



The Peninsula OBSERVER

the Newssheet of the Balmain Association PO Box 57•Balmain•NSW•2041
www.balmainassociation.org.au

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The Life The Love and The Memory of Tom Uren AC

On Wednesday 4 February 2015 a packed Sydney Town Hall celebrated The Life The Love and The Memory of Tom Uren AC.

Anthony Albanese MP was Master of Ceremonies, Robert Ampt was the Organist, Uncle Max Eulo did a Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country and Michael Uren, Martin Flanagan, Anthony Albanese, Richard Leplastrier and Sister Josephine Mitchell gave inspiring testament to a life well lived by a great Australian. The Timorese Community Choir and the Sydney Trade Union Choir, Illawarra Union Singers, Newcastle People's Chorus, Solidarity Choir and Coro Austral Choir set the mood for reflecting on the inspirational life of Tom Uren.

We came away thinking what a wonderful multi-layered life Tom had lived. Service to the Community, to Country and his many friends over seas were paramount in his life.

It was a truly inspiring service for a sportsman, politician, soldier, friend and family member. Someone who in the darkest days of the Thai Burma Railway imprisonment refused to give in to despair. He fought and was imprisoned for marching against war and supporting nuclear disarmament. He implemented Government Policy for the environment, natural and built. Tom loved Balmain, and people who recognised him in the street always gave him a warm greeting. He had time for everyone.



Hon Tanya Plibersek, Member for Sydney with Tom Uren at the launch of the Dunny Book in December 2013. Photo courtesy Lee Gemmell.

Tom Uren will be greatly missed but not forgotten.

Well done, good and faithful servant.

National Trust Heritage Festival 2015 "Conflict and Compassion"

The Balmain Association will present an exhibition titled "Balmain Cared".

Following is an extract of information that will be presented in the exhibition. When Britain declared war in August 1914, Australians responded with unquestioning support for the motherland and an intense desire to prove themselves "worthy sons of Empire". There was little thought of how extensive their support would need to be, nor the sacrifice that would be required. As the Dardenelles campaign stalled and casualties mounted, communities across Australia began to reflect on how they might further contribute to the war effort. Patriotic associations were formed to raise funds, provide material comforts and recognize appropriately those fighting overseas. They also sought to assist returning wounded soldiers and their dependents facing financial as well as emotional difficulties by the following:

1. Fundraising activities such as boxing matches" in Balmain's National Theatre.
2. Balmain-Rozelle Fund was formed at a rally in January 1916 and raised

funds through weekly subscriptions and donations.

3. Balmain and Rozelle Wounded Soldiers Fund was supported by Rozelle Branch of the Red Cross Society and all the local churches.

4. Fund raising to provide comfort packages including tobacco, stationery, pencils, clothing, literature. These were sent to the Australian Base Hospital in Belgium.



Broughton House, photographer Henry King courtesy Mark Turnball.

5. Balmain Volunteer Workers Association raised a substantial sum through its various activities and selected Alfred Edwards a soldier returned from Gallipoli as a worthy recipient of a house in Lyall Street, Leichhardt.

6. Annandale timber merchants, Frederick and William Langdon offered their home, Broughton House, to the government as a convalescent hospital for shell shocked soldiers.

Throughout this period there was a strong sense of community involvement in responding Balmain. It was a response, while not uncommon in itself, was extraordinary in its extent. During the Great War Balmain cared.

The exhibition will be open on four Saturdays from 25th April till 16th May see times on back page.

IN THIS ISSUE

- P. 1 Tom Uren; *Balmain Shared*
- P. 2 Planning matters
- P. 3&4 Unilever Exhibiton
- P. 5 RSL Memorial March and Service; Bus Museum.
- P.6 What's on at the Watch House

**Balmain Association
turns 50 this year!**

Bays Precinct planning by Urban Growth

The State Government's Bays Precinct Summit was held last November with little public follow-up from the organisers, Urban growth. The Bays Community Coalition and People's Campaign have made submissions following the summit. In response they have only received a list of the State Government's broad Principles for the Bays Precinct, which largely ignore much of the input from world experts and community representatives who attended the summit. No detailed report from the summit has been forthcoming. Instead the latest communication shows a timeline for progress on a Transformation plan for the area, with no opportunity for further public involvement during the preparation period. A public consultation/presentation of the plan is due to occur in mid 2015. Meanwhile the strongly opposed current plan for a WestConnex motorway with a spur to the junction of Victoria Rd and the Anzac Bridge is forging ahead. This will impact heavily on the Bays Precinct and surrounding residential suburbs. There is a proposal to extend the motorway via expensive tunnels and vent stacks through Balmain. This is in complete opposition to the majority of expert recommendations at the Summit for an emphasis on public transport and public recreation space, and for planning with extensive public consultation and input.

