like a prison exercise yard. There is still no Masterplan for White Bay. The Bays Taskforce Terms of Reference do not include preparation of a new plan.

A change of State Government has so far not produced better planning outcomes for our foreshores. The DA for the large Nutrimetics site in Elliott St has been refused by the Joint Regional Planning Panel on the grounds of bulk and scale and loss of viewlines. Leichhardt Council is

proposing to amend the Leichhardt Local Environmental Plan 2000 (LEP 2000) to rezone land at 118-124 Terry Street Rozelle from Industrial to Residential, with some additional uses and controls, to facilitate the remediation and redevelopment of surplus industrial land in preparation for the construction by Anka of a residential and commercial development on the old Carrier site. The development application can be tracked on the Leichhardt Council website.

Rozelle Village Pty Ltd has lodged a revised DA with the State government for redevelopment of the former Tigers Club site. The latest proposal is for a very large retail and residential development with three towers, one 32 storeys, and two 26 storeys. A previous 13 storey high development was rejected. The Floor Space Ratio has increased from 3.9:1 to a massive 6.7:1. The proposal is now on exhibition, so submissions can be made. I encourage anyone who is interested in protecting our local residential and business environment to submit an objection to this proposal. The development proposal can be viewed on the Planning Department website under: Development, Major Projects Register, Leichhardt Council local government area, Redevelopment of Balmain Leagues Club. It is noted that this is a proposal that will be assessed under the notorious Part 3A assessment legislation, which has been repealed. Information is on the Leichhardt Council website.

The landscaping and refurbishment of the heritage Bell's Store on the foreshore at East Balmain is progressing and expected to be completed before the end of the financial year. Following the completion of this work, residents will be invited to submit suggestions

for the use of Bell's store.

The Mort Bay Park Community Garden group has commenced work on the new community garden at Mort Bay Park. The garden is being supported through a community grant from Leichhardt Council valued at \$10,000. The public can visit the garden site to view the works and discuss the group's long term vision for the site. Non-gardeners are also welcome as there are many ways people can help.

The Callan Park Masterplan is currently being considered by the NSW Planning Minister. Council representatives are meeting with State Ministers, opposition members and government authorities to present and explain the Masterplan. Meanwhile the Glover St and Balmain Rd sports fields are being prepared for use by local sporting clubs.

A Planning Review is being conducted by the NSW State government. Some decision-making responsibilities are being returned to local councils but major developments will still be assessed and approved, or otherwise, by the new Government Planning Assessment Committees. The current government is also looking to make it easier for developers to have their proposals more quickly assessed and is encouraging the use of private certifiers. Concerns have been expressed by local councils with regard to developments classified as exempt and complying development. High density high-rise development is also being encouraged by the NSW Government for inner-city areas and above and adjacent to rail lines and main traffic routes. Unfortunately much of this development will occur without associated increases in amenity or infrastructure.

Christine Ritchie

ST GILES-IN-THE-FIELDS & Dr William Balmain

St Giles-in-the-Fields, in the heart of London, is the final resting place of Dr William Balmain. No longer "in the fields", the surrounding land has been developed with commercial buildings, that pay rent to St Giles. Dr Balmain was buried in an unmarked grave, but the graveyard has been cleared, with some of the headstones placed on the boundary of the graveyard. This cleared area provides an open space beside the church.

There has been a church on this site since 1101, when Queen Matilda, the new wife of Henry 1, founded a leper hospital here. In common with all English monasteries, the hospital was dissolved by Henry VI in 1539. The hospital chapel became the new parish church. This was when the words "in-the-fields" were added to its name. The parish soon became densely populated and a by-word for poverty and disease. In 1665 the Great Plague of London started here. The present church was built between 1730 and 1734. Population of the parish grew enormously in the 18th and 19th centuries, exceeding 30,000 by 1831. The surrounding areas were among the most notorious in London for squalour. Since the 1950s the area has changed greatly, with the construction of the massive Central St Giles and Centre Point shopping centres. The population has diminished. St Giles was the last church on the route to the gallows at Tyburn. The churchwardens paid for the condemned to be given a drink from the next door pub, "The Angel", before they were executed.

