



The Peninsula OBSERVER

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

Vol 51 No 2 Issue 339

Founded November 1965

June 2016

People and Houses of Balmain, Heritage Festival 2016

This exhibition was part of the National Trust Heritage Festival, *Discoveries and Rediscoveries* and covered 3 aspects of Balmain life *Remembering the 1500, Rediscovering Balmain's Lost Houses* and *Discovering the People of Balmain*.

Over the 4 days it was open 128 local residents and visitors from other areas attended. It was well received by all. Some visitors brought photos and their recollections of living in Balmain. These will form the basis of our exhibition in September as part of History Week with the theme *Neighbours*.

Remembering the 1500 presented 40 photos of Balmain men and women who enlisted in the Great War. They are part of a comprehensive database compiled by Association's historian, Andrew West, which has now grown to over 1750 entries (see page 7) The photos selected are representative of all three services and ranks from Commodore to Sapper, airmen to submariners, prisoners of war and 2 nurses. They include those who returned to Australia and a few who did not. Also presented were photos of local honour boards and the original

plan for the monument in Loyalty Square. While there are a number of local Honour Boards that relate to particular churches, schools, places of employment or sporting associations, these do not reflect the totality of those in the community who served their country. There are those who may have been born in Balmain, enlisted in Balmain, went to school in Balmain, lived in Balmain, worked in Balmain or worshipped in Balmain – but whose names and any memory of them is lost because they were not necessarily recorded as "Balmain".

In the immediate post-war years such memorials were regarded as a community response, rather than an official responsibility. It was not until the mid 1920s that the nation began to come to terms with its grief and to seek some meaning in the sacrifice of so many lives.



*J. B. Sharp's Furniture Store 1930s, Loyalty Square, now Woolworths.
Photo courtesy the Sharp family.*

Rediscovering Balmain's Lost Houses, photos of many of Balmain's great houses and buildings that have been demolished such as Minevia, Kalouan, Rozelle Post Office, Birchgrove House and many more. Maybe one these once stood where you now live.

Discovering the people of Balmain, recollections of life in Balmain, pictures and videos through the years. In particular one video from 1973 captured people's attention as it featured well known members of the association, Bill Haesler, Robert Irving to name a couple, and many local known advocates for our community, Issy Wyner, Alicia Lee, Larry Hand and many more. Sadly, some are no longer with us but all appearing were young and very passionate about saving Balmain.



Photo: Andrew West pointing to SELLHEIM, Victor Conradsdorf Morriset, C.B. C.M.G

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Planning Matters May 2016 – Christina Ritchie

Council amalgamation – The amalgamation of Leichhardt, Ashfield and Marrickville councils to form a single Inner-West Council has been enacted by the Premier, despite strong opposition from residents and some councillors. The elected councillors have been dismissed. An administrator and interim General Managers will oversee the transition. Elections for 12 or 15 councillors for the merged council are expected to take place in about 18 months. Democracy has been thrown out the window. The Leichhardt Council website has already become part of the new Inner West Council website. The councils that did not roll over with a declared fall-back position but chose to fight the process through the courts have been spared for now. For apparently political reasons, in light of the forthcoming Federal election, some Councils will not be merged.

White Bay Power Station – If you wish to make a comment on the future of the White Bay Power station and surrounds, latest information can be found on the Urban Growth website. Consideration of likely outcomes is well underway, if not largely determined. Google appears to be a preferred tenderer. Perhaps Google Australia and the Heritage Council would be more useful contacts for comment if some meaningful public space and Heritage preservation is to be achieved.

Telstra Exchange, Post Office Park – Costs towards the demolition of the front section of the Balmain Telephone Exchange and creation of a public square have been included in the Leichhardt Council budget for 2015-2016. In light of the Council merger there is no certainty the funds will remain allocated. However, interim deputy General Manager Peter Head has stated that the agreement has been signed with Telstra so it should proceed.