White Bay Cruise Ship Terminal - serious error – The severe impacts from the Terminal have still not been dealt with and many local residents have been forced to spend time away from their homes or have left the area to avoid the serious health impacts. The Parliamentary Inquiry into the EPA has now tabled its report. In respect of approval and operations of the White Bay Cruise Terminal the Committee of Inquiry has declared the decision to relocate the terminal from Barangaroo to White Bay as a 'serious error'. It acknowledges the serious impacts upon residents and recommends that on-shore power be retro-fitted to the terminal, noise mitigation measures be implemented as soon as possible and limits enforced, cruise ship terminals be required to have an Environment Protection Licence and regulations governing air quality be reviewed in light of far tighter regulations existing elsewhere as world's best practise and the ongoing deleterious effects of emissions on residents.

White Bay Power Station – This notable Heritage item was a separate topic of discussion at the Bays summit. There

has been NO public consultation thus far on the adaptive re-use of this site. Local community and other organisations interested in the preservation and appropriate adaptation of the site should begin letting the State government Planning department and Urban Growth know their thoughts and ideas. The Urban Taskforce group of major developers have put together their ideas for the site, which involve intensive commercial and residential development. Any adaptation needs to be workable in the local area and the Heritage site should remain in public hands. Your ideas would be welcomed.

Glebe Island Bridge – No information on future plans for this Heritage item have yet been provided by the State government.

In a State of Growth – A new Strategic Plan for Sydney has just been released. It concentrates on increasing residential density via high-rise development for various centres around the Sydney Metropolitan area. This is another boon for developers. There is widespread concern regarding the State government's new planning process whereby it encourages major unsolicited proposals, which require no competitive tender process and little or no meaningful public, or even council, consultation. This appears to be less satisfactory and less consultative than the infamous Part 3A of the previous State government.

LPP -The new Leichhardt Planning Panel (LPP) to determine DA's is now in place. Elected councillors will no longer be involved in the decision-making. The B&D meetings have been scrapped and the panel of 'experts' will hold their meetings on a Tuesday afternoon immediately following any site inspections. A new Policy Committee of Council will meet at the time the former B&D meetings took place.

Heritage Advisory Committee – The next meeting of the Heritage Advisory Committee will be held on Sat 21st Feb 2015 at Leichhardt Town Hall.

Telstra Exchange, Post Office Park – Negotiations are continuing between Council and Telstra.

East Balmain Ferry wharf – Concerns remain about the lack of shelter on the approaches and poor replacement transport options during the 5-6 month construction period, which began in late January. Submissions from local



Andrew West, Helen Carter, Christina Ritchie, June Lunsmann, John Symonds, Kathleen Hamey, Leo White, Carolyn Allen, Diana Garder, Duncan MacAuslan. Absent Ross MacKenzie, Penny Alexander, Margaret Bailey.

resident representatives have been made to Roads and Maritime Services and the Transport minister to address these issues. Leichhardt Council has begun discussions regarding a proposed revamped vehicle turning circle and toilet facilities.

Fenwick's/Bell's Store Heritage

Building and site – Council has a DA on exhibition for further work on this Heritage building and determination of its future use. At the request of members of the Balmain and White Bay Precincts and Balmain Association, the exhibition period has been extended beyond early February and a public presentation on Council's DA will be held (date to be announced). I would encourage all who are interested in the future of this iconic building and prominent peninsula gateway site to attend the presentation and make a submission.

Beattie St Car Park extension – There is currently on Exhibition a Council proposal to extend the Beattie St carpark in Balmain to 2 or 3 levels.

Loyalty Square – work is proceeding on a refurbishment of Loyalty Square in Balmain in preparation for the Anzac centenary. Pavers will be laid and a second flag pole will be installed. The work is to cost \$400,000. Separate work took place last year to upgrade the war memorial. Some residents have suggested that a redesign of the whole square and junction is needed to provide a more attractive and practical community space and improve traffic flow.

