

THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY • YOUR RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

# NEWS BULLETIN

PO Box 99 PADDINGTON NSW 2021 Phone 9360 6159 March 2008

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**If you receive this Bulletin electronically, would you consider printing copies for friends or neighbours who might be encouraged to become members? The membership subscription form is printed below.**

Welcome to the new committee and thanks to our retiring president, John Mant and vice president, Nina Mistilis, for steering the Society and its work with their valued professional expertise. Welcome to the 2008 presidency, Robyn Attuell and new committee members, Maria Hoareau and Adrienne Revai.

Since our last Bulletin, we enjoyed our party for members and friends before Christmas in the front garden of Juniper Hall. With the Society's commitment to community, Sinead Joyce ran *Clean Up Australia* with the Paddington Society, Sunday 1 March and pamphlets are circulating for *Secondhand Sunday*, Zone 1 Woollahra Council, Sunday 30 March.

Paddington Community Garden, Trumper Park, Steering Group to be appointed. Bettina Boss proposed to represent The Paddington Society.

*Coming Up*, watch our web page and see the detailed 2008 Events Calendar in this Bulletin.

April events, Wednesday 2 in the *Know your own Pub Series*, Drinks in The Cocktail Lounge at the *Light Brigade* and on Wednesday 29, Marina Finlay's exhibition at the Charles Hewitt Gallery, *Images of the Eastern Suburbs* — oil on canvas & works on paper — tell your friends!

Watch out for the first in our Restoration Artisan Series No 1: *Australiana Decor from Victorian to Federation*.

A sense of place: The busy intersection, Oxford, South Dowling, Victoria Streets and Barcom Avenue is looking for a name. Sue Ritchie is canvassing the neighbourhood for suggestions. Planter boxes recently installed marks the first step in creating an edge.

Inside, A letter from America, Joan Shannon, nee Hull found us on the web and after living her adult life in America, nostalgically remembers her carefree childhood at 160 Underwood Street, Paddington.

Enjoy another *Periodic Peek at Paddington* from Ron Johnson.

## **Annual General Meeting, 21 February 2008**

The meeting was held in the bar at the Paddington Town Hall, with refreshments through an adjoining door to the Chauvel Theatre lounge. Bill Fraser and Linda Gosling were joint guest speakers, Bill reminiscing on growing up in Paddington in the 1940s with Linda speaking as a young family enjoying Paddington in the noughties. We thank Clover Moore and the City of Sydney for relaxing the heavy rental for the Town Hall and granting us a peppercorn rent, and for the helpful assistance of its attendant in setting up the room. Members appreciated the hospitality of the Chauvel and stayed talking in its relaxed ambience.

Retiring President, John Mant thanked the 2007 committee for its support through the year and extended a vote of thanks to Nina Mistilis acknowledging her diligent management of projects over several years as Vice President and committee member. Nina was unfortunately indisposed and unable to attend the meeting. She was pleased to receive flowers in recognition of her contributions.

Bill Morrison, Vice President, gave a vote of thanks to John Mant:

*On behalf of the Committee, I would like to extend a vote of thanks to the outgoing president, John Mant.*

*We have been privileged to have had John's leadership over the past 5 years. During this time he has brought to the position his great knowledge and professional skill which is second to none in Australia in terms of local government and planning laws.*

*He has also blessed us with his no nonsense management strategies; his incisive and perceptive judgements on all manner of things; and his finely honed ability to delegate.*

*John has effectively represented the Paddington Society in the public arena and always willingly given his time to representing the cause. This includes bringing his skills and expertise to achieving a number of goals including:*

*The Strategic Plan for Paddington; the review and revision for the Paddington DCP [Development Control Plan]; and extensive improvements to the pedestrian traffic system in Paddington, he has led the thrust with the ongoing saga of the redevelopment of White City; the approaches to the City of Sydney with regards to the development control for South Paddington; and encouraged a cross over between north and south Paddington.*

*During his leadership he has:*

*Represented the Society at numerous court cases and; supported many community events and activities including the publication of Paddington Pictures in 2007 and many other matters just too numerous to mention.*

*John has been an inspiration to all of those on the committee. His philosophical approach to governance and the need for a Place Manager responsible for Paddington continues to be an objective we will pursue.*

*The Committee will miss John's wit and wisdom and we hope he won't be far in times of need. John, we thank you for all you have done and wish you well.*

*Could you all put your hands together for John Mant.*

A presentation from the Society was made and John responded his thanks and appreciation.

