



The Peninsula OBSERVER

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

Vol 51 No 3 Issue 340

Founded November 1965

September 2016

Tom Uren Walking Trail

On a wet Saturday morning, 28 May, a large number of people turned out at Illoura Reserve in Balmain East to pay tribute to Tom Uren with the launch of a walking trail named in his honour.

Anthony Albanese, MP for Grayndler and Darcy Byrne, Mayor of Leichhardt were among the many speakers who told of Tom's commitment to fighting for social justice, civil liberties and environmental issues. Members of his family and extended family spoke about the more intimate side of Tom as a family man.

John Doyle who emceed the ceremony made the point that he had had a connection with Tom Uren for longer than he can remember. In 1955 his mother worked at Woolworths in Lithgow when Tom was the manager and John was in his mother's womb.

In recognition of Tom's legendary hat, the trail is marked by timber sculptures bearing the hat. Attendees at the ceremony were all presented with a badge of the hat to attach to their own hats and a prize was awarded to the best hat.

The trail winds its way from Thornton Park along the foreshore to Peacock Point and on to Datchett St, traversing the Water Police Base to Ewinton Park. Heading up Darling St and crossing over to proceed along Hart St to Propellor Park near Tom's home. The trail continues along the foreshore to Duke St, passing Origlass Park and on through to Nicholson St. There are some scenic lookouts at the ZigZag



steps and the end of Simmons St. The walk finishes by going along Gallimore Ave to Darling St and downhill back to Thornton Park. Along the trail there are story panels and signage at Illoura Reserve, Ewinton Park, Propellor Park and Zigzag Reserve telling the story of Tom's life and public work. For further information contact Leichhardt Council 9367 9270 or go to www.leichhardt.nsw.gov.au/TomUrenTrail. Ross Mackenzie.

A Fortuitous Friendship - Fergus Fricke

Tom Uren is still alive and kicking in my memory even though he died on Australia Day 2015. Perhaps that is an indication of Tom's influence on me and of how important he was to my generation. He may be forgotten, or never even known, by most Australians, but once met, Tom and his achievements were not easily forgotten.

Tom Uren is probably the preeminent member of the Balmain Pantheon. He was one of Balmain's best known but least approachable residents. He was hidden behind a massive frame, a formidable reputation, a serious unsmiling face and a deaf ear. For most locals who knew Tom by sight he will be remembered for his hat (the way-finding symbol for the Tom Uren walking trail) and his lone walks around Balmain. I was fortunate to get to know him a bit better.

Tom was known, admired and

loved by many for his numerous achievements. He was, amongst many other things, a champion boxer, a war hero, a Federal Member of Parliament, a Deputy Leader of the Labor Party, an enlightened Minister for Urban and Regional Development, the Chairperson of the Parramatta Trust and a fighter for social justice and the environment. He helped establish the heritage and conservation movement in Australia and, in particular, worked to preserve the heritage of inner Sydney. Tom was also a supporter of the East Timorese in their fight for independence and for the independence of Irian Jaya.

I first met Tom in 1983 when he launched the book "The Lost World of Irian Jaya" written by Bob Mitton in collaboration with friends and admirers and published after Bob's death.

After the book launch I had no further

connection with Tom until he moved back to Balmain. In the late 1980s it was clear that the main industries in Balmain were going to close. The industrial sites of Unilever, Ampol, Caltex, Monsanto, Colgate Palmolive and Balmain Power Station were up for grabs and were snapped up by developers. One of these sites was Ballast Point. The fight to save Ballast Point from high-density residential development and create a park was bitterly fought over many years.

Contd page 5.

IN THIS ISSUE

- P. 1 Tom Uren Walking Trail; A Fortuitous Friendship
- P. 2 Inner West Council, BTE Update, AGM 2016
- P. 3 & 4 Mary Quirk, creating history
- P. 5 A Fortuitous Friendship contd, B to B Day
- p.6 WestConnex, White Bay Power House
- p.7 Refugee Centre, Callan Park
- Skippy the Dog
- P.8 What's on at the Watch House, Book Launch
- Jack's Story.

The Inner West Council - John Stamolis

In May, the Premier, Mr Baird, dismissed 42 Councils and created 19 new Councils. Specifically for us, Leichhardt, Marrickville and Ashfield Councils were merged into the **Inner-West Council**.

The Inner-West Council commenced under an Administrator, Mr Richard Pearson, and will remain under administration until September 2017.

It is difficult to find any examples in the history of local government where a Premier has placed all newly proclaimed Councils under administration for such an unprecedented period.

It's also hard to excite communities about generational change of local government when, for the first 16 months, the Council is under administration.

Most unexpected, however, was a decision made just after the Council merger to dismiss every committee of all three Councils – even the Precinct Committees and the management and events committees which are run by community volunteers. Shutting down community groups and community input is not a great way to start a new Council and it shows that community engagement doesn't appear to rate on the priority list for the new Council.