On the day I visited, last September, the Parish Fete was in full swing on this area, with Morris Dancers (below), a Punch and



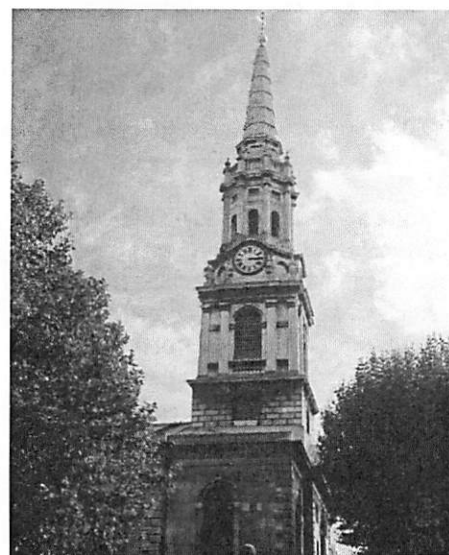
Judy Show, brass band etc. Even though they were busy, the Venerable Dr William Jacob, Rector, and the Rev Alan Carr, Associate Rector, spent considerable time speaking to me. Possibly my Balmain Association membership helped. On the North Aisle wall of the church, is the William Balmain Memorial Tablet, a black slate tablet, 92cms X 36cms, with gilded incised lettering:-

DR WILLIAM BALMAIN
SURGEON WITH FIRST FLEET
TO NEW SOUTH WALES 1788
PRINCIPAL SURGEON TO
COLONY OF NEW SOUTH
WALES 1796
RETURNED TO ENGLAND
1802

DIED 17 NOVEMBER 1803
Erected by the Balmain
Association of Balmain Australia

It cost the Association about £2,000. The church is in St Giles High Street, Holborn, WC2. The Parish Office is open Monday to Friday, 9.00am-4.00pm, phone 020 7240 2532. www.stgilesonline.org.

Rita Ellis



St Giles-in-the-Fields

Announcing the new Balmain Association web site

The Balmain Association has a new web site. Committee members worked with Red Ant Media of Glebe to give us the new site using Wordpress, operating as a content management system.

We can now provide members with the latest Association news and details of Association events using the straight forward updating software. Exhibitors at the Watch House have a space to promote their exhibition including a picture of one of their works.

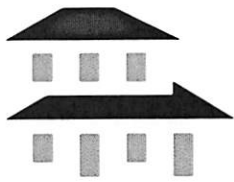
Association publications are more clearly listed and a downloadable order form allows for easy ordering.

The overall web design came out of the work of a group of UTS students who, as a final year project, were commissioned to create a consistent image for the Association across print and electronic media.

The site is designed to work with iPad and other tablets.

Please visit
www.balmainassociation.org
and give us your thoughts.

DR. WILLIAM BALMAIN
SURGEON WITH FIRST FLEET TO NEW SOUTH WALES 1788
PRINCIPAL SURGEON TO COLONY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
RETURNED TO ENGLAND 1802
DIED 17 NOVEMBER 1803



What's on at the Watch House

www.balmainassociation.org.au

JUNE

Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 10am – 4pm

Mishmash - Prints by Karen Greenwood
A collection of works created by Karen Greenwood. An avid Printmaker, who has been practising for 15 years. This exhibition demonstrates multiple techniques including etchings, solar plates, and collagraphs, to name a few. Her influences range from nature to abstractions, cityscapes to everyday objects. This is a celebration of her labour of love - Printmaking.

Opening Fri 1st June, 6-8pm. All welcome

Saturday 9 and Sunday 10, 10am - 5pm; Friday 15 and Saturday 16, 10am - 8pm; Sunday 17 10am – 5pm.

3Gaol Birds

Three talented eccentric women present their work in a range of media including fibre art, drawing, painting and printmaking.

Andra Krumins is an experienced artist exhibiting her ink drawings, ceramic tiles and paintings in New Zealand and in Sydney.

Susie Cujes has been working and exhibiting a range of media for the last 30 years and currently works predominantly in fibre art.

Ronnie Wakefield works mainly in the field of printmaking including solar etching, monoprint and mixed media.