East Balmain Ferry Wharf transport interchange – Work on construction of a new bus turning circle and transport interchange is continuing with much disruption to Ferry wharf access. Unfortunately there will be some permanent loss

of green space in Thornton Park. Temporary toilets have been installed until Council can provide replacement toilets in an alternative 'convenient' location. Shuttle buses have replaced normal bus services between Gladstone Park and the wharf during construction. This shuttle service appears to be adequate but some disruption to regular bus services from Gladstone Park continues as buses bank up and some are cancelled. There will be some impact upon the Heritage Bell's store from new steps from the 'turning circle', and the location of new toilets is yet to be finalised.

Fenwick's/Bell's Store Heritage Building and site – Council still needs to respond to the Heritage Council's evaluation of the latest DA and their conditions for approval. One might be concerned at the delay now that the Council merger has occurred. If Council had proceeded with the low-key café proposal that was expected instead of proceeding with a grander plan that appears to compromise the Heritage building and has delayed progress, we might have been enjoying a coffee and snack inside the small beautiful Heritage building, or on the harbourfront in the lovely autumn sunshine, before now.

Former Tigers Club site redevelopment – The Rozelle Village proposal for the former Tigers Club site was presented to the Land and Environment Court in April. Residents' representatives made statements to the Court, and the expert witnesses for Rozelle Village and for Leichhardt Council were cross-examined. Major points for discussion included: Traffic impacts, the return of the Tigers club

- Retail impacts
- Design issues, retail impacts and design issues.

A decision by the Court is expected in a few months. Both parties will present their closing arguments this Friday, after which the court will adjourn to provide a final ruling. The timing of the final ruling is not known, and could possibly take some months, but we will provide an update once we receive any information.

Pedestrian pathway Paringa Reserve – If a decision made recently

by Leichhardt Council is upheld by the new council a connecting pathway will be constructed at the end of Paringa Reserve Balmain. The waterfront land at 102 Elliott Street (the former Nutrimetics site) is set to be public open space. The new public park will connect via Elliott Street to the south-west end of Paringa Reserve. The proposed right of way from the end of Paringa Reserve is designed to extend the existing pedestrian pathway through Paringa Reserve, up the right of way and then via the streets to Elkington Park. This is part of Council's strategy to connect larger areas of open space by linked pedestrian ways and to increase public pedestrian walkways around the harbour. Further information is available in the Report from **February Council Meeting - Item 6.01**. Submissions close on May 20th. **Callan Park Welcome Centre Draft Operational Plan** - Leichhardt Council is currently exhibiting a Draft Operation Plan for its proposed Refugee Welcome Day Centre in the Wharf Road Recreation Hall at Callan Park. Submissions close on May 27th. **Leichhardt Council Budget** – The proposed 2016-2017 Leichhardt Council Budget is on exhibition. This will now be impacted upon by the 3-Council merger.

May Precinct News:

Local residents should watch for the Precinct News - a May edition has been circulated with an update on the precincts. The precincts have now become formal committees of council with a council officer present to take minutes. I believe that this is a good initiative with prospect of amalgamation with other councils that do not have a precinct system in place. Hopefully it will ensure that we will still have a forum locally at which to discuss and raise issues. Well we all know what has happened since I wrote this bit to go in the newsletter. This came from our precinct co-ordinator.

All committees of council have been dissolved. We await decisions on timelines regarding all committees of Council. June Lunsmann

Leichhardt Council abolished and Administrator imposed on merged councils.

On Thursday 12 May the NSW State Government abolished Leichhardt Municipal Council. The council was merged with Ashfield and Marrickville against the wishes of the residents of all and an administrator installed.

We have every reason to be outraged. Throughout our history the Association and its members have had a close relationship with Leichhardt Council, working to promote and represent the voice of our local community in all Planning and Environment Issues, and of course, Heritage.

The Association and its members have supported and are proud of the principle of Open Council we have at Leichhardt. We value the role of Precinct Committees in enabling representation at the local level. Association Members regularly attend Council Meetings including Policy, Planning and Environment and Heritage Meetings. We are proud of our role in developing Local Environment Plans and Development Control Plans for specific neighbourhoods of historical significance.