The dismissed committees were given no reason why they have been shut down and there has been no contact with them for nearly three months about their future. For 30 years, the residents who saved and now manage Clontarf Cottage have been dismissed and they have no idea why! Closure of the Precincts is a big loss. So often they have *led the charge* on many issues when Council was inept or slow-footed: Tigers, Bays Precinct, Birchgrove Oval, acquisition of open space and cruise ship pollution. *The new executive team...*

The initial weeks of the Inner-West Council has seen the creation of the new executive structure. Ms Vanessa Chan was appointed the interim General Manager (GM) until September 2017. Ms Chan was the GM of Ashfield. The two GMs (from Leichhardt and Marrickville) have left.

There were 11 Directors across the three Councils. The new Council will have 7 Directors. As such, 4 have resigned (a 5th Director has just resigned!). The 7 Director positions are currently being

filled on an interim basis but will be formally advertised in early 2017.

Employment for the 1,200 staff in the Inner-West Council will be protected for the next 3 to 5 years.

The cost of the merger is big ...

The merger process will involve big and high cost challenges for Council. Over the first two months, the cost to ratepayers is well into the \$-millions. Changes to computer systems will require extensive resources and funding for some years ahead. All policy documents, all service charges across the Councils will need to be reviewed. Processing of development applications will need to be made consistent over the three Councils. Then, in three years' time, there will be a major rebasing of rates which will affect all residences and businesses. Who knows what this will bring?

When the merger is finally done, it is best not to ask what the cost has been. Simply do as the Baird Government has done; ignore the merger costs and over-estimate its benefits.

So what has happened to the Mayor and the Councillors? ...

The Administrator has set up two committees to keep ex-Councillors involved in Council. The **Implementation Advisory Group (IAG)** consists of the three ex-Mayors and three ex-Deputy Mayors. They meet once a month to discuss issues which relate to implementation of the merger.

The other committee is the **Local Representation Advisory Committee (LRAC)**. There are three LRACs – one each for Leichhardt, Marrickville and Ashfield. The LRACs meet once a month to discuss local issues. For example, we have discussed Westconnex, the Parramatta Road Urban Transformation Strategy, Councils' 2016-17 budget, grant funding and other things.

Not all Councillors chose to participate in an LRAC. For Leichhardt, 9 of our 12 ex-Councillors are in the Leichhardt LRAC. All 12 ex-Councillors from Ashfield decided to participate in the Ashfield LRAC while 7 of the 12 ex-Councillors from Marrickville are in the Marrickville LRAC.

While the IAG and LRACs make recommendations (resolutions), these committees have no power to make their resolutions become policies of Council.

Telstra BTE Update

Telstra is pleased to have finalised an agreement with Council to enable the conversion of the area at the front of the Balmain Telephone Exchange for public use. Telstra continues to work productively with Council in progressing the building separation and demolition works, with a current forecast completion by mid-2017.

At the monthly **Ordinary Council Meeting**, the Administrator will make the final decision on resolutions which come from the IAG and LRACs as well as on the range of other agenda items that the Administrator and General Manager decide to include on the agenda. *A quick look at the new Council ...*

The Inner-West Council has 185,000 people (Leichhardt had 58,000). It covers 36 km² compared with 10 km² for Leichhardt Council. The Inner-West Council includes: Annandale, Ashfield, Balmain (& East), Birchgrove, Dobroyd Point, Dulwich Hill, Enmore, Haberfield, Leichhardt, Lewisham, Lilyfield, Marrickville, Petersham, Rozelle, Stanmore, St Peters, Summer Hill, Sydenham, Tempe, parts of: Ashbury, Camperdown, Croydon, Croydon Park, Hurlstone Park and Newtown.

Operating income for the new Council in 2016-17 will be \$281 million (it was \$90 million for Leichhardt). Expenses will be \$239 million (about half being employee costs). Average residential rates (based on the old municipalities) are: Leichhardt \$1,240 per residence, Ashfield \$1,187 and Marrickville \$901. For businesses, average rates are: Leichhardt \$7,300 per business, Ashfield \$5,200, Marrickville \$5,667. Note that IPART has recently approved an 8% special increase in rates for Ashfield.

I nearly forgot to mention, there is the option of changing the name of the Council at some stage in the future but given the large costs to date i.e. banners, website, media, letterhead etc, I doubt that anyone will want to raise this issue. John Stamolis is the Independent Councillor for Balmain.

Balmain Association AGM
6pm Wednesday 5 October 2016
at the Watch House
Keep the date free.
Notice will be posted separately.

Mary Lilly May Quirk, MLA

“Creating History” - Andrew West

As the first Labor woman, and only the second woman, to be elected to the New South Wales Parliament, Mrs. Quirk carried the hopes of many women that she might be able to bring about a change in the way women were perceived.

