



The Peninsula OBSERVER

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

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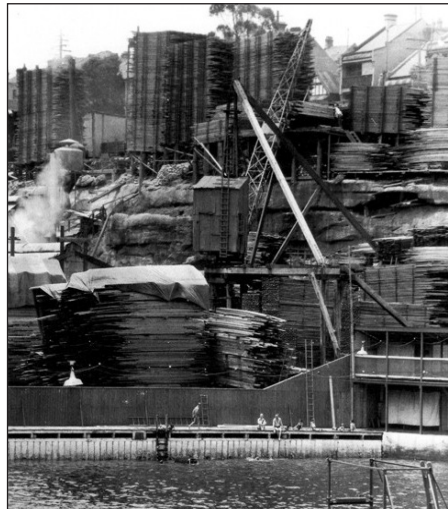
HOW BALMAIN HAS CHANGED IN 50 YEARS so NOW YOU WANT TO LIVE HERE! - Di Garder

When I came to Balmain in 1965 it was a working class suburb – a slum as some of my friends referred to it! There were all types of industries: ship building and repairs around the waterfront – Storey and Keers, Jubilee, Howard Smith; soap factories – Colgate Palmolive, Lever Bros; oil refineries – Ampol, Caltex; chemical factories – Monsanto; the Balmain and White Bay Power Stations; the Coal loader as well as other smaller industries – timber, lollies, boxes.

The amount of open space was extremely limited. We had 1.3 hectares per 1000 population which was the fourth lowest in Sydney at the time. The Planning and Environment standard was 3 hectares per 1000 population.

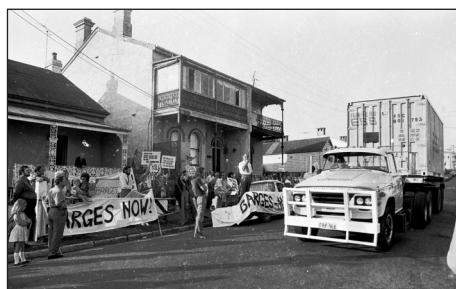
The waterfront worked shift hours and I remember at 3.00pm the wharries roaring up Grove St at the end of their shift after unloading timber onto barges in Snails Bay from Norwegian ships. The soap factories and coal loader, when the wind was blowing in the wrong direction, would leave a combination of soap and coal dust on your washing! Also ships at the docks in White Bay would blow their boilers – with black soot as the result!

We came together to form the Balmain Association to try and improve the environment of the local area. Early successes saw the landscaping of Peacock Point using the natural topography and native plantings. The landscape architect, Bruce Mackenzie, was responsible for this park and subsequently developed Long Nose Point Park at the end of Louisa Road, the site of a ship building company and slipway, Morrison and Sinclair. Also Fitzroy Avenue Park where a box factory has stood was to be developed by Parkes into high rise home units. This was one of a number of redundant waterfront sites submitted to the Whitlam Government by the Balmain Association for acquisition to improve the open space. A great win for the local residents.



National Box Co. courtesy Merlin Hanson family

When containerisation took over from conventional shipping, Sydney was unprepared and an “ad hoc” solution was to take over Mort Bay and White Bay with containers stacked on both sites and moved between them. This meant that semi-trailers moved day and night, up and down the narrow streets of the peninsula. A huge campaign by the Balmain Association to stop the traffic had some success with gates put at the



Campaigning for barges rather than trucks on Mort St

entrances to Mort Bay to limit trucking to daylight hours. A tragedy on these narrow streets forced the government of the day to fast track Botany Bay wharfing facilities. With the containers out of Mort Bay low income housing was proposed and some was developed allowing a good amount of open space as well as some private housing.

With the development of home units



The rock face today

in the 1960s some red texture brick walk-ups were built but the Council was planning for eight storey towers along the Darling Street ridge. Fortunately only one of these towers was built, Nicholson Street, East Balmain – imagine a row of similar tower blocks running up Darling Street and dominating the skyline!

There was no library in Balmain so the Balmain Association started a children’s library at the Watch House and had regular story telling mornings. Out of that developed the wonderful library facilities that we now enjoy at the Balmain Town Hall.

