

NEWS BULLETIN

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September 2001

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Several months ago the Paddington Society committee began reviewing our objectives for the future of Paddington. We soon realized it was necessary to develop a strategic plan for Paddington's future and this plan would then provide us with a framework for defining the priorities for our activities over the next few years.

Our vision for Paddington (see below), is an image of what we would like Paddington to be in the future. This came about through professionally facilitated workshops with the committee and then at our last public meeting, with the Paddington community whose involvement and input was thoughtful and reassuring - we are all travelling along the same path.

We identified Paddington's internal strengths, weaknesses, and the external opportunities or threats that will assist or thwart our vision. We are now in a position to develop a strategy for Paddington's future. Our objectives will be clear and we will have a documented long term action plan from which to work. It's a huge step forward to put in place a strategy to maintain and protect our suburb rather than continually defending so many single issues that threaten our amenity and heritage.

Please come to our next community meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 16th October at the RSL Club and join in developing the final plan for the future of Paddington.

Robyn Attuell

OUR VISION FOR PADDINGTON

A word picture of what Paddington should be like in the future...

The people of Paddington appreciate that they live in a heritage suburb. They support the limits

that this imposes on the built environment and the extent to which they can develop their properties. They also value a high quality public domain that reflects the urbanity and heritage of the place.

As a consequence the heritage qualities of both the private and public domain have been protected and enhanced through the efforts of the Paddington community and its local government. The design controls for the suburb reflect these heritage objectives and are supported and applied in a fair and honest manner.

The result is an overall coherence but not one that requires absolute adherence to uniformity.

Although Paddington is essentially a built environment, the tree planting in the 1960s and 70s gave it a green cover. This has been carefully managed with some more appropriate plantings and the excellent design and management of open spaces. Some vistas of key building groups have been enhanced by selective removal of poor tree specimens.

Steps have been taken to manage water flows so as the natural drainage lines were not further disrupted.

The design of the public domain has not only enhanced the heritage values but has made Paddington a suburb where residents and visitors prefer to walk rather than use cars.

Besides favouring pedestrians, priority is given to public transport, emergency and service vehicles. While private car movements are not banned, drivers are conscious that the motor vehicle shares the road space with all categories of users. The management of traffic respects the urban environment.

In redesigning the streets to reflect the relative priorities afforded to the different users, the opportunity has been taken to substantially enhance their design quality and safety.

Overhead lines have been undergrounded, foot-paths have been fixed, and low-level pedestrian lighting has been installed. The streets are kept clean.

As a consequence walking has become a pleasure for people of all ages. With further improvements in the availability of other forms of transport, more residents are finding it not necessary to own a motorcar.

The continuing pressure on inner City housing markets, not to say the successful management of the suburb, has done nothing to limit the attraction of Paddington as a place to live. This has continued the rise in property values and limited still more the affordability of the suburb.

Positive steps have been taken to nonetheless keep as mixed a community as possible. The suburb has not become a high-income enclave, a retirement village or a heritage theme park. It remains a vital, living and changing community, united in a love of the area and what it offers.

The suburb therefore has retained its mixed use atmosphere with encouragement given to traditional local activities and enterprises, rather than global chains. The community accepts that the suburb is a part of Sydney's tourist infrastructure. Pubs, galleries and restaurants remain, attracting locals and visitors, with the latter accepting the restrictions on behaviour the residential nature of the area requires. Some corner shops have survived and are supported.

Families with children have been encouraged with excellent facilities and a safe environment. Older people also feel welcome despite the attractions of the suburb to a wide range of different lifestyles. There remains a tolerance of difference.

Given the need to counter the loss of community connections in modern life, community organisations and the Paddington local government have adopted a range of mechanisms to encourage good neighbourhood relationships and a sense of responsibility for the suburb and how it is managed.

The local government of Paddington, which covers both South and North Paddington, is effective, transparent and efficient. The community has accepted that it is essentially its responsibility to ensure that the infrastructure of the suburb is restored and maintained in manner that is fair to future generations.

As a consequence, Paddington has both a heritage integrity that is world famous and is a wonderful place in which to live.

John Mant

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

**Join us in developing the final plan
for the long-term future of the whole
of Paddington**

When **Tuesday 16th October**
Time **7.00pm - 9pm**
Where **Paddington RSL Club**
 266 Oxford Street

ST JOHN'S CHURCH SAGA ENDS

The Land and Environment Court has delivered a slap in the face to those in this community seeking to uphold the objectives of the Paddington Society. The Court, with Senior Commissioner Jensen presiding and assisted by Commissioner Bly, on 9th August 2001 upheld the appeal of the Uniting Church Property Trust against the refusal by South Sydney Council of the development application for the redevelopment of the St John's Church site in Oxford Street.