When John Quirk, the Member for Balmain, passed away in December 1938, it was suggested that his wife Mary contest the by-election for his seat. Her reply was that politics had hastened her husband's death and she was not interested. She relented and was duly elected in January 1939 with a small absolute majority.¹



John Quirk c. 1920s (Fairfax Collection)

Her election, however, was not without rancor. Both Quirks strongly supported Jack Lang, whose dictatorial attitude and firebrand policies split the Labor movement in the 1930s and lead to lasting divisions within the Party. The lingering bitterness between the factions was evident from the time Mrs. Quirk was declared to have won the seat of Balmain for the Lang Labor Party. Two unsuccessful Labor candidates present at the declaration of the poll, were reported to have behaved “with extraordinary coolness” towards Mrs. Quirk. One candidate, Mr. S. Western, refused to shake her hand and both said that they objected to the methods employed by Lang faction supporters.²

Mary Quirk faced opposition throughout her career, not only from within the Labor Party, but also from those who felt it was not a woman's place to be in parliament. These sentiments were not confined to one political party, but were evident on both sides of the House and at all levels of society.

1 Hobart Mercury, “Woman MLA – Mrs. Quirk's Election” 17/1/1939 p6

2 Tweed Daily (Murwillumbah) “Mrs. Quirk Declared Elected” 18/1/1939 p7

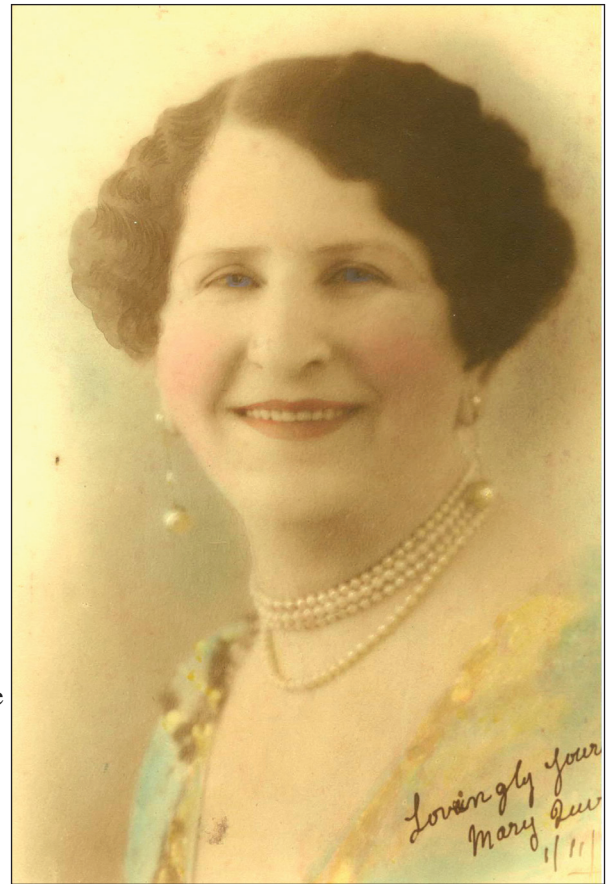
As the first Labor woman, and only the second woman, to be elected to the New South Wales Parliament, Mrs. Quirk carried the hopes of many women that she might be able to bring about a change in the way women were perceived. She was determined to demonstrate that women were capable of playing an important role in politics and embarked on her parliamentary career by declaring, “I want all to watch me and if, at the end of this term in the House, I cannot break down the feeling against women, I will think that the prejudice against women is justified.”³

As she entered the Legislative Assembly on her first day, the new member for Balmain would have observed the public galleries crowded with women who had come to see her sworn in. She later remarked, “A lot of people told me that I only got in on a sympathy vote and that the women of Balmain would be too catty and jealous to let me get in again. But at the next election they stood by me, as I knew they would. After I got in a second time a member of parliament said to me, Mrs. Quirk you have created history.”⁴

Mary Quirk went on to serve the people of Balmain for a further eleven years from 1939-1950. She established a reputation in the House as ‘a skilled and able fighter’ for people in industrial districts and was known more widely as a fervent advocate for the rights of the housewife. In 1946 she successfully argued against an increase in the price of bread and milk saying that housewives during the war had been forced to make all the sacrifices, while distributors benefited at their expense. She threatened that if an attempt was made to increase the price of bread or milk when zoning ended, Sydney housewives

3 Daily Advertiser (Wagga) “Mrs. Quirk, M.L.A. Will Attempt To Remove The Prejudice Against Women”, 18/1/1939 p1

4 The Sun (Sydney) “Human Stories” 26/3/1950 p 34 Published in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 16, (MUP), 2002



Mary Quirk, photo courtesy her grandson Anthony Dickson

would apply a boycott.⁵ Her stand was strongly supported by the president of the Housewives Association, Mrs. Eleanor Glencross who called on the Prices Commission to end price zoning, which she claimed was inflating prices by continuing wartime restrictions on these staple foods. Mosman Councilor, Mrs. J.L. Digby described it as an opportunity for grocers to charge what they liked, while newspapers described it as “a war on housewives”.⁶