We planted trees!! There were no street trees and most gardens were without trees (except for the odd oleander or lemon tree). Native trees and shrubs became very popular in the early 1970s and although many inappropriate trees were planted in small terrace front gardens or courtyards, the greening of the suburb was begun. I planted 40 casuarinas in one of my gardens (40 years ago!) of which there are still some survivors.

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Bays Precinct Planning

Urban Growth is currently considering the thousands of submissions for 'Great ideas' for the future of the Bays Precinct. Submissions were categorised by the contribution they can make to employment, global competitiveness, housing, creation of great places, building design and transport infrastructure, and divided into 7 destinations. The first area to be considered is the fish markets area in Blackwattle Bay. A transformation plan by Urban Growth is due to be presented to the State Government later this month. Meanwhile Government Ministers are meeting with various developer and financial groups and agencies to discuss aspects of the Transformation Plan.

White Bay Cruise Ship Terminal

Inter-Agency meetings continue to discuss the impacts of the White Bay Terminal– the only action so far has been to legislate to reduce the sulphur content in the fuel used from October 2015. Dangerous particulate matter, benzene and toluene emissions have not been addressed. A feasibility study is underway for the possible introduction of Shore-to-ship power at the White Bay Terminal but a report is not expected for many months and there is no proposal as yet to install it. Long-suffering residents are left wondering when the other dangerous emissions are to be regulated, why the noise breaches continue to be allowed without penalty and are concerned at the lack of urgency shown by government authorities. The impacts need to be significantly reduced or the offending ships relocated. Meanwhile the Cruise ship industry is booming with a large increase in berthings at White Bay scheduled for the coming Spring and Summer seasons – far more than was indicated in the information provided for the assessment of the terminal.

The recent State Government's response to the EPA inquiry states that the government does not support the recommendation to require the cruise terminal to have an Environmental Protection licence, arguing that the existing development consent, along with existing and proposed changes for managing noise and air quality preclude the need for the licence. This is not good news for the community as a license would have provided a mechanism for better control over toxic emissions and noise breaches.

Heritage Advisory Committee

The Heritage Advisory Committee meeting was held on Sat 15th August 2015 at Leichhardt Town Hall. A number of Balmain Association committee members attended. A presentation was made on the

installation of Photo-voltaic cells on the eastern roof of the Balmain Town Hall. A discussion on the future of Fenwick's/Bell's Heritage store and curtilage took place. Councillors Hannaford and Channels supported the Council DA, while Councillor Stamolis expressed concerns about the damage to Heritage aspects and opposed it. There was dismay from some attendees that council failed to discuss the proposal with the Heritage Committee prior to the DA being finalised and sent to the Planning Panel (LPP) for consideration. The majority of attendees opposed the Council DA as they believe that the DA, if approved, would severely and permanently damage the heritage aspects of the building and site and that the premises would be overly-commercialised. The LPP will consider the DA later this month. Submissions can still be made prior to the determination by the LPP.

Telstra Exchange, Post Office Park

Lyn Gerathy, Council's Property Manager, recently gave assurance that Council has allocated \$920,000 for the demolition of the front of the BTE in this financial year's budget. We don't yet have a date for the demolition.

East Balmain and Birchgrove Wharfs

The upgrade of the East Balmain Ferry wharf has been completed and the wharf is now in use. Concerns continue to be raised about the lack of shelter on the approaches. It appears that most other new wharfs in the harbour and Parramatta River provide shelter on the approach ramps, including the new Thames St wharf. Balmain Association members have suggested that possible relocation of the Birchgrove Wharf to improve access should be included in the upgrade discussions.

Fenwick's/Bell's Store Heritage Building

including the site Council has submitted a DA to the LPP for alterations and use of the Fenwick's Heritage store and curtilage. Many concerns remain regarding the effect on the building of alterations and additions and the location of the lift and public toilets. The site was bought by Council for the community. The public can make submissions to the LPP on the new DA until its expected assessment on 25th August. The changes to the bus turning circle under consideration by RMS will affect access to the heritage site and toilets and also on the Heritage curtilage. Some Balmain Association members believe that the DA should not be finalised until

full discussions have taken place between Council and RMS.