### **President's Report for July 07**

#### White City

*What is the Future?* Predicting the future of White City is difficult. The situation is complex and fluid.

But why has not the Woollahra Council acquired the land as a community asset, even if it was then leased back to a community tennis club? If the Council had the same public policy objectives as, say, Leichhardt Council has had over the years, it would have moved long ago to secure the whole of this last remaining private open space. There is a clear deficiency of open space in this area and there are now demands from the State Government to accommodate even more development. The case for compulsory acquisition could be easily made.

Already a sizeable slice of White City has gone to a private school for playing fields that will be used only by it during term time and, then, for only a few hours a week. The rest of the time it will be shut off from use behind a high fence. In other cities increasingly playing fields are being shared between schools and the public.

Another slice has been sold to a private club, which has restrictive membership. It is possible that the rest will still be used as a tennis club to which anyone (with enough money) can join, but, when the dust settles, it is possible that it too will be the property of a club that formally restricts membership to only certain members of the community. (Unlike some of the older clubs in the Eastern Suburbs, which restrict membership informally.)

And all this for the sake of an open space acquisition at a possible cost of ten sizeable Paddington terraces. It demonstrates the way in which rate pegging, and the consequences of the policies of previous councillors to keep rates below what was needed to maintain and improve the municipality, have reduced the financial capacity of the local government of one of the wealthiest areas in Australia.

#### *Traffic and Parking*

The potential membership of the club does raise planning issues, the major one being traffic and parking.

There are two options:

The first is to provide sufficient parking to meet the demand. If membership were restricted to only certain members of the Eastern suburbs community and if very few of the residents of Paddington qualified, then the demand for car access will be very significant. There will need to be sizable amounts of parking provided and the demands on Alma and other already over trafficked streets will be substantial.

The second option is to do what has happened elsewhere in Paddington; namely, to provide no parking.

If some parking is provided, everyone will be tempted to bring his or her car in the hope of being able to find a space. If it is known there is no parking available then the car stays at home.

There is only limited street parking provided for the shops in Oxford Street (which has some of the highest retail rents in Australia) with most customers walking or taking public transport.

Of course, as with a shopping centre, restrictions on parking for a new Club would tend to reduce custom and advantage membership from those within walking distances or with easy access to public transport. It would also require strict enforcement of on-street parking to protect spaces for residents.

If Woollahra Council is not prepared to acquire what is left of White City so as to ensure it remains an asset available to all the community and enable council to manage how the site is used as an owner, then at least it should restrict severely the amount of parking provided both within the area and on the surrounding streets.

#### Paddington DCP — the Woollahra side

Discussions are continuing about the proposed amendments to the DCP for Woollahra s side of Paddington. Robyn Attuell and Bill Morrison have been contributing to the debates. A report will go to council shortly.

The issues essentially have to do with how much of the existing housing fabric can be demolished and how much should be retained. The houses in a terrace structurally support one another. If one is

effectively demolished, or there is near boundary-to-boundary excavation, then, with the sand and floating rock geology of Paddington, the other houses in the terrace may be under threat.

The issues are not only about stability. They also involve the nature of the conservation of the heritage of the suburb. Is it to become Disney-land of Victorian facades, or is it to remain a Victorian suburb with households living in houses that reflect their Victorian past?

These are difficult issues, although the Society's position is clear. We believe that, while houses should be able to be brought up to modern standards, this does not require all but the facade to be demolished or for there to be deep basement excavation.

Living in Paddington has advantages and disadvantages. If someone wants a modern house significantly larger than those that existed in Victorian days and, possibly, a two-car garage and swimming pool, then they should go to some other suburb where the blocks are larger and the houses less mutually dependent.

#### Minister Sartor is Bashing Councils Again

The Planning Minister has been making much of the inefficiencies of councils in the handling of DAs. Is he softening us up for taking more power away from councils?

It is true that there are delays in councils, particularly in those councils where it is difficult to fit new developments into the existing contexts.

It seems that, even when applicants and their architects (or, too often, designers) have a pre-meeting with council officers, they still present proposals that do not meet the controls. There seems to be a view in Sydney that it is whimpish to comply. You find this from the largest developments to the smallest house alterations. The consequence of this attitude is that often councils have to request changes to proposals. The amended design may need to be re-exhibited and re-considered.