Mrs. Quirk believed that more women should aspire to be politicians. “There should be at least half a dozen women in Parliament, but only women of mature experience like myself. Of course men are necessary for the big industrial problems, but women understand men very much better than they understand themselves. Men are really nothing more than overgrown babies. I always tell the members I know just by looking at them, if they are well or happy or if they are being sincere on the floor.” For the most part, the men conceded in good humour, that she knew them better than they knew themselves.⁷

Although there were many who opposed

5 Sydney Morning Herald “Housewives Protest Milk and Bread Prices” 8/2/1946 p3

6 The Sun (Sydney) “War Declared on Food Front” 24/11/1946 p5

7 op. cit. The Sun 26/3/1950 p34

women in politics, or sought to limit their role, Mrs. Quirk received support from a wide cross section of society. Her election was warmly welcomed by Dr. E. Kent Hughes, Armidale's only woman representative on the Municipal Council. "I am indeed pleased to see that Mrs. Quirk has taken her place among our legislators," she said in an address to the Armidale Country Women's Association. "Women in Australia, who are so slow to take their part in the government of their country, lag far behind the rest of the world in this respect," continued Dr. Kent Hughes. "However hard they work in their homes or among the various charitable institutions it is our legislators who have the most power to make our country a happy and healthy land." She went on to say "Mrs. Quirk has always been interested in her husband's parliamentary career and working conditions for women and children. Living in the heart of Sydney she knows that slum clearance is an urgent matter, and has announced her intention of endeavouring to improve the housing of the people."⁸

Mrs. Quirk chose to make her maiden speech on the second reading of the Child Welfare Bill. As she rose to speak, Mr. O'Sullivan, the Labor Member for Paddington drew the Speaker's attention to the lack of a quorum. As the division bells sounded summoning members to the chamber, Mrs. Quirk began her carefully worded speech, reading from a typewritten script in a soft, muted voice, that belied the forcefulness of her argument and the intensity of the feeling behind it.

Soon the chamber was filled with members, aware that this was indeed a moment when history was being created.

In her speech she advocated that women should be appointed as judges in Children's Courts because they more than men, had a natural empathy with children and could better understand them. "I believe that those courts would prove excellent places in which to test the capacity of women to handle judicial problems," she declared. "I would like to see them tested in this way. I know they wouldn't fail."⁹

Urging the Government to address the

⁸ The Armidale Express, "Mrs. Quirk MLA – Spheres of Activity – Best Wishes From Armidale Women" 24/2/1939 p4

⁹ The Mercury (Hobart) "Women's Viewpoint" 20/3/1939 p6

root cause of the problem, Quirk quoted from a doctor in the *'Medical Journal'* who said: "Poverty is the greatest single cause of disease and death in the world today." She added, "We must show that any attempt to get physical fitness is a farce unless everyone, especially every child, is adequately fed.

People are not poor because they are stunted and stupid. They are stunted and stupid because they are poor."¹⁰

Speaking from her own experience amongst her constituents she continued; "Mothers bring to me children suffering from malnutrition and rickets. It is terrible to see their little white, pinched faces. Their faces showed that they had not enough food.

The dole was not sufficient to prevent children from being hungry. The cost of providing for children's welfare should not be too great for the Government when the defence of Australia depended on the proper care of the rising generation.... Surely it is time someone called a halt and demanded justice for these little sufferers." In seven years, she said, 3664 prospective mothers, and the same number of babies had been lost to the State many as the result of malnutrition.¹¹

Throughout her political career Mary Quirk campaigned tirelessly to improve the lives of her constituents, particularly women and children. Politics she said had become her life's passion. She lived simply and devoted most of her waking hours to this work. Despite her undoubted hard work and the urging of her supporters, Premier (Sir) William McKell, refused to appoint her to the cabinet. Whether this was because of factionalism or for other reasons is not clear.

In May 1950 Mrs. Quirk announced that having failed to secure pre-selection from the Balmain-Rozelle branch of the Party she would contest the next election as an Independent Labor candidate. The announcement came on the heels of a bitter dispute that resulted in Mrs. Quirk filing a suit for libel against Thomas Dowling of the Waterside Workers' Federation.

Mrs. Quirk asked for £2000 damages alleging her reputation had been impugned in an article that appeared on 9 May 1946 in "The Link", a weekly

¹⁰ *ibid.* p6

¹¹ Newcastle Sun, "Her First Speech as MLA" 18/3/1939 p7

newspaper circulated in the Balmain-Rozelle area.