Council Amalgamations

IPART is preparing a report following submissions by Councils under the 'fit for the future' criteria. Leichhardt Council has made a submission to stand alone but with a fall-back position of a merger with Ashfield and Canada Bay Councils, despite no support having been shown by the other two councils for such a merger, nor from the local community. Across NSW there is strong opposition to Council mergers.

New Strata laws and development

The Association received the following information from the Better Planning Network with which the Association has an affiliation: 'The Government is proposing major strata reforms. While some changes improve governance and owners' rights, there is considerable concern about changes that allow the 'collective sale' of a block, with only 75% of owners support. This diminishes the legal rights of owners and will impact those more vulnerable. Further, research by the University of NSW City Futures, shows that the reforms are likely to see high land value suburbs targeted'.

11 Beattie St Balmain

A local resident has alerted the Association to interest by a developer in properties in Beattie St which include the lovely old sandstone building with a well at the rear, currently a veterinary surgery, at No. 11. Committee members will monitor the situation.

Cockatoo Island

A marine centre and proposed boat storage development. Concerns have been raised about the visual impact, the impact on parking near ferry wharfs in Birchgrove, the impact on public open space and the heritage of Cockatoo Island.

Callan Park

The NSW Government has resolved to:

- Implement a Callan Park Trust
- Work with the Trust to finalise a Callan Park Master Plan noting the principles of the current draft Callan Park Master Plan
- Ensure that the Callan Park Master Plan includes a sustainable long-term funding model to secure the protection of Callan Park in perpetuity.

Balmain Association AGM
6pm Wednesday 7 October, 2015
at the Watch House
Keep the date free.
Notice will be posted separately.

“HOMES FOR THE PEOPLE”

The story of Alfred Hancock – “father of Rozelle” - Andrew West

Alfred Hancock has often been referred to as “the father of Rozelle”. Between 1867 and 1907 Hancock and a syndicate of other developers, including piano importer W.H. Paling, purchased an area of about 19 acres, which was subdivided and sold off in small allotments. Known as the Merton Estate it covered much of the area of present day Rozelle and Lilyfield. Hancock’s company pioneered a form of time payment that allowed buyers to put a deposit on a block of land and pay off the remainder in monthly installments over five years. Hancock’s plan afforded the working class the opportunity to aspire to home ownership at a time when banks and other lenders were reluctant to offer mortgages to workingmen.

His advertisements famously proclaimed “Homes for the People” – a slogan that suggests almost revolutionary zeal. It delivered a homily worthy of a socialist reformer, with a call to throw off the shackles of tenancy, “strike the first blow” for financial independence and free oneself from the burden of rent.

It was stirring stuff, appealing to two popular sentiments of the time. On

“Homes for the People” – suggests an almost revolutionary zeal worthy of a socialist reformer. “Strike the first blow” for financial independence and free oneself from the burden of rent. Hancock, however, was no socialist.

the one hand it resonated with the egalitarian spirit of the nascent Labor movement in Australia in the 1890s. But there is also the assertion that all that was required to begin the climb to prosperity was “a short experience of thrift and self denial” – a sentiment that would have been readily endorsed by laissez faire English liberals of the same period.

Hancock, however, was no socialist. He was a shrewd businessman who recognised that he could turn a steady profit by selling a large number of small allotments at modest prices to the working class. He even offered to provide timber to build houses for an additional 10 shillings a week. In the forty years to 1907, Hancock’s

drainage and open space in his subdivisions.¹ There is sufficient correlation between work undertaken on streets within Hancock’s subdivisions and his tenure on Balmain Council to support this conclusion.



HOMES FOR THE PEOPLE.

“Who would be free, himself must strike the blow.”

If you desire to **FREE YOURSELF FROM LANDLORDS AND RENT**, you must commence by **SECURING A BLOCK OF LAND** while the opportunity of extremely easy terms last, and eventually build your homestead thereon.