Rozelle Village development – The developer Rozelle Village P/L (RV) is in negotiations with interested parties to sell the former Tigers club site on Victoria Rd and Waterloo St Rozelle.

State election – The State election will take place on 28th March 2015. All major parties have announced candidates for the seat of Balmain.

The Unilever Exhibition Opening 13 December 2014

The exhibition generated steady interest from passers-by on the Saturday open days during December and January and was much appreciated by former employees and others with an association via relatives and friends.

The exhibition was initiated by Ian Arthur from Australian Society for the History of Engineering and Technology (ASHET) after receiving a grant from Leichhardt Council for a history project of local significance. He approached Jim Nash who had worked for Unilever over the period January 1961 to November 2012 and who was thrilled to work with Ian and others in the preparation of his panels and to contribute from his collection of photos and historical product samples. After the official opening at Leichhardt Library, Ian was asked by the Balmain Association to stage the exhibition at the Balmain Watch House. Ian and Jim would be happy to do the same for other interested parties. Anyone else with knowledge of Lever Brothers who is willing to contribute to our archives will be very welcome please contact nashj_e@bigpond.com or Balmain Association contact@balmainassociation.org.au.

Photo: Jim Nash with Suzanne Dodd (nee Hill) who also commenced in January 1961 as a trainee chemist in the Balmain factory at the exhibition opening.

The exhibition featured four strands:

1. A series of large panels prepared by the (ASHET) describing the origins of Lever Brothers in the UK and the growth of production at the Balmain site to include a wide range of products including edible fats and oils and packet soups (Continental), cake mix and desserts. The factory closed in November 1988.
2. A selection of photos provided by Jim Nash dating back to establishment of the works and some of the people who worked there.
3. A comprehensive folder of photos from Balmain Association's archives.
4. Product samples from Balmain Association's archives.

Life at Unilever - Allan Garrick



I worked at the Unilever Balmain site for about 12 years between 1967 and 1980. The site was at its peak in the 1960s when over 1000 people were employed there. Many of these were locals who could walk to work - some of them even walked home for lunch!

It was common for several members of the same family to work at Unilever - brothers, sisters, parents, uncles. Many people met their life partners there. You had to be very careful if speaking ill of a

fellow worker in their absence because unbeknown to you a brother-in-law or sister-in-law could be listening in the audience!

It was also common to have your neighbours as Unilever workmates. The line between a person's working life and community life was much more blurred than what it is now due to this very strong local community presence in the workplace. The very clear physical boundaries of Balmain also reinforced this situation.

Every lunchtime in fine weather the barefooted apprentices would play touch football in their white overalls in Punch Park but anyone could join in - office workers or onlookers.

There was a very strong bond between workers which was also helped by much socialising outside of work hours. There was a big drink every Friday night at the Leagues Club to celebrate and let off steam after the weeks' work. At this Friday night drink you could learn more about what was happening at the worksite than you would ever learn at the worksite due to the alcohol loosened lips!

The Kent Hotel on the corner of Wortley and Palmer streets was a popular drinking hole for Unilever employees. I can



Special thanks to Judy Newton who in her capacity as Unilever Librarian at the closing down of the Technical Library allocated material to the Royal Australian Historical Society (RAHS), National Archives in Canberra and Unilever Headquarters in London.

remember while working on the night shift, sneaking out when my supervisor wasn't watching and walking to the Kent Hotel in the middle of the night. There you could obtain a drink on the verandah by knocking on a window and placing money in a protruding hand. The Kent was later immortalised in the film "Caddie."

Unilever also helped the community connection by its practices. Sunlight Haven was a camp set up in 1944 for employees at Palm Beach where they could stay on weekends. This continued up to 1958. Sunlight Hall in Hyam Street served as a staff canteen and centre for social functions but was also a focus for Balmain community life. In the two World Wars the Red Cross organised many functions there.

I did work briefly for Unilever in Essex, England. The concept of the benevolent employer was even more strongly entrenched there. Unilever provided its employees with a social club, not near the industrial site with its steam belching chimneys but in green fields a few kilometres away with sporting fields. On the weekends you could go to the Unilever club for a roast lunch. In the 1950s Unilever had a soccer team which competed in a local competition. Unilever management were very keen

for its soccer team to do well such that if you were applying for a job at Unilever and it was known that you had good soccer skills it was almost guaranteed that you would get the job!