Although her name was not mentioned, the article appeared to be directed against Mrs. Quirk; suggesting she was a slum landlord. Mrs. Quirk owned a terrace of seven houses in Coulon Street, Rozelle, that she had bought in 1938, a year before she became the Member for Balmain. The rent of each house, 12/-, had not been changed since. The article described one house as in poor condition, and alleged the tenant said the rent had been raised from 10/- to 12/-. Mrs. Quirk stated she had always been kind to her tenants and allowed them, if unemployed to remain without making payments. She said she had spent money renovating the house and installing electricity.¹² Judgement was made for Mrs. Quirk who was awarded £250.

Mrs. Quirk lost her seat in the 1950 election. She continued her work with women and children, becoming a director of the Sunshine Home for Children. She died on 4 March 1952 and was buried in the Field of Mars cemetery beside her second husband. Perhaps she had the last word, however, requesting that on her tombstone be inscribed with "Mary Quirk (Ex. M.L.A.)."¹³

Mrs Quirk is recognised on a foundation stone for the Housing Commission Apartments in Curtis Rd Balmain, 1948. Grandson, Anthony Dickson lobbied for a plaque to recognise both John and Mary Quirk in O'Connor Park, named after Ricky O'Connor, the last mayor for Balmain, in Quirk St, Rozelle. The plaque was unveiled on 10 December, 2004.



¹² Newcastle Morning and Miners Advocate, 23/5/1947 p6

¹³ Leanne L. Blackley, 'Quirk, Mary Lilly May (1880–1952)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/quirk-mary-lilly-may-11473/text20457>, published first in hardcopy 2002, accessed online 24 July 2016.

A Fortuitous Friendship (contd)

Fortunately Tom Uren, although not taking a public stance, did make it clear, with a nod and wink, that he would help behind the scenes. He talked to politicians and gained us access to relevant Ministers. To cut a long story short he and the Ballast Point Campaign Committee succeeded in persuading the Carr NSW Labor Government to announce in 2002 that it would resume the Caltex site and that the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority would be responsible for creating a public park there.

For more than a decade after this announcement Roger Parkes and I would visit Tom in his house in Gilchrist Place, drink tea, chat and, more importantly, listen to Tom reminiscing. Despite having read Tom's autobiography, "Straight Left", and other articles about him and by him there were always new insights into the man. He was amazingly open about his life in a way that some would call a "warts and all" approach. He seemed

to become more religious as he grew older and I sometimes got the impression that Roger and I were being used to hear his confessions. The devil in Tom's later life was green not red or to be more precise, "The Greens". Despite the environmental aims of Tom and The Greens being very similar, Tom's religion was the Labor Party and the Greens were the infidels. Tom needed to be needed. He also needed to be respected and to do things. He was a "doer" and was a little bit dour in the doing (If he had a sense of humour it wasn't like mine!) It was almost as if he felt inferior and needed to show he wasn't. This was despite numerous honors, and even more numerous portraits. Tom was also awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Sydney. Rather



Issy Wyner, left-wing political stalwart for many years, Roger Parkes, Tom Uren

than give the usual short, feel good oration Tom gave the graduating architecture and urban and regional planning students what amounted to a lecture on the failures of their professions. He was not one to mince his words or hide his views.

I miss our conversations, and his monologues and tea making expertise. Thank you Tom Uren AC, AO, for your friendship, help, advice and occasional scoldings.

Fergus Fricke.



Issy Wyner, Roger Parkes, Máire Sheehan, at that time Mayor of Leichhardt, Fergus Fricke, Bruce Petty, cartoonist designed graphic on the plaque, Tanya Plibersek, MP Sydney, Sandra Nori, at that time MP Port Jackson, Tom Uren, Phil Jenkyn, renowned community activist.

Back to Balmain Day 2016

Despite the council amalgamation, we've been told that funding (insurance cover) and support are in place for this year's Back to Balmain picnic.

So it will be the usual

Elkington Park Sunday, October 30 from 10-30 am

Again we are looking forward to the Rowing Club providing the sausage sizzle and in the unlikely event of wet weather that their premises will be available.

Michele Hacking mjhacking@gmail.com

Jamie Parker, MP Balmain with some committee members, Shirley Arthur, Elizabeth Stamoulis, Janice Swanson, Michele Hacking and Kath Hacking



What is WestConnex?

WestConnex if completed will be the biggest underground motorway system anywhere in the world and certainly per kilometre the most expensive. Current estimates put the cost to the NSW taxpayer at 16.8 billion. WestConnex will suck public funds out of vital public transport projects. With the rapidly escalating energy crisis in mind the rest of the world has turned to mass transit solutions, rail and light rail in particular but not in NSW. This path would avoid the toxic pollution from the proposed unfiltered stacks. It is possible to build filtered smoke exhaust stacks but the Government rejects this on the basis of cost. Emissions from these smoke stacks will spread as far as two kilometres from the site and will settle on homes, businesses, sporting fields, playgrounds and childcare centres.

WestConnex is part of an overall scheme for car based, high rise redevelopment across vast areas of Sydney. That is why WestConnex and Urban Growth (NSW Government's mass property resumption arm) have been working so closely together.