A short experience of thrift and self-denial will place you on the **FIRST RUNG** of the ladder of prosperity, **AFTER WHICH YOUR PROGRESS WILL BE COMPARATIVELY EASY.**

The undersigned offers Fine Freehold Allotments in the following streets in Balmain at £2 DEPOSIT and £1 MONTHLY, and will advance Timber, &c. for Building, if required, **PAYABLE AT TEN SHILLINGS WEEKLY.**

WATER FRONTAGE, DICKSON STREET, near Bridge, Long-view Street, and ALLOTMENTS at ALBION, PERCY, EVANS, ALFRED CALLAN and FOUCART STREETS. At LEICHHARDT HILL ESTATE, Corner Lot Starling and Piper streets, and 4 Lots at White street. Also

THE BEAUTIFUL CITY VIEW ESTATE,

Bounded by Piper and Brennan streets, Leichhardt.

No advertisement of this Grand Estate is necessary. It is simply the **Finest Site** in the rapidly improving Borough of Leichhardt, and is within 5mins. of tram and boat. Every Lot is admirable, and commands Fine Views of the City.

Go and see it, and Estimate what its increased value will be before you have paid for it.

The Terms are Five per cent. Deposit and £1 Monthly.

Deeds may be taken up at any time, and interest charged only to date of payment. Think this well over and act promptly in taking the first step for your advancement in life.

FREE PLANS AND PRICE LISTS FROM

ALFRED HANCOCK, Merton Estate Agency.

BEATTIE AND ELLIOTT STREETS, BALMAIN.

agency sold almost 1600 allotments in Rozelle/Lilyfield.

Hancock served as an alderman of Balmain from 1873 to 1882 and again from 1884 to 1886. Balmain historian, John Williams, suggests that this “was an opportunity that Hancock probably used to minimise infrastructure costs associated with the provision of roads,

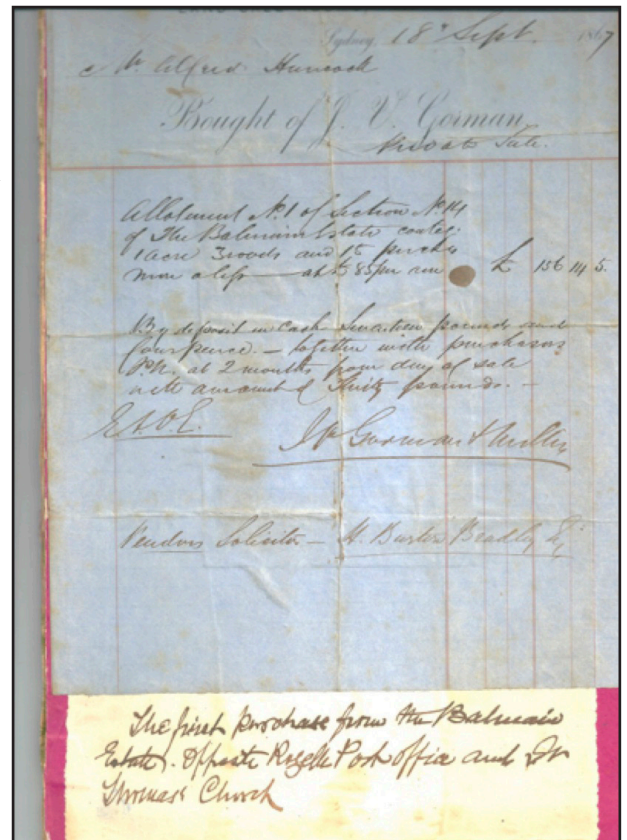
A cursory glance at a map of Rozelle reveals an interesting pattern in the names of the streets and suggests something of the extent of Hancock’s holdings. Hancock’s estate was named for the London borough of Merton where Hancock was born. Merton’s most celebrated resident was Viscount Horatio Nelson, hero of the Battle of Trafalgar. The admiral was clearly a favourite of Hancock. Many of the streets within his subdivisions were named for Nelson and his contemporary, the Duke of Wellington. Street names such as Nelson, Hamilton, Wellington, Napoleon, Trafalgar and Waterloo clearly reflect Hancock’s fascination with this period of British history.