When you add this to the absence of Third Party merit appeals and the complexity of the controls and the processes, then delays are inevitable.

NSW has by far the most complex controls and processes. This is the product of faults in the legislation. And, for example, in Victoria and South Australia (to which the Minister made a whistle stop trip, presumably looking for ideas), neighbours can appeal against a council's approval of a development and have the Court reconsider that decision. This is not possible in NSW (unless it is a major and potentially polluting development). It is only possible to challenge a decision as being *illegal*, that is, getting the process wrong.

Court challenges are difficult to win but they are expensive for councils to defend, let alone lose. Council officers in NSW are very careful to get the process absolutely right and therefore limit the opportunities for challenges. Their colleagues in the other States do not have to be so risk adverse as there is a simple merit appeal available anyway. And the systems in the other States are much less complex and prone to error.

The geographies of Melbourne and Adelaide are also different. The cities do not have natural barriers. Densities are less, the land parcels are larger, the earth is flatter, there are fewer views to protect and the State governments are not so intent on cramming in more and more development. The job of balancing the rights of the neighbours against the rights of the applicants is not as difficult as it is in Sydney. Interstate comparisons can be misleading.

#### Also the unintended consequences of private building certification

A further cause of delay and expense is an unintended consequence of the fatally flawed private certification of building in NSW. Because of this system, councils and neighbours want to see all the

detail in the planning application. This is especially so in a Heritage Conservation area such as Paddington.

There is only one chance to get it right. In the days when the councils controlled building approvals they could accept less detailed DA plans knowing that the details could be checked when the working drawings came in. Now that councils have no control over the building approvals, or the supervision of construction, this efficient system has disappeared. Having to put the detail up front is expensive for applicants, councils and neighbours and it causes delay. (All this is in addition to the insoluble conflict of roles inherent in the private certification system.)

Before the Minister takes away more power from local representatives, he should be looking to properly fix the complexity of the system in NSW, to provide third party merit appeals and to restore the situation where building certifiers, rather than being responsible to the builders being regulated, are again responsible to councils.

### **PADDINGTON SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2008**

President:	Robyn Attuell	9361 3877
Vice Presidents:	Bill Morrison	9331 1405
	Krystyna Luczak	9360 4849
Secretary:	Leone Morrison	9361 0864
Treasurer:	Francis Walsh	9363 9572
Members:	Adrian Boss	9363 9131
	Bill Fraser	9331 3729
	Linda Gosling	9332 2111
	Maria Hoareau	9380 5602
	Will Mrongovius	9331 5954
	John Richardson	9360 2548
	Adrienne Revai	9332 4678
	Graham Stewart	9036 9018
	Michael Wilson	9331 3714

**General Contact: Francis Ph: 9363 9572, Fax 9363 9572 or Leone 0409 361 378**

Email us on [heritage@paddingtonssociety.org.au](mailto:heritage@paddingtonssociety.org.au)

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### **A Periodic Peek at Paddington s Past (7) by Ron Johnson**

#### **The Rushcutter Bay Gentry Revealed (1)**

All the early grants in the Paddington area had been for a specific economic purpose; eg, the houses at the bottom of Glenmore Road for soldiers to guard the rush cutters in the Bay, the grant for a distillery to Underwood, Forbes and Cooper, the West grant for farming and a water mill, a lime pit near Rose Terrace, a skin washing facility near Centennial Park.

Governor Bourke, the father of Paddington , introduced a new policy of land grants in Paddington when he allocated land for residential purposes on either side of Glenmore Road. He expected small residential estates to be developed and eventually they were. In this way he rewarded highly placed government servants. The class system of the old world was to be duplicated in the antipodes.

Who were these designated colonial aristocracy?

The Reverend Richard Hill took up his grant in 1833 and built a house next to that of Thomas West. He came to NSW in 1821. When St James Church was consecrated by Samuel Marsden, the flogging parson , he was inducted as its first minister. He worked hard, establishing a Sunday School, and he founded the NSW branch of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.

He worked for sixteen years as Secretary of the Benevolent Society. He died of apoplexy in the vestry of St James Church. He held seven acres in Glenmore Road.