What does Westconnex mean for Balmain/ Rozelle/ Annandale?

Just recently plan number three for this area has been released. This will link Iron Cove Bridge to the proposed WestConnex tollway and involves the construction of a one kilometre tunnel under Victoria Road and the former Rozelle Rail Yards. It does

remove the need for the previously proposed spaghetti junction in Rozelle and the Government has announced plans to build a park above this section of tunnel over the Rozelle Rail Yards site. While all this is most welcome, there is no transparent information as to the exact details of this project, the smoke stacks or the noise issues that this the project will bring.

Most public transport and motorway experts believe this plan like the others will not work and a new plan will be released.

Many houses in Rozelle will be 'compulsorily acquired' and destroyed. Heritage listing is certainly no safeguard against this as many homes in Haberfield that were heritage listed have been bulldozed in recent weeks. 27 homes and businesses in Balmain/ Rozelle, having first heard via a news report have now received notification of their fate. In many areas where people's houses have been acquired they have received below market value.

The increase in traffic from the induced traffic will clog up the exit points of WestConnex and all surrounding streets. Already the Anzac Bridge is at maximum capacity during peak hour and in off peak times, it will become a nightmare.

The high toll proposed for the run from Parramatta to the CBD \$109 weekly (conservative estimate according to Government figures) will mean that drivers will use 'rat runs' to avoid tolls and

will add to the already congested streets of Balmain/ Rozelle. A recent survey done in Western Sydney by ReachTel for the NoWestConnex group found that 64% of respondents would not use the WestConnex motorway and would prefer an updated public transport system.

AND already Mr Ian Wright of Rozelle Village, developer of the Tigers site is saying he will be able to build higher because the tunnel will solve the traffic problem.

There are many reasons why it is imperative that the community opposes the WestConnex project. The project and associated corporations have been dogged by corruption claims; heritage houses are being demolished to make way for temporary site offices; endangered species habitat is set to be destroyed; local residents are being evicted from their houses - and then not receiving proper compensation and those left right on the edge of polluting exit portals and left with an unliveable house receive a maximum of \$15 compensation; and billions in public funds are being funnelled into the pockets of developers for a project that is going to add to the very problem it is trying to solve - traffic congestion.

Ecotransit; Liz Butterworth, Member of NoWestConnex Annandale; recent tunnel information from report by Jamie Parker MP, www.jamieparker.org/.

White Bay Power Station update June 2016

John Brogden, UrbanGrowth NSW Chairman, recently announced that Urban Growth would assume the role of master developer of the White Bay Power Station, following the closure of the Request for Proposals process.

The NSW Government's vision for the site is for it to become Australia's leading, world class tech hub. In October 2015 UrbanGrowth NSW sought proposals from the private sector to transform the iconic site.

According to Urban Growth, while some proposals were strong in certain areas, there were no complying proposals that addressed the evaluation criteria set out to achieve the Government's vision.

The private sector proposals relied too heavily on residential development to fund decontamination of the Power Station, and doing so would have changed the nature

of the site.

"In our role as master developer, UrbanGrowth NSW will divide the site into smaller parcels of land as part of a staged development to attract a diverse range of tenants, who will meet the Government's agenda"

"We have set a very high bar to transform this strategic asset and its surrounds into a tech hub that supports Australia's knowledge-intensive industries," Mr Brogden said. "As the custodians of this heritage-listed building on public land, we owe it to Sydneysiders, the people of New South Wales and future generations to get this right."

"We will draw inspiration from New York's emerging Roosevelt Island development in partnership with industry and the community to create a new home for Sydney's high-tech sector."

UrbanGrowth NSW have advised the proponents of the decision to take on a more direct role in developing the site in keeping with international best practice, and Urban Growth will focus initially on securing suitable occupants for the White Bay Power Station by the end of the year. The White Bay Power Station, closed since 1983, is an immediate priority Destination for The Bays Precinct Urban Transformation Program. It will be adaptively reused to house major knowledge sectors and high quality public spaces, activating the approximately 10 hectare site and connecting it with the waterfront. UrbanGrowth NSW plans to commence the transformation of the White Bay Power Station in 2017. For more information go to <https://www.thebayssydney.com.au> which is a link from UrbanGrowth NSW

The Welcome Centre and other Callan Park happenings

I visited the refugee welcome centre on Monday and sat for a short while to hear a presentation to a group of approx 15 young men and women aged under 25 who had arrived in Australia within the last 20 to 90 days. They were from Iran, Iraq and Syria and bused in that day from Ashfield, Auburn and Liverpool. A couple of local resident group supporters were also present.

The bus was similar to that used by WHO's or Council and there were 4 cars parked alongside Palm Court area so I don't believe this Centre will add to existing traffic or parking problems.

The presentation was part of Youth supported by SSI Ashfield and MRC Liverpool and communicated in both English and Arabic language.