Some streets with a less obvious connection include Cross, Starling, Paling, Foucart and Easton Streets, all named after business partners with whom he bought land. Elizabeth Street was named after his first wife (and was also the name of his third child b. 1864). Mary Ann Charlotte was the name of his second wife, whom he married in 1886, as well as his eldest child (b.1859). Percy Street was named for Hancock's son Percival (b.1874) while Alfred Street and Alfred Lane were named for Hancock, who dedicated the streets from his Park View Estate to Balmain Council in 1895. Other streets such as Loughlin and Reuss were named after Hancock's friends. ²

Hancock's house on the corner of Beattie, Elliott and Lawson Streets was called "Mertonville", (now the Ann Cashman Reserve) while the former Nelson Hotel on Evans Street and the Merton Estate Hotel on

Victoria Road (then Weston Street) are further evidence of Hancock's influence.

This receipt, dated 18th September 1867, records the purchase of land between Darling Street and Weston Road (Victoria Road). It was the first land bought by Alfred Hancock and was known as the National Estate. Hancock later purchased an area on the western side of Victoria Road known as Park View Estate. The notation at the foot of the page is in Hancock's own hand. It was in a folder marked "Reminiscences" kept by Hancock and which is now in the Balmain Association archives. Included in the folder are cuttings from the "Sunday Times" of December 1896,



that recall when Hancock purchased this land at a cost of 5 shillings per foot, he was regarded as having taken leave of his senses. The same land in 1896 was worth £45 per foot (an 18 fold increase). The article states that to date Hancock had sold £300.000 of property in Rozelle. Other cuttings from various newspapers refer to the history of Rozelle (previously known as West Balmain) as well as to Hancock's role as a Justice of the Peace and Returning Officer for Rozelle. It is clear from these that Hancock was proud of his role in the development of Rozelle, both as a businessman and a civic official.



Alfred Hancock and family at Mertonville (site of Cashman Reserve, Beattie Street)
Second wife, Mary Ann, right holding baby son

- 1 John Williams Dictionary of Sydney "Alfred Hancock – father of Rozelle"
 - 2 "Streets, Names and Places -1836-2005- An index of the origin of the street names of Balmain, Birchgrove and Rozelle" Yvonne Davidson and Kathleen Hamey, Third Edition 2005 (Balmain Association)
- Note. All illustrations are from the Balmain Association archives.

How Balmain has changed contd from p.1

With the passing of the factories there was pressure to develop these redundant sites for housing. The main five sites, Ampol, Unilever, Monsanto, Balmain Power Station and Caltex, were all to be developed with high density units and limited open space. A concerted campaign through the 1990s saw most of these lost although some concessions to density and open space were won. Balmain Cove, Balmain Shores, Dockside and Unilever sites were developed with some access to the waterfront.

The Caltex site at Ballast Point was a big win for the local residents, supported by the Balmain Association, when Bob Carr, Premier, announced in 2002 that the government would purchase it for a public park. In 2009, after soil remediation, a wonderful landscaped park was opened and we all shared in the pleasure of planting on the day. There were no restaurants in Balmain in the 1960s. There was a Chinese Take Away, the Hing Nam, on the corner of Rowntree and Darling Streets. The first restaurant to open was a German one, the "Wiener Stuble" and the Balmain Association took over the restaurant for a night for members. This became a ritual as each new restaurant opened. Who can forget L'Ironique, Salama, Blackets, the Old Post Office, The Ivy, Dick Sau – we had some great dinners! The shopping was very different: at least three delicatessens selling all those