This ‘amalgamation’ process began in 2011 with a conference on the future of local government as part of Destination NSW 2035, following this was the Independent Local Government Review of Professor Samson in 2013. Samson proposed voluntary mergers. There was no suggestion of forced council mergers put to NSW residents at the March 2015 election, however, by May 2015 forced amalgamations were proposed. The Balmain Association made submissions on all these proposals and supported Leichhardt Council in rejection of forced amalgamation. Throughout this process, councils needed to prove that they were “fit for the future” on matters of ‘size and scale’, and later a new criterion was added “capacity” – but with no definition of what this was.

By September 2015 the final proposal for us was a merger between Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville. The State government had decided to use a process through the Boundaries Commission, rejecting any democratic

parliamentary process. There are still legal challenges to process and some councils who proposed alternative mergers have yet to be determined.

The Boundaries Commission process was a complete sham. The recommendations and so called “savings and increased efficiencies” were made on the basis of a report from KPMG which was never made public. We saw only a summary and repeated requests from all have still failed to result in the release of the full report.

The ‘sham’ process involved the state government appointing ‘a delegate’ to examine its proposal to amalgamate Leichhardt, Marrickville and Ashfield Councils and to hear from the public. The ‘delegate’ was then to make a recommendation to the Boundaries Commission. A final decision appears to have been made without the public seeing the delegates report.

The Balmain Association was represented at the hearings and as well as a number of members attended.

The delegate was asked to measure the proposal against a set criteria including financial advantage, cohesion between areas, historical & traditional values, attitudes of resident, effect on representation and ensuring that the opinions of diverse communities are represented and the impact on provision of services and facilities and on council staff. The Balmain Association found that residents of Leichhardt would be adversely affected on all these factors.

They asked about having wards in a new council. The Balmain Association considers it is essential that we do – even though with the amalgamation proposal wards will be far too large to represent local interests.

The opinions of our communities cannot be represented in such a large Council. We have fairly effective representation within Leichhardt now but with a much larger and more diverse community it will be impossible. A larger Council will favour the major political parties who have the resources to run candidates. It will work against independents.

In summary, the Balmain Association

is opposed to the forced amalgamation of Ashfield, Leichhardt and Marrickville Councils. Not one of the councils want it, it will be financially detrimental to Leichhardt residents and result in reduced services. It will limit our representation & access to Council, it will take the local out of local government.

It has now been forced on us. Perhaps we can do little but “rant” until the next State election?

Carolyn Allen

FIT FOR THE FUTURE

The tests applied to assess councils to be Fit for the Future:

Scale and Capacity;

Financial criteria overall;

Sustainability;

Infrastructure and service management; Efficiency.

Leichhardt Council along with many other metropolitan councils has been deemed Unfit for the Future even though they passed all tests except for Scale and capacity.

During the many discussions there never seemed to be a definition of Scale and capacity.

We are now amalgamated with Marrickville Council which passed all tests except for Scale and capacity and Ashfield which failed Scale and Capacity and Efficiency.

The first meeting of the new Inner West Council will be held on Tuesday 24 May, 6pm Petersham Chambers, 2-14 Fisher Street, Petersham.

The way things were...

In the 16th News Sheet of the Balmain Association (October 1968) there is promotion of a Balmain Inspection Day. There are seven houses, which will be open to public on 13 October from 10.30am to 3.30pm and the tickets cost \$1(one dollar)!!

There is also notice of a special General Meeting to amend the rules of the constitution so that pensioners and children under 15 can become members for the annual subscription of 20c (twenty cents)!!

Di Garder

From ERIC to ROTHESAY

Victorian Gothic Cottage, 24 Pearson St, Balmain East

No. 24 Pearson Street was constructed between 1870 and 1872 for Sydney financier, George Etheridge. The two-storey brick villa was built in the fashionable American Gothic style, featuring elaborately decorated timber bargeboards, finials and gable ends with similarly treated dormer windows upstairs. The stone quoins gave an appearance of solidity and substance that was intended to reflect the wealth and social standing of its owner. The ecclesiastic style windows and leadlight glass panels reinforce this. Etheridge was an Alderman on Balmain Municipal Council from November 1872 until his death in February 1874. Unfortunately, he was heavily mortgaged and the executors of his estate were obliged to sell the house to meet his creditor's demands.