All of the above was very positive but not everything was positive - there were many environmental issues on the Balmain site due largely to the fact that this was an ancient site trying to operate complex processes very close to the local community. Smells were always present

The Library - Judy Newton

The land in Balmain for Lever Brothers factory was purchased in 1892 because of its convenience as a base for Australian tallow and copra from the Pacific Islands to use in soap making. Previously product such as Sunlight Soap was shipped from England. The first boil of Australian Sunlight took place on 13 October 1900 at the new works. In UK, the Lever Company of soap products was joined with the Margarine Unie of Rotterdam to form "Unilever" about 1930, involving margarines and food.

In Australia, a merger of various soap manufacturers in Victoria and South Australia led to the 1925 Lever and Kitchen Company. In NSW it was the Lever products which were manufactured at Balmain whose soaps were Sunlight, Lux, Surf, Omo, Pears, and later Rexona products. Oils and fats were always a part of the industry and Edible Oil Industries formed in 1939, though margarine production was constrained by legislation setting quotas, until Stork in 1955 and then Fairy in 1957. Flora followed in 1967. These products transferred from Balmain to Marrickville in 1983.

Foods developed at Balmain from 1950 included Mellah packet desserts and Puffin Cake mix, followed by

and the strength and direction of the wind determined who would be affected. There were noise issues from heavy vehicles entering and leaving the site and from steam hammer in the pipes.

When working in the lab I was sent by my supervisor one morning to investigate a Palmer Street resident's complaint. He had come out of his house and found his car covered in a white material. Upon analysis, the white material was identified as Omo which

had been discharged upwards from the flash drying tower instead of falling vertically onto the conveyor belt!

Fat spills unless contained immediately could leak into White Bay. Unilever management realised in the 1970s that the only solution for these issues was not to spend more money at Balmain but to move to new sites.

This occurred and the Balmain site was shut down in 1988.

Continental Chicken Noodle Soup, the first packaged soup, in 1951. Survival of all this Balmain site history for posterity, such as photographs and the relevant packaging, was by chance. It depended on a few devoted employees, such as the families of Alan Garrick & Jim Nash (who each represent a couple of generations of Balmain workers) keeping relevant

material. A Technical Director in the 1980s, Jeff Hole, recognised the need for an archivist to preserve and catalogue boxes housed in an open shed. With some library experience, I was employed, after the archivist's 3 days, for 140 hours at \$10 per hour. Later I was employed to replace a maternity leave librarian. I stayed 20 years, as Information Scientist. Finally I packed up the remainder, some of which was seen in the December/January exhibition, when Unilever closed the Balmain site in 1992. Some 40 boxes of Unilever archives were sent in 2003 to Canberra's ANU



Judy Newton (2nd from left) with guests at the opening

Noel Butlin Business Archives, while appropriate material came to the Balmain Association, Leichhardt Library and the Royal Australian Historical Society for their collections.

In the 1960s, it was said that some 1000 mostly local residents were employed here at Balmain's Lever & Kitchen and Edible Oils Industries site. Hence this exhibition represents an important part of the social history of the district and its residents.

Judy Newton, eighteen years as part of a huge family! Even smelt the soap at home in Carrieville St, Balmain.

Other Recollections from the Unilever family

Ruth Zionzee (nee Bowie) commenced in February 1947 as a comptometer operator and typist left in December 1949; trained as a nurse 1950-55, Balmain Hospital and returned to Unilever in 1957 as industrial nurse until November 1988 being principal occupational health nurse. Ruth followed a long line of family members who were employed by Unilever: Maternal grandfather Charles Fairclough was chief engineer 1900-1938; her husband's grandfather, Joseph Zionzee supervisor in the Boiler House for the same number of years; her brother Charles Bowie served his

time as an apprentice compositor in the printery 1945-1949; Robert Zionzee was a carpenter for 30 plus years and his father Joseph worked in construction.

Bob Koskela 1960 to 1980 all over the factory as a packaging fitter. Bob had his wedding reception in Sunlight Hall. His wife and mother also worked at Balmain, his wife's father, as well.

Narelle Hooper only 12 months but very interesting in the final days at Balmain, working in the Supply Office.

Gremys Thorie in 1949 my first job after leaving school was with Unilever at Blackfriars Bridge London in their legal department.

Suzanne Dodd (nee Hill) First job worked in the laboratory for 6 years while studying at UNSW for science degree. Excellent company to work for and people to work with (1961-1966). Jim Kelly was chief chemist and her boss.