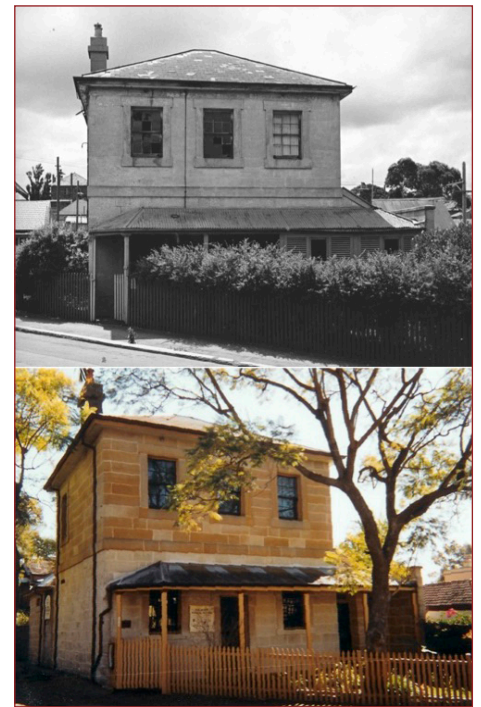
wonderful European delights – salami, pumpernickel, olives, cheeses; there were butchers with saw dust floors, greengrocers, milk bars, a haberdashery, men's tailoring not to forget the hardware stores. We were all renovating our houses and the hardware store was a popular place on Saturday mornings.

We fought the establishment of an army base at Mort Bay, a freeway proposal right through Birchgrove to Greenwich and the restriction of the ferry services.

The recognition of the heritage significance of individual houses as well as conservation areas improved the standard of new buildings in their heritage surroundings and stopped some significant demolitions.

The Balmain Association and residents became more involved with local council and Leichhardt Council was the first council in Australia to introduce Open Council, where the public was encouraged to speak in an open forum. Mention must be made of our two local Balmain councillors, Nick Origlass and Issy Wyner who fought alongside the residents all the way for improvements to our suburb.

The open space improvements over the peninsula and much better access to the waterfront included Camerons Cove, Simmons Point, the Canefields, Hopetoun Quays, Balmain Cove, Balmain Shores, Fenwicks/Weston Street, Mort Bay, Fitzroy Avenue, Hoskings Street.



The most significant success of the Balmain Association has been rescuing the Watch House from demolition and its restoration and ongoing maintenance that continues today.

These improvements to the local environment – parks, trees, access to the waterfront, the closure of polluting factories and workshops, the heritage values and conservation areas, the restaurants, coffee shops and specialist shops followed the increasing gentrification of Balmain and meant that Balmain became a more desirable place to live. Di Garder

Our 50th Celebrations in September



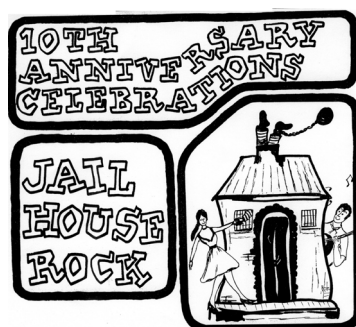
Arts and Crafts Fair late 1960s

The big day - Saturday 12

Arts and Crafts Fair á la 60s from 10am to 3pm with local artists – jewellery, pottery, kids gear, timber products.

To get into the spirit of the "Jailhouse", children can come as convicts and see what it's like to spend some time "behind bars".

On Saturday night the Charge Room will become a Wine Bar 1960's style – **COME AND ROCK THE JAILHOUSE!!**
From 6.00pm.
Information contact Di Garder
digarder@bigpond.net.au
0402220993.



Invitation to 10th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday 20

Catered cruise on the ferry Proclaim leaving Thames St wharf at 11.15 am returning 2 pm. to look at sites that have been saved by local campaigns. Guests will speak of their involvement in these various campaigns. Bookings essential Cost \$75 incl. 1 complimentary drink
Ferry bookings to June 9810 6885 or bookings@balmainassociation.org.au
Booking form enclosed.

Saturdays 5, 12, 19 and 26 11.30 to 4pm "Then and Now"

The exhibition looks back over the past 50 years including photos and drawings of many houses during that time. Come and spot your house.



What's on at the Watch House

www.balmainassociation.org.au

OCTOBER

Saturday 3, Sunday 4, Monday 5 9am-6pm
Pre Christmas Clearance Sale

Paintings by Richard Sercombe - start your Christmas shopping at this relaxed weekend sale with wine and nibbles all weekend.

Opening Friday 2 6-9pm All welcome
Saturday 10 and Sunday 11 10am-4pm
Painters At Large

A group exhibition of painters under the tutelage of artist Fiona O'beirne.