The new owner, Sydney wine merchant, Thomas Fitzgerald named the house "Eric". *The Sydney Morning Herald* refers to the house in a sale notice as "Erie". This may have been a misspelling or could have meant "Eire". The family knew the house as "Eric". However, the notation on this photograph from the Mayhofer Family Tree, suggests that "Eric" may have been Thomas Fitzgerald's father.

Fitzgerald made several improvements to the property including the installation of gas lighting in March 1876 as well as substantial changes to the grounds to improve the aspect. In 1878 "Eric" was the venue for the wedding of Thomas' sister, Elizabeth Fitzgerald to Harry Williams. It was also the venue for the wedding of Thomas Fitzgerald's eldest son, Thomas Jr. to Elizabeth "Bessie" Reece in 1891.

Thomas Fitzgerald died at his residence on 15 November 1908 aged 66 years. His wife, Dulciebella predeceased him in June 1880. For many years until 1880 he served as Italian Vice Consul in Sydney. He was a widely respected member of the Balmain East community and a member of St Andrews Cathedral choir for over 25 years. The Fitzgerald



Thomas Fitzgerald 1842-1908 from Mayhofer Family Tree, Ancestry.com.au Public Photographs

family lived here until 1909 when Andrew Fenwick purchased the property and renamed it "Rothesay" after his father's birthplace in Scotland.

In 1928 Andrew Fenwick moved to Killara. The house was sold to Raymond Proust, pharmacist in 1929, although Fenwick's mother-in-law, Mrs. Beattie, aged 90, was permitted to stay on until 1936. Raymond and Ruby Proust remained in "Rothesay" until at least 1949, while the house continued to be the centre of social activities in the community.

Andrew West.



Andrew Fenwick lived there 1909 - 1929 Ancestry.com.au Public photographs

The property changed hands in 1951 to Jacob Czokalski of Sydney, guest house proprietor. He and his family lived here and also ran Rothesay as a guest house. The land was subdivided into two allotments in 1968 and thereafter Rothesay was retained on Lot 2 DP 528763. Jacob Czokalski conveyed Lot 2 to Janina Czokalski in June 1970.

The next we know is that Mr M A Warner purchased the property in 1998.

Rothesay today

Rothesay is described as being of local historic, aesthetic and technological significance as a rare example of a Victorian Rustic Gothic style house constructed between mid 1870 -1872. Despite unsympathetic alterations and additions, the building retains its original scale, form, character and details including steep pitched gable ended roof clad in terracotta tiles and rendered chimneys with terracotta pots, the building retains its early scale, form and details particularly the roof form and verandahs which wrap around most of the building. The building occupies a relatively large site and makes a good contribution to the Pearson Street streetscape. From Heritage Assessment by LMC.

After refusal of several applications to develop the property, Mr Warner sold the property in 2012. Again after some refusals the current owners have proposed a plan for the restoration of main building and includes a separate building at the back.

June Lunsman.



Photo from Domain website 2012

Debby Nicholls - social entrepreneur, advocate and friend

The first time I met Debby was some 30 years ago when I went to the Balmain Watch House to purchase a new publication *Around Balmain*. Debby greeted me with a big smile and said Welcome. That smile was deceptive, as before I left the Watch House I found I was a member of the Balmain Association and had a set of jobs to carry out.

The early 1990s was a busy time for the Balmain Association with the redevelopment of the 5 industrial sites in Balmain, here Debby with her quick mind and her typing skills and way with words, was in demand to write our concerns to Leichhardt Council or whoever was thought could help.

With the success of the publication *Around Balmain* the Committee decided to work on another publication, the subject the Pubs of Balmain and Rozelle. Bonnie Davidson, myself carried out the research and searching for the early

photos of the 55 Pubs. Debby once more compiled the mass of research and showed her humour in her selection for the introduction, of a gentleman being tricked into tasting water, and to name what it was.