Opening Fri 9 June, 6.30 - 8.00pm – All welcome.

Web address for Andra Krumins - <http://www.galleryandra.com/>

Saturday 23, 10am – 4.30pm, Sunday 24 10am – 4pm

HART & SOUL

A painting exhibition from the members of Balmain hART stART Studio, now in its 15th year in Balmain/Rozelle, and enjoying a busy and productive year. 'Hart and Soul' is the 15th annual exhibition. Although members achieve the stylistic confidence to mount their own exhibition, resident tutors Gary and Rowena emphasise that hART stART studio is a course designed for beginners. Through modernist methods, all members develop a confident personal style in an atmosphere that friendly and non-threatening.

Drinks with the artists Sat 23 1-3pm
hART stART studio meets Tuesday evenings at The Writers Centre, Rozelle. The next intake for new members is on Tuesday 17th July. Ph 0410639810.
www.hartstartstudio.com

Saturday 30 June and Sunday 1 July 10am to 5pm

Story-Tales by Nicholas Beckett

An exhibition of Oil paintings, and watercolours based on the idea of Story-Tales, somewhere between Fairy Tales and this urban reality we find ourselves in.

Relentless by Jan Blake

Jan Blake presents her latest collection of assemblages. Wall hangings made up of found objects from years of collecting.

Opening Fri 29 June 6 - 8pm. All welcome!

Web address <http://saintbeckett.net>

7 July to 22 July Watch House closed for maintenance. History Room will be open Saturdays 11.30am to 3pm.

JULY - AUGUST

Sat 28 July and Sun 29 July, Sat 4 and Sunday 5 August 10am – 4pm

Printeresting

Innovative and compelling works by this year's graduating third year printmakers from The Gallery School, Meadowbank TAFE. The wide and colourful range of etchings, screenprints, linocuts and woodcuts, collagraphs, monoprints and solar prints have been developed with the guidance of Rew Hanks, distinguished printmaker and studio head teacher.

Opening Fri 27 July, 6 - 8 pm, please join us for drinks.

Sat 11, Sun 12 and Sat 18, Sun 19 10am – 5pm

"InsideOut"

A collaboration between Watercolourist Julie Simmons, Mixed Media artist Patricia Devine and Painter Printmaker Mellissa Read-Devine. A delightful meld of peaceful domestic scenes and the wilder streetscapes and landscapes beyond the garden fence. Both Julie and Mellissa are widely exhibited with many prizes and awards between them. This will be a great opportunity to view and purchase some of their latest work.

Opening Friday 10 6.30pm All welcome.

www.readdevine.com &

www.juliesimmonsfineart.com/

Sat 25, 9am – 6pm and Sun 26, 9am – 5pm

'Over To You - 2012'

Following his successful exhibition in 2011, Richard returns to the Watch House. He is is predominately a landscape/urbanscape/still life artist who works in a variety of mediums including mixed media, acrylic, watercolour, soft pastel and charcoal. He is presenting approximately 50 pieces, in the hope that all who view it will enjoy themselves and go away feeling that it was time well spent...and so it's over to you again!

Preview - from 6pm Friday, 24 August, with opening at 7:30pm. All welcome.

History Week September 2012: The theme is "Threads"

They wore what?! Long before the fashionistas of today decided 'the look', dress was an important element of human expression.

But what of the threads of history, families and events, that pass through generations connecting the community? The Balmain Association will look at these threads that have contributed to the rich tapestry of Balmain.

There will be

- a display of swimwear dating from 1920s to 2000, from the Balmain

Swimming and Waterpolo Club, the oldest club in Australia.

- an exhibition by local artist, Jan Wood, *A Patchwork of Memories*, depicting Balmain from 1950 to 1970's.

- a photographic exhibition of the historical threads - personalities, industry and leisure in the 19th century. Watch House, 179 Darling Street.

Saturday: September 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd. Time open: 11.30 to 4pm.

Let us know if you have something to contribute Kathleen 9818 4954.

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 6:00pm in the Watch House, 179 Darling Street Balmain. MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO ATTEND.

The History Room at the Watch House is open every Saturday from 11:30-3

Postal: PO Box 57 Balmain 2041

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