Opening Friday 9, 6 to 8pm - all welcome
Elisabeth Prax- anoasis@optusnet.com.au

Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 10am - 4pm
Impressions of Balmain and Beyond

We invite you to come along to see interesting recent works by **Carlie Lopez**, known for her funky and funny ceramic sculptures and mosaics; **Barbara Hamilton's** watercolour and acrylic scenes of the waterfront; **Corinne Gaston's** impressionistic modern acrylics and watercolours and **Peter Baldwin's** different photographic techniques of mostly scenic images.

Opening Friday 16 from 6 - 8 pm wine and cheese all interested are welcome.

Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 10am-5pm
The Balmain 5

Will be holding an exhibition of recent paintings including landscapes, cityscapes and boats of all descriptions available for sale framed and unframed paintings. Framed and unframed paintings for sale.

Saturday 31 October, 10am-4pm and Sunday 1 November 10am-5pm

AN ART SHOW

Marina Bishop, Sharon Glover & Trish Zavattaro. Marina and Trish met while working together and discovered their love of painting and drawing. With the encouragement of Marina's late mother they joined an art class at Sharon Glover's 'Water Shadow studio' in Glenorie. This is an exhibition by these 3 artist friends with a wide variety of works and subjects.

Opening: Friday 30, 6 - 9pm All welcome
NOVEMBER

Saturday 7 and Sunday 8 10am-4pm
A Splash of Colour

Recent artworks from the Brandling Street Painters

Opening: Friday 6 - 9pm Join the artists for drinks nibbles and early sales. All Welcome!

Friday 13, 10am-6.30pm, Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 November 10am-5pm

Gift of the Grape

Paintings, drawings and printmaking of wine grapes and wine making by Cathryn Coutts.

Opening: 1.30pm to 3pm Saturday November 14, with light refreshments, all welcome

Wednesday 18 to Sunday 22, 10am-5pm
3 PATHS. 1 JOURNEY.

Denise Barry's paintings are mostly abstract looking at identity, Deanna Doyle's are bird paintings and drawings and Madeline Hayes exhibits small ceramic sculptures based on domestic daily life.

Welcome opening Friday 20 6-8pm All invited. Enquires: 0419423408

Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 10am-4pm
The Wednesday Art Group

Once again the Wednesday Art Group is holding its annual exhibition of more than

100 art works inspired by the beautiful harbour city and other exciting locations. Most art works are available for sale at very reasonable prices. The group meets each Wednesday For details email Patrick Connolly patrickbc39@gmail.com

DECEMBER

Saturday 5 10am-6pm and Sunday 6, 10am-4pm

Alanna Turns 50 *My Journey*

My Journey is inspired by travel snaps taken on exotic overseas holidays as well as local scenes around Balmain and Leichhardt using oil and acrylic on canvas.

Alanna has studied at Balmain Art School and Art Est at Leichhardt. Her style varies from Realism to Impressionism.

Opening: Friday night opening 6-9
[Http://alannaspaintings.weebly.com](http://alannaspaintings.weebly.com)

Back to Balmain Day 2015

Each year on the last Sunday in October, there is a picnic and opportunity for residents to meet old friends in Elkington Park. As you know, the Back to Balmain Committee organises the day and has been given strong support by Leichhardt Council and Balmain Association in the past. This is our 22nd event.

From about 10 am we expect people to gather in Elkington Park.

In the unlikely event of wet weather, the Rowing Club has kept their premises available as an alternate venue. Emphasis will be on "memories" this year.

Michele Hacking for Back to Balmain Committee

Friends of Callan Park

Walking Tour of Broughton Hall in Callan Park

Explore the wartime transformation of Broughton Hall to a military hospital for shell shocked soldiers, and its innovative therapeutic environment as a psychiatric hospital through the 20th century. See how the landscape and the unique rainforest were utilised as therapeutic tools.

Join this walking tour Saturday, 5 September 2015 from 1 - 3 pm

Meet at NSW Writers' Centre in Callan Park, Lilyfield

General \$20, Children under 16 free

Registration: www.callanpark.com

Contact: Cynthia 0413 733 219, focp.admin@gmail.com

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

Material from this newsletter is not to be reproduced without acknowledgement