Colonel Henry Dumaresq, born in 1792, came to Australia with his two brothers William and Edward, accompanying Governor Darling in 1825. Their father had fought in the American War of Independence. Henry campaigned with Wellington in the Peninsular War and was on Wellington's staff at the battle of Waterloo in 1815. He was shot in the lung at Waterloo and died young as result from ill health in 1838, not long after he received his Paddington grant. Henry married Eliza, sister of Governor Darling. Henry was appointed private secretary to the Governor and Clerk to the Executive Council 1825-31. He received a grant of 1200 acres at S Heliers, Mussellbrook. In 1833 he became Chief Commissioner for the Australian Land Commission. In 1834 he acquired the property Saumarez, a squatting run in the New England district. The property was said at the time to have neat whitewashed buildings and happy workers (this was of course pre AWAs!!). He held 9.5 acres and never built in Paddington. He was well connected we might say.

Robert Hoddle was born in England in 1794. In 1824 he was appointed Assistant Surveyor. He surveyed the line of Bells Road from Richmond to Cox's River and explored for better roads for the Hunter Valley settlements. Brisbane gave him a grant of 100 acres at Warkworth. In 1837 he became the Surveyor General for the Port Phillip District and laid out the centre of Melbourne. You've guessed already. There's a street named after him. He was granted 8.5 acres and never built a house in Paddington.

William Lithgow received 8.2 acres. He was born in Scotland. He received a degree from the University of Edinburgh and became a licentiate of the Church of Scotland. In the Napoleonic Wars, he was clerk to the commissariat in Heligoland and Mauritius. He arrived in Sydney in 1824. He must have had good letters of introduction for he was almost immediately appointed a member of the Legislative Council. In the same year he became a magistrate, clerk to the Legislative Council, private secretary to the Governor and a Director of the Bank of NSW. He then landed a grant of 2000 acres at what is now Lithgow, named after him in 1827 as well as his Paddington grant. He became Auditor General in 1824 and served on the Legislative Council till 1856. He died at St Leonards in 1864. He never built a house in Paddington.

Is there a pattern here? Only one built a house in Paddington of those looked at so far. They were all hard working and it would seem able. They were all on the make, but all three died in NSW. Support in England was clearly essential for advancement in the colony, achieved by a combination of influence and ability. They made a big impact on the development of the colony. We put a great deal of emphasis on convict origins but not enough on the contribution of these pioneers. Convicts were not real good on government, religion, law making, farming and bureaucracy.

More next time.

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***And now, the reminisces from Joan Shannon nee Hull, who found our website at random***  
([hopefuljoan@earthlink.net](mailto:hopefuljoan@earthlink.net) for anyone who remembers her and would like to make contact.

Dear Ms. Walsh:

I am writing you from Sedona, Arizona. I grew up in Paddington before my family moved to the suburbs. I know this is a long shot, but are you related to Mrs. Walsh who used to own and live at 160 Underwood Street in the 1940's until...??? I had a magical childhood in Paddington.

Walked to the old bottle-o on Elizabeth Street a block away and turned in our bottles we collected for a penny a piece, mainly beer bottles. Then walked half a block away towards Oxford Street, still on Elizabeth Street, to the fish and chips shop to buy the batter ends. We used to jump the trams and ride them to Woollahara and further if we could with no money, shifting from one end of the seat to the other as the conductor walked along the running board from one end of the tram to the other. Several of us would be up real early on the weekend when the Easter Show was on and climb over a back fence, throwing our billy cans over first, then begging the cow owners for

free milk and walking out through the front gate receiving glares from the guard on duty.° There were so many many kids to play with and we wandered around Paddington with lots of freedom even after dinner until 9pm as it was so incredibly safe.° The ice-cream man came around on Sundays on his bike and Saturday afternoons we all went to the movies and saw the serials each week and exchanged comics.° Paddington may have been considered a slum, but when we lived there it was perfectly clean and the safest area to live in.° We wandered everywhere by ourselves even when we were just five years old.° There was a great playground° ten minutes away that had all kinds of games etc., can't recall the name of it.° There was a big empty paddock in the middle of all our homes and each year for Guy Fawkes night we would spend two weeks collecting old pieces of wood, old tires, anything that would burn, and made a HUGE bonfire.° We were the envy of all the kids in the neighboring neighborhoods.° I was born there as were my parents, grandparents, great grandparents and great great grandparents when Paddington was started.° We all attended the Catholic School on Oxford Street, including my mother, my two aunts, my uncle and grandparents. I made my first communion there.