A. Soburr (sp.) worked in the food section from 1958-1967, now lives in Canberra and was so excited to see the exhibition.

Nyree Diggins: Wonderful company - Wonderful exhibition - Wonderful Balmain Watch House. Thank you! (Nyree is still with Unilever where she is responsible for Unilever Australasia's electronic and print publications)

Sydney Bus Museum

A large part of Sydney's transport heritage now resides in Leichhardt.

About six years ago the Sydney Bus Museum in Tempe was forced to close its doors and relocate its fleet to the old Leichhardt tram shed next to the bus depot. The last few years have been devoted to developing the new site to meet current fire safety and disability access requirements. This work is nearing completion and it is hoped to reopen the Sydney Bus Museum around the middle of 2015. The museum's collection includes Sydney double deck buses dating from 1935 through to 1972 many of which you may have seen operating in the city on Australia Day. There is also a range of privately and government operated single deck buses dating from 1924 to the 1980s. In addition there are two London buses and several from other Australian cities. These are supported by a collection of street furniture, signs, several trucks and taxis and a mass of photographs and archive material.

After being a tram shed the museum building became the Leichhardt Bus Workshops and would have employed many local people. The museum is always looking for reminiscences, artefacts, photographs and other items related to Sydney bus transport. We also welcome volunteers to help preserve the buses, work on engines, shop keep, scan photographs and many other tasks.

We look forward to reopening and welcoming Balmain, Birchgrove and Rozelle residents to see what we think is Australia's best collection of buses. The museum will be open on Wednesdays and Sundays.

For more details on the museum see www.sydneybusmuseum.info or email us at info@sydneybusmuseum.com

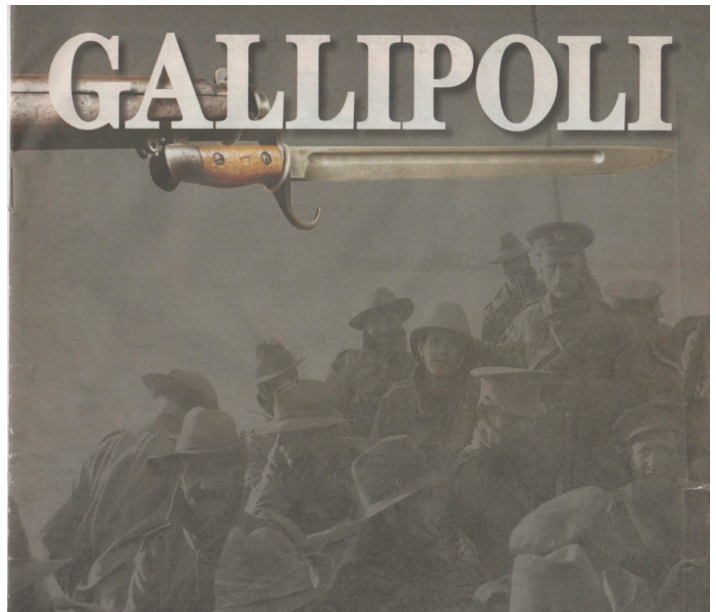
Duncan MacAuslan



Bus Museum Workshop photo courtesy Liam Brundle

Centenary Commemoration of ANZAC

25th April 2015



To commemorate the 100th anniversary of ANZAC the Balmain/Rozelle RSL Sub-Branch and Leichhardt Council would like to invite members of the general public to attend the March and ANZAC Dawn Service commencing at the roundabout Curtis Rd and Darling St at 5.45 am to be followed by dawn Service at Loyalty Square. Current serving, ex-serving personnel are invited to march and relatives of ex-service men and women are invited to join the march in remembrance of their loved ones service.



LEST WE FORGET



50th
Anniversary

We turn fifty this year and are intending to celebrate during September.

So members what would you like to do for this, can we say **“amazing celebration”?**

contact June 9810 6885

Diana 9810 3639



What's on at the Watch House

www.balmainassociation.org.au

FEBRUARY

Saturday 28 Feb, Sun 1 Mar 10am-5pm

Hela Donela Solo exhibition

"Early 2013 a near-death accident woke me up to realise the importance of pursuing what one loves ...to pause, open the eyes and breathe." Solo exhibition by an emerging artist, Hela Donela, hailing from Finland and now based on Jervis Bay.