Another association we joined in 1994 and indeed were foundation members was the Balmain Proboscis Club for at that time, people over 60. Twenty two years later, Debby had held principal positions of President, Secretary, Treasurer and member of the management committee. This was when she was fully engaged with other Community Volunteering.

I assisted with the Fun Runs, she organised to raise funds for the Community Aid Abroad in the 1990s.

I am missing my visits to Deb's house in Gipps St where we would chat about our families in Hong Kong and of 'things Balmain'.

Kathleen Hamey.



Debby was always a great supporter of Back to Balmain Day, is here with Kathleen in 1991 and the publication Called to the Bar that had been launched by Dawn Fraser in September.

The Balmain Association has lost a most revered and much loved member in Debby Nicholls.

Debby was a true friend and is remembered by us for her warmth, compassion, her sharp mind and wit.

Debby was open to all and worked tirelessly to make the world a better place. She will be remembered most for her social justice work, but she also gave to her local community she will be missed by those who had the privilege to be her friend or colleague.

Debby, originally from the United States, came to Balmain in 1979 and joined the management committee in 1984. She served in a number of positions over many years. Debby was Secretary from 1986 to 89, Treasurer and Watch House Conservator from 1990 to 93 and then President in 1995.

As Conservator she worked for the restoration of the Watch House, working on plans and submissions for funding. She was also active in our publications and she researched and compiled the publication *Around Balmain* (1986) and, with Bonnie Davidson and Kathleen Hamey, co-authored the book *Called to the Bar*:

150 Years of Pubs in Balmain and Rozelle (1991).

Debby continued to be an active member of the Balmain Association but her great energy was put to fundraising for Community Aid Abroad (now Oxfam), and then after the Tampa Crisis in 2001, to advocating for and supporting refugees and asylum seekers through Balmain for Refugees and Bridge for Asylum Seekers. We have been pleased to be able to provide assistance to Debby for this work by providing space for two very successful exhibitions of Refugee art work and donating funds from other exhibitions to the organization. Debby was awarded the Medal of Order of Australia for

service to the community in January 2012.

Debby was awarded one of the Balmain Associations' Inaugural Life Membership Awards in June 2014.

The Balmain Association celebrates the life of Debby, and acknowledges her enormous contribution to making our community a better place.

Carolyn Allen.

Debby with other Life members Bob Irving, John Morris and Val Hamey at the inaugural Life Membership Celebration



Graham Stevenson 1935-2016

Graham died on 8th April, after a long illness. Graham was one of the early “blow-ins” who led to the changing face of Balmain.

In 1964 Graham and his wife Jeannette moved into 43 Grove Street, one of the tiny sandstone terrace houses that collectively came to be known as “Fertility Row”. The births of their children Michael and Amelia contributed to this reputation.

Graham and Jeannette were involved in the earliest meetings that led to the formation of the Balmain Association. His contribution was limited then by his work as a sub-editor on the Sydney Morning Herald, but he served on the original management committee, and as a journalist took responsibility for

the production of the “Newsletters”. He was a dashing batsman on Birchgrove oval in matches against the Glebe Society. The couple were conspicuous revellers at those fund-raising parties that set the Association on its way. With their growing children they moved to larger houses, firstly in William Street East Balmain, and then in Birchgrove Road.

On the break-up of his marriage Graham moved, with his new wife, to the leafy North Shore. By then of course with the efforts of the Association, Balmain was itself becoming a leafy suburb.

Errol Pickard.

Fundraising in Octoer 1970



Using the Sands Directory - Andrew West

Deciphering the Sands Directory can be an art form. Houses in Balmain were generally not numbered before 1887. House names were sometimes used, but these were unregulated and often changed with a change of owner. At first, streets were numbered from what was regarded as the most important point. This was often from the waters edge where industry was concentrated with vacant land between there and a main thoroughfare. Later this changed so that streets were numbered from the principal thoroughfare. Sometimes this resulted in a complete reversal of the numbering order. The adoption of the convention of numbering houses on the right with odd numbers and even numbers on the left, also radically changed the sequencing.