As I was an unscheduled guest I did not stay for too long but during a break in proceedings had an opportunity to briefly talk to the Youth co-ordinator who said that Building 504 is a very good facility, they plan to use it often, and that at the end of their sessions they take a 20 minute walk around the park.

It was an uplifting experience and I think we are indeed fortunate to have not experienced war or displacement.

I have committed to supply some information re Callan Park and accompany the group on a short walk around.

Member of the Friends of Callan Park.

HISTORY WEEK - CALLAN PARK TALKS & TOURS Sunday, 11 September 2016

TALKS: 2.00 – 3.30 PM

• **CALLAN PARK MENTAL HOSPITAL - 19THC CONTEXT & REALITY**
Hear about the work of Dr Frederic Norton Manning. Learn about his influence on psychiatric care in the late 19th century and his role in the development of Callan Park. *Dr Richard White worked as a psychiatrist at Callan Park 1971-1975*

• **THE FIRST FORTY-FOUR PATIENTS AT CALLAN PARK**

The first 44 patients – all men – were transferred from overcrowded Gladesville Hospital to Callan Park in 1876 and watched as the asylum was built. *Sarah Luke is writing a book on Callan Park's early history 1876-1900 and first patients*

TOUR: 3.45 - 4.30 pm TOUR GARRY OWEN AND KIRKBRIDE
Come along afterwards to hear more about Garry Owen, where the first 44 patients lived – and the glorious buildings of the Kirkbride complex.
VENUE: NSW Writers' Centre @ Callan Park, Rozelle (enter Cecily St gates)

COST: \$20 per person = talks + tours Afternoon tea = gold coin
Children under 15 = free

Questions: focp.admin@gmail.com Cynthia 0413 733 219

Bookings Essential by 8 Sept. <https://www.trybooking.com/MBOU>

Skinny – The Neighbourhood Dog

This is one of many stories that have come to light as Balmain residents shared their memories of the neighbourhood as they were growing up.

“There is one story of a Ferdinand St. identity which I think should be told and that is the story of Skinny the Dog. Skinny had been living in Louisa Rd., perhaps he was left there when someone moved, I can't remember. He had been ill-treated and a man used to hit him with his walking stick. So Skinny learned to hate men. One afternoon the children of Ferdinand St. were gathered in the street playing hopscotch and skippings when down the road came this stray dog. No, that doesn't describe his entry into our life accurately. He strutted majestically like a warrior king and with the sun behind him this created some sort of heavenly apparition to us. When he came nearer we all fussed over him and then went to obtain scraps of food from our mothers for the skinny dog, whose ribs showed like an undernourished racing dog. So skinny was named. That night the children of Ferdinand Street tried to save food from their dinner for Skinny. Some got away with it, but I didn't and was told by my father he wasn't feeding all the stray dogs in the neighbourhood. But when I looked at Dad after seeing he had left a good size piece of meat on his plate, he mumbled about giving it to the poor starving dog if he wasn't gone in the morning.

Morning came and Skinny was still in our street. We spent an anxious day at school and rushed home to find Skinny was

still in residence and there he stayed and lived. It was his street and he protected us and our homes for the rest of his life. The men he tolerated, but the women and children he loved. None of the other dogs in the street seemed to object to him even Mittens, another dog owned by a neighbour who was well-loved and given tidbits too. Mittens showed Skinny the ropes and on weekdays they visited the two local butchers round the road who gave them a bone or some meat, stopping at various homes and shops where food could be obtained with a wistful look. In those days the milkman and the baker delivered and when they complained about being held up by a vicious dog in Ferdinand St., the police came and tried to take Skinny away. We children, unbeknown to our parents, hid him in the laneway behind the houses; sometimes taking him through a house and whose yard backed onto the lane into Rose St. There was a lot of sympathy and much muttering about the poor persecuted dog without a home and people decided to get their bread and milk from the local shops because the milkman and the baker wouldn't deliver in our street unless Skinny was got rid of. Skinny won – much to the relief of the children, but we had many an anxious day worrying about him. The small children clutched hold of his ears or tail to steady their tottering



steps and he bore their unmeaning rough treatment with good grace. Our visitors had to be escorted into the street as the faithful dog, thinking he was protecting us wouldn't let them past. Not once did I ever hear of him biting a child. When I married and moved away and brought my children back home they rode on his back. Mr. and Mrs. Jimmy Miles registered Skinny and for the last few years of his life he was legal. He died as he lived, much loved among friends in Ferdinand St.”