Opening Friday 27 6pm-9pm All welcome.
<http://heladonela.com>

MARCH

Saturday 7 and Sunday 8, 10am - 4pm

"Our Land and Beyond"

The Balmain Peninsula Park Painters are holding their 11th annual exhibition.

Opening Friday 6, 5:30-8pm All welcome
Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 10am - 4pm
Visual Elements 3

An exhibition by Maria Billinis, Shiwani Menon and Dianne Meilak- Zammit and their interpretation of the world/ environment through the use of colour, line and texture. Painting, Photography, Digital Media and Mixed Media.

Opening: Friday 13, 6-8 pm All welcome
Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 10am-5pm
Earth Keeping

New works by artists Sophia Sourlas, Maria and Tina Sourlas revisiting the sacred and precious natural world. Digital and Mixed Media works focus on the beauty and complexity of microcosmic elements from the natural world.

Opening: Saturday 21 March at 2:00 pm
Saturday 28 and Sunday 29, 10am-5pm
Treasures for sale

A fundraising event by SAWA (Support Association for Women of Afghanistan) NSW to support Hewad School for Afghan refugee children in Pakistan.

Opening Friday 27 5.30-8.30, \$10 donation. All welcome.

APRIL

Saturday 4 and Sunday 5, 10am-4pm

Birds of a feather frock together: designer birds in mosaic

An Easter pageant of mosaic birds to delight your senses and tickle your sense of humour, sparkling bowerbirds surrounded by blue jewels, silver lyrebirds wearing bling and high heels, pelicans over-dressed in mother of pearl will be on display.

Opening: Friday 4, 6-8.30 All welcome
Saturday 11, Sunday 12, Saturday 18, Sunday 19, 10am-5pm

Weekdays by appointment 0408 415 227
Traces of Wilderness (final)

Jennie Holtsbaum presents her final show

for her UNSW Master of Fine Arts degree. She is a multi-media installation artist who activates the Watch House using native flowers & animals as inspiration.

Opening Friday 10, 6-8pm All welcome
www.jennieholtbaum.com

APRIL/MAY

Four Saturdays 25 April to 16 May, 11-3.30, Sunday 17 12-3

Balmain Cared

Saturday 23 and Sunday 24 10am-6pm
Around Us

Organised by Sydney based artist Cecilia Hwang, a collaboration with other artists from different walks of life, with a variety of medium from paintings, drawings and collages. Come and enjoy canapes and drinks over the weekend.

Opening Friday 22, 6.30-8.30 All welcome

Sat 30 10am-6pm, Sun 31 10am-4.30pm
5 + 1 ART

Continuing high value, quality and variety displayed by this team! Helen Ross, Christine de Stoop, Mollie Pegler, Fiona Davis, Diana Wallwork and Garry McDougall, have created a great selection of modern and contemporary artworks. Join them to share some fine wine and friendly company.

Opening Friday 29 6pm – 8.30pm
www.helenscolour.com

JUNE

Sat 6, Sun 7, Mon 8, 9am -6pm

Over to You 2015

Richard Sercombe's exhibition of acrylics, soft pastels and water colours.

Opening Friday 5, 7.30-9 preview from 6pm, All welcome.

Balmain Cared

Exhibition opening 11am Saturday 25 April

Join us at 2pm for a social game of two-up, meat pies, ANZAC biscuits and swing along to WWI songs in the background.

RSVP for catering Kathleen 9818 4954 June 9810 6885

The exhibition continues on Saturdays till 16th May
11am to 3.30 pm and on Sunday 17th May from 12pm to 3pm.

Leichhardt Local History and Friends of Callan Park "Capture Callan Park" photographic competition

Grab your camera and explore the historic grounds of Callan Park with its sprawling, therapeutic gardens and extraordinary architecture of colonial architect James Barnet. The gardens and green spaces were originally designed to help heal the inmates/patients of the purpose-built Kirkbride Building for the insane in 1885. There are great cash prizes:

1st prize - \$300.00 2nd prize - \$150.00

People's Choice - \$250.00

No entry fee, two entries are allowed per person. Entries will be exhibited at Balmain Library during Heritage Festival 2015. Entries due 13th Friday March 2015

Submit online or download a form at <http://www.leichhardt.nsw.gov.au>

Exhibition will be on show 1-30 April during at Leichhardt Library during library hours.



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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