Before the introduction of Local Government Regulations, developers determined the placement of streets and laneways and subdivided estates so as to maximise their returns. This created a maze of streets that did not necessarily match adjoining subdivisions, either in width or alignment. Some streets have since disappeared; others were extended or have been renamed. Building lots were further subdivided to recover the cost of the original block or have been consolidated into larger blocks. In 1916 Balmain Council attempted to regularize this by renumbering many of Balmain's older streets. Despite this, some inconsistencies remain to this day. Before 1887 Balmain's mail was delivered to the Mrs. Chape's Grocery Store in

Queen's Square. Mrs. Chape acted as the unofficial post-mistress for which she received a small stipend. When the new post office opened that year, mail was distributed and received from there, making it essential that houses and places of business be numbered.

It is important to note when using the Sands Directory that the information

was collected at the end of one year to be published the following year. Thus the first year that a house appears in the Sands Directory is generally the year after it was built. The information may record who was living at an address when the census taker called, but does not take account of someone who may have lived at the address for less than a year. The entries record residents and make no distinction between tenants and owners. Some addresses may include several unrelated names. It was not uncommon for families to take in boarders to help ends meet, nor for residents to move from one address to another close by. Often extended families lived in close proximity, so it was not uncommon for adult children and their families to live in the same street as their parents or other close relatives. Sands Directory 1880 –Note no house numbers

NB. Sands Directory is available

on the Leichhardt Library Catalogue from 1880- 1933. The Sydney City Council covers the period from 1869

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/learn/search-our-collections/sands-directory>

INVESTED FUNDS THREE MILLIONS STERLING.

Aba

DIRECTORY

Bea

159

BALMAIN.

Ashlar road—North side

Extends east to Deakin street

Burstead, John, blacksmith

Stones, Alfred, joiner

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BALMAIN DATABASE 1914-1920 - Andrew West

More than 1500 men and women from Balmain Municipality enlisted to serve in the Great War. Some are commemorated on various monuments and honour boards throughout the district, but there are many whose names and personal details are recalled only in scattered pieces of information that give scant recognition of their deeds and little idea of their humanity.

The purpose of this database is to collate publically accessible information relating to those who served, and thereby create a more complete historical record. For some it may be their only memorial, for not everyone is remembered on public monuments. The initiative to commemorate these men and women lay with the community, rather than the government. Schools, sporting clubs, churches and returned servicemen's leagues took up this challenge, although often it was a number of years after the cessation of hostilities. They relied on their own records, family lore and the collective memories of the community. It was not until the late 1920s that governments sought, in any meaningful way, to salve the loss and suffering felt across Australia, by erecting public memorials. This too was cut short by the onset of the Great Depression and the lack of funds to support such endeavours. Given the recent availability of digitized service records it would seem a relatively straightforward task to identify those

who served from Balmain. However, many Balmain men and women did not enlist locally, choosing instead to sign up at Holdsworth (Liverpool) or Victoria Barracks, in the hope of securing a place in a preferred unit. Others may not have been born in Balmain, although this would not be evident from their application, since the address the applicants were asked to provide was that of their next of kin or other person to whom the authorities could refer in the event of their death or hospitalization. A significant proportion of applicants from Balmain cited a UK address as their place of birth or for their next of kin. Some historical records circumvent this issue by listing a "place of association", which is generally the community with which the applicant most identifies.

To provide some sense of cohesion this database includes those born in Balmain, educated in Balmain, parents or next of kin living in Balmain, employed in Balmain or worshipped in Balmain.

It does not necessarily include those who were members of local social or sporting groups, since while they may have participated in these activities in Balmain their work, home or family connections were elsewhere. An exception was made for the parishioners of local churches, where it is likely there was a more frequent and enduring association.

Looking back on this cache of names and service records it is possible to make some

conclusions about social attitudes of the times. The young men who enlisted from Balmain were predominantly working class with the most frequently listed occupations: labourer, boilermaker's assistant, carter and machinist. The men were mostly aged between 18 and 23 years and had undertaken some military training through a compulsory scheme introduced in 1911. Very few of these men became officers. They had limited education, but were keen to gain wider experience of the world and training that might be of use to them when they returned to Australia. Almost without exception they were, at some point hospitalized, often a number of times. This was as a result of injury, disease, accident and recurring ailments such as diarrhoea and pneumonia. Many suffered gunshot or shrapnel wounds as well as gangrenous sores commonly referred to as "trench feet". The most chronic cases were sent to England where they recuperated, before being returned to France to rejoin their units.