- Meg Chamberlain, 1995

If you would like to add to this trove or are just curious about what living in Balmain was like in the post-war period join us

**at the Watch House for our
Neighbours Exhibition
Open: Saturdays 3,10,17, 24
September 11am-4pm
also Tuesdays - September 6,13
and 20 – 11am -1pm**



What's on at the Watch House

www.balmainassociation.org.au

OCTOBER

Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 10am-4pm

In the middle of the game

Sydney based artist and a student of interior design Sunmee Lee presents second solo exhibition. Her works reflect her daily life as a play so she chooses photographs as a tool to visualise her concept. In daily life, she perceives the images from the walls, streets, buildings and nature. She explores her emotions, experiences and thoughts in her unique methods. Every individual wanders 'in the middle of the game called life'.

Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 10am-5pm

REVERIE

Step into the whimsical imaginings of mixed media artist Alisa Burlington an artist from the quaint town of Rylstone, NSW. She is a graduate from The Sydney College Of the Arts and is the Director of Jewellery label Mon Alisa Design. Her exhibition explores the art of transcendence through both physical and imaginative themes. Weaving narratives through varying collections to reawaken perceptions of awe and wonder for the child within.

Opening Friday 7 6pm-8pm All welcome

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Mon-Alisa-Design-346917035336959/>

Blog: <http://monalisadesign.blogspot.com.au>

Saturday 15 10am-5pm and Sunday 16 10am-4pm

SYDNEY SKETCH CLUB

Exhibition showcasing members' drawings and paintings completed plain air at various locations across Sydney (including museums, galleries, historic houses, annual festivals, beaches and parks etc) – works on paper include watercolour, pastel, coloured pencils or markers in a variety of styles

More information available at: www.meetup.com/art-494 click on "Join Us" to be advised of a wide range of activities 2-3 times a month

Saturday 22 and Sunday 23

Pop-up sale tba Watch House History Room open 11.30am to 3pm

Saturday 29, Sunday 30 October, Saturday 5, Sunday 6 November 9am-6pm

Over to you 2016 mark 2

Great opportunity to start your Christmas shopping with original artwork by Richard Sercombe, including mixed media and acrylic works of differing styles and sizes. Two relaxed weekend sales with wine and nibbles all weekend. Come along at any time and enjoy some wine, nibbles and the artwork.

Opening Friday 29, 6-9pm.

NOVEMBER

Saturday 12, 10am-5pm and Sunday 13 10am-4pm

Watercolours on Thursday

Following a successful exhibition last year we are returning in November with our latest work. We are a community based group of watercolourists who enjoy painting together and exploring our individual styles.

We have formed a strong bond through our time spent painting and discussing all manner of topics, from solving the problems of the world to the latest play or newest movie or even the mini crisis that has

occurred at home. We invite you all to come and see the latest results.

Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 10am to 4pm

WAG annual exhibition

Everyone is welcome to the group's annual exhibition of drawings and paintings inspired by a variety of Sydney locations. Members of the Wednesday Art Group will offer over a hundred artworks for sale at very reasonable prices. For information about the group and its Wednesday meetings email Patrick Connolly patrickbc39@gmail.com.

Opening Friday 18 6-8pm All welcome

Saturday 26 and Sunday 27 10am-4pm

L'Art du Voyage

"L'Art du Voyage" is based on three months travel I did last year in the Autumn months. I journeyed to London, Wales, Ireland, France, Vienna, Budapest, Prague and Malta with their

magnificent art collections.

This will be my fourth exhibition at The Watch House. The other three successful shows have also been based on journey and the joys of discovery and learning through travel. www.catherineharry.com.au

Opening Friday 25 6-8pm All welcome

DECEMBER

Saturday 3 and Sunday 4 10am-4pm

Crystallise

Crystallise brings together the artistic expression of Christine Young and Margaret Kelly and their social concerns with imaginative, visual and social cognition and how these forces crystallise as experience in the external world. Expressed through their vivid mosaics.

Opening Friday 2 December 6-8pm all welcome.

History Week September 2016

Remember to join us for our exhibition "Neighbours"

Saturdays 3, 10, 17 and 24 September 11.00 am to 4pm

Tuesdays 6, 13 and 20 September 11am to 1pm

Come and read the stories of individuals, families and communities living near one another and their connection to the churches, local sporting clubs, schools and most importantly parks.

Add your story to the number already there whether you have lived in Balmain, worked in Balmain, played sport in

Balmain, swam in the Dawn Fraser Pool or simply visited Balmain.

We have many photographs of people and events. So please join us.



The start of the Dawny to Cockatoo race

Book Launch - Jack's Story : Growing up in Balmain

John Thomson, known to his many friends as Jack, has spent all his life in Balmain. Born in 1927, Jack remembers the days of the Depression, when kind greengrocers put aside 'specs', fruit with spots on it that they gave to hungry children. As well, Jack's childhood had its trials. Come and join us for this rich personal account.

Wednesday 7 September 2016, Balmain Town Hall Meeting Room 6pm for a 6:30pm start Free event - All welcome - Light refreshments provided

Bookings - online or call 9367 9266 or localhistory@lmc.nsw.gov.au

The Balmain Association Inc Representing Balmain, Birchgrove and

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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