Sorry, can't imagine how I got started into all this. Guess because I am going down there in July to see friends and relatives and to hang around Paddington for a while with my cousin taking photographs of all the houses we°and our ancestors lived in.° We moved to the suburbs eventually and then in later years I moved to America and met my husband here in Sedona. He died a few years ago and after all these many years I still think of Paddington as my home. Even after the move away I°°commuted°°and attended St.Patricks on Harrington Street.° Am I allowed to join your society and receive newsletters even though I am no longer a resident?

Blessings,

Joan Hull Shannon

*We have forwarded copies of our recent newsletters and Joan has since written to say that she has decided not to come for a visit in July but to stay to sell up her houses and come back here to live.*

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**Secondhand Sunday Zone 1, Sunday 30 March 2008 — 8.30 am -1.30pm**

This will be the third time that the Paddington Society and Woollahra Municipal Council have worked together encouraging residents to organize their unwanted items into garage sales the day before the scheduled Monday cleanup.

Pamphlets have been distributed to all buildings in the WMC Zone 1 area inviting participation.

Return registration forms to WMC by Friday 14 March, by fax (02) 9391 7044, email to [elissa.bishop@woollahra.nw.gov.au](mailto:elissa.bishop@woollahra.nw.gov.au) or by phone (02) 9391 7962. Participating households will receive a free poster to go on their fence advertising their garage sale and be included in publicity opportunities in the Wentworth Courier.

The second round of pamphlets and maps will identify the position of garage sales. The Paddington Society will have an information table at Fiveways from 9.30 am to 12 noon where maps will be available for bargain hunters.

Unsold items can be taken back by the householders, donated to the Salvation Army if in good condition (Ph: 13 16 40) or the Bower Re-use & Repair Centre (ph (02) 9568 6280 or left out for the council cleanup on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Further enquiries: Elissa Bishop WMC ph. 9391 7062 or Leone Morrison ph. 9361 0864

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**Thanks** to several members for responding to our request for a small refrigerator. Anna from Paddington Green read our newsletter and we now have the convenience of this item in our rooms ready for functions.

**Request:** Some members of the committee have taken on tending the little garden in the front of Juniper Hall, watering and planting out under the guidance of the Trust's Gardiner, William. Josephine Revai asks if anyone has any cliveas that they may be dividing that we could use to fill some of the gaps.

## Coming up soon

(See our 2008 Events calendar for full list – bookings for all functions with Leone 9361 0864)

- Mar Sun 30 Secondhand Sunday WMC Zone 1
- Registrations close with Woollahra Council - Friday 14 March  
Enquiries: Elissa Bishop WMC ph. 9391 7062  
or Leone Morrison ph. 9361 0864  
Map of participating residences will be available, throughout the zone and on the day at the Society's Info table Five Ways
- April Wed 2 Know your own Pub – Cocktail Lounge, *The Light Brigade Hotel*
- Recently opened refurbished cocktail lounge and dining room showing restored art deco features
- Corner Oxford St and Jersey Road - 6.30pm to 8.00 pm  
Price includes first drink and savouries, further drinks at bar prices. Non members \$15, Society members \$12 and Concession \$8.50. Bring your friends. Bookings: Leone Morrison 9361 0864  
Optional Dinner in the dining room afterwards can be booked through the Society.
- April 5 -20 Heritage Festival – National Trust – theme: “Our Place”
- April Sun 6 Paddington Public School launch of *Pathway of History*  
(The Society donated 2 pavers to commemorate their 160<sup>th</sup> year)
- April Tue 29 Gallery exhibition
- Marina Finlay - *Images of the Eastern Suburbs*, oil on canvas and works on paper  
6.30 pm – 8.00 pm – tell your friends! Bookings appreciated.  
Charles Hewitt Gallery, 335 South Dowling Street (cnr Taylor Street – limited parking under building) *Purchases of art on the night will attract a donation to the Society from the gallery*  
Non members \$15, Society members \$12 and Concession \$8.50
- May Sat 31 Restoration Artisan Series No 1: *Australiana Décor from Victorian to Federation*
- Find out about your house with Paul Storm, collector, explorer of social history and practising glass etcher. An interactive talk with examples of glass etching, rubbings, plaster cornices, and other decorative objects.  
2.00pm . Venue to be advised. All welcome. Bookings please.  
Members: \$12, Non members \$15, Concession \$8.50 –subject to venue cost.