The soldiers and nurses selected for this exhibition reflect some of the diversity of those who enlisted. All of them have their own story and you are invited to learn more about them. You may have a relative from Balmain who served in the Great War. If so we would love to hear from you. Perhaps we can add his or her name to the database and remember their service to country.

Jack Robinson - A Builder of Boats.

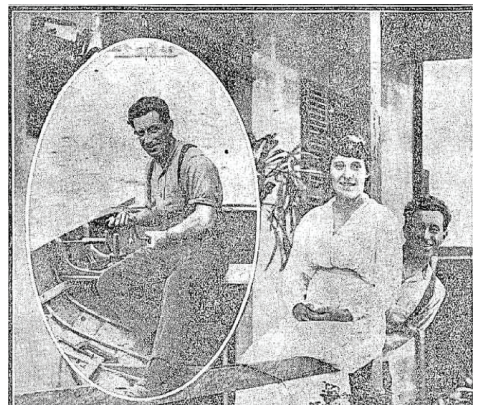
For Heritage Week 2015, *Conflict and Compassion*, the Balmain Association presented an exhibition called "*Balmain Cared*". We featured a story about Jack Robinson, a local who enlisted in WW1. While researching for the database, Andrew found this newspaper article to add to Jack's story.

In Balmain-we visited John Robinson, late lieutenant and a pilot in the Flying Corps, who is now a boatbuilder, employing two hands. Overlooking the harbour, with Goat Island immediately opposite, Mr. Robinson certainly works amidst ideal conditions. His dwelling house is just back of his workshop, and there we were introduced to Mrs. Robinson, a war-bride, a comely English-woman, daughter of a yeoman farmer from Oxfordshire. Mrs. Robinson loves the new life, and is well pleased with the country of her adoption. The house she and her husband live in is certainly very old, one of the oldest in Sydney, but it is kept scrupulously clean. She and her soldier builder of boats make a good picture on the old stone-flagged verandah. The capital with which Mr. Robinson started

from Repatriation was inconsiderable. Now he is turning out any sort of boat, motor launches, 18-footers, etc., and prepares his own designs. In fact, he could make more boats if he had more room. He has to get three finished by Christmas.

Some of his boats have done well in races in the harbour. Last week Mr. French's "Wave", a Robinson-built craft, won the motor race. The Britannia, a useful 18-footer, is Mr. Robinson's own sailing boat, and a well-built, honest craft she is, too, like all his boats. There is no shoddy here. Nothing but the best of material and workmanship goes into the work. No wonder, then, that Mr. Robinson's work has a reputation. This ex-airman has just built a set of 10-metre spars for the Singapore Yacht Club and two sets for the Brisbane Flying Squadron, so that his fame is more than merely local.

He has ambitions, of course, and one is connected with his beloved air flying. Lieutenant Robinson hopes, when flying becomes more general, to specialise as a builder of aeroplanes. And why not? It is these young men, with energy and vision, who dared greatly in, battle, and are now 'prepared to venture boldly in business, who deserve the success they won in war. *Sunday Times*, 7/12/1919 p19
"Diggers Succeed in Business as they Triumphed in War."





What's on at the Watch House

www.balmainassociation.org.au

JUNE

Saturday 4, 11.30 to 3pm

Balmain Association History Room

**Saturday 11, Sunday 12, Monday 13
10am-4pm**

Flowers with Flair

In her first exhibition Therese has combined her love of nature with her love of bright colours to present a collection of bold floral art. Roses, poppies, irises and magnolias form a large part of the collection which also includes flowers found by a roadside in California that Therese so far has been unable to identify.

Contact: therese.javender@gmail.com

Saturday 18, 11.30 to 3pm

Balmain Association History Room

**Saturday 25, 10am-4.30pm and Sunday
26, 10am-4pm**

A Change of hART

The 20th annual exhibition from Balmain hARTstART studio. Through modernist methods, and the introductory abstract painting units, **all** members develop a confident personal style in an atmosphere of warm friendly support. The hART stART method encourages mindfulness, personal growth, and the sincere friendship which occurs between their members.

Drinks with the artists Sat. 1-3pm

JULY

Saturday 2 and Sunday 3, 10am to 4pm

Birds of a Feather

Nicole Miranda, Fiona Roderick and Michelle Roberts all met at local markets, all having a love for similar things - Nature, Flowers, Textures....

Nicole is an artist and ceramicist; Fiona a printmaker specialising in lino printing and Michelle is an artist and ceramicist. Each using their unique style to exhibit and celebrate their passions.

Contact www.fionaroderick.com

Saturday 9 and Saturday 16, 11.30-3pm

Balmain Association History Room

Saturday 23 and Sunday 24, 9am-6pm

Over to you 2016

Original artwork by Richard Sercombe including mixed media and acrylic works of differing styles and sizes. Come along at any time over the weekend and enjoy some wine, nibbles and the artwork.

Opening Friday 22, 6-9pm

**Saturday 30 and Sunday 31, 10am-5pm
WORKS THREE WAYS**

Cassandra Pomroy, a potter and potterer based in Wagga Wagga, recently completed the Diploma in Ceramics at the Gympie Design Studio

Pamela Smith focuses on domestic bowls, plates and vases, of Hardy stoneware and fragile porcelain with an emphasis on variations of 'rims'. They both studied at the Gympie design Centre.

Irene Whitton, photographer chooses time, place and history to witness the mundane and the extraordinary, in contemporary Cuba.

Opening Friday 29 6-8 pm All welcome.

AUGUST

**Saturday 6, Sunday 7 and Saturday 13,
Sunday 14, 10am-4.30pm**

Tuesday's Fine...Thursday's Better!

A new exhibition from Sydney gallery school printmakers will showcase original and limited-edition linocuts, lithographs, etchings, collagraphs, woodcuts and other works on paper from established and emerging printmakers. Including internationally award-winning artist Rew Hanks and lots of talented artists from across Sydney as part at the Balmain Watch House show.

Official opening from 3pm on Saturday, 6
Jutta Fuhrmans, mobile: 04099 719 948
email: gjfj@tpg.com.au

**Saturday 20 and Sunday 21, 10am-4pm
City to Country Landscape Exhibition**

An exhibition by a group of artist friends who love painting en Plein air. They met and became friends through Joe Bezzina's en plein air landscape class at the Royal Art Society of NSW. Please come and join us on our opening night, and enjoy an evening of wine, nibbles and art.

Opening Friday 19 6-8.00pm All welcome

**Saturday 27 and Sunday 28, 10am-5pm
Picture Party Spectacular**

A Picture Party spectacular by three Sydney artists

Nicholas Beckett - "Jewels and Fools" Oil painting on wood and canvas

Kathryn Henry -Mixed media works on canvas and wood exploring illusion

Natalie Cassaniti - 'Odyssey of Dreams Pt I & II' self-portraits Works on paper and paintings on Canvas

Opening Friday 26 August 6pm to 8pm
All welcome.

For more information visit the website

<http://saintbeckett.net>

History Week: Neighbours

3 - 11 September 2016

Now in its 19th year, the History Council of NSW's History Week has become a significant event in the cultural calendar of NSW. This year's theme, 'Neighbours', includes stories of individuals, families and communities living near one another and links between adjoining suburbs, regions and countries. The concept of neighbours has shaped imaginations and memories, created identities and has been a source of both conflict and friendship.

During September, Saturdays 3,10,17 and 24 the Balmain Association will present an exhibition of people's stories and photos about living, working and



Past and present residents and neighbours meet every year at Back to Balmain Day in October, a great way of staying in touch.

maybe just visiting Balmain and their communication with local residents.

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 and Tuesdays 11-1pm

Postal: PO Box 57 Balmain 2041

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