The development will provide for an 80 seat restaurant in the Church, to operate 7 days a week from 11am to midnight Monday to Saturday and 11am to 10pm Sunday; an open air cafe and kiosk in front of the old manse, to operate 7 days a week from 8am to 9pm; major excavations and construction of large underground kitchens; restoration of the Church Hall for retail uses; restoration and extension of the new manse and construction of a new residential flat building providing for 8 large residential units (for later subdivision?), with basement parking for 19 cars; and subdivision of the site into three lots.

South Sydney Council had rejected the development application on the grounds that inter alia, the commercial component, particularly the restaurant, was an over development and would have an adverse impact of the amenity of surrounding residents; the constructions proposed

would diminish the heritage value of the existing buildings; and that the proposed flat building would have significant affect in terms of visual bulk, loss of privacy and overshadowing for residences opposite in Renny lane.

Subject to minor modification, the developer received approval for all details of their proposal.

The Commissioners made no mention in their judgement of the broader issue of the loss of amenity for nearby residents arising from the intensive commercial uses. They confined their opinions on the impact on nearby residents to the loss of privacy and overshadowing which they found acceptable.

Hugh Wilson

VALE - BILL LUCAS

Last Monday September 10th 2001, Bill Lucas died suddenly at 'Moonbah' at Thredbo, in the company of his children. Bill was one of Paddington's best known personalities, a long time resident and founding Member of the Paddington Society. He also served on committees and was a fervent protector of Paddington's importance as a special architectural area to be lived in and enjoyed by its residents - many his friends and colleagues. Less well known was Bill's background as heroic serviceman in the airforce, then his brilliant years studying architecture at Sydney University. The visionary houses he designed are known, and his record as a sensitive and innovative architect. He collaborated with the illustrious designer Marion Hall Best to build 'Moonbah', the ski lodge at Thredbo where he died.

Bill's interest in the environment was legendary. His involvement with designs for Aboriginal housing at Brewarrina, the Murraweena Community Centre at Redfern, the campaign to save the Queen Victoria Building, and his early design for the Paddington Markets are on record. He lobbied for the design competition for the Sydney Opera House and was in the forefront of the campaign to keep Jorn Utzon on as designer. For a decade he was a lecturer at the School of Architecture at the University of NSW. In the early 1970s Bill was part of the founding of Guriganya, a school in Paddington which had much vision. He was involved in the campaign to save Woolloomooloo, and his plan for the suburb should not be forgotten. Also to be remembered

is his inspired design for the Paddington Arts Centre, on which he worked with Marion Best and Owen Tooth.

We will always remember Bill, walking in Paddington with his distinctive style of shorts and cravat. A loyal friend, a man of personality and integrity, a Paddington resident who will be missed.

Susan Tooth

EMAIL!

Do we have your email address?

Help us to communicate with you efficiently and save costs.

Send your email address to our Secretary, Mary J de Merindol

maryjustine@hotmail.com

PADDINGTON RESTAURANTS SHINE

At the recent Restaurant and Catering NSW Metropolitan Awards for Excellence, three Paddington restaurants won awards -- It is good to see our suburb featuring so strongly. Congratulations to each of these establishments.

Best Sushi Bar: Toko - Sushi on Oxford

Best French Restaurant: Bistro Lulu

Best Italian Restaurant - Fine Dining: Buon Ricordo

Leonie Furber

DO YOU ENJOY SINGING?

Your Paddington Society Committee would like to organize Christmas Carols to take place on Sunday December 2nd finishing at the Christmas Party at Juniper Hall at 5pm. If you are interested to be a part of this, not only to join in as a singer, but to organise the Carols, please contact Mary J de Merindol on 9331 5777 or maryjustine@hotmail.com

WHITE CITY

On Friday 7th September, a Rezoning and Staged Development Application for the White City site was lodged by Tennis NSW with Woollahra Council.

This submission takes into account that the land north of the canal and south of the viaduct will be owned, conditional to the rezoning being approved, and maintained by Sydney Grammar School for playing fields.

Whilst there are a number of positive changes from the original Manboom proposal with regard to reduced development of the site, there are still outstanding issues – one of which is the size of the proposed commercial development along New South Head Road (proposed for 7 stories, whilst even the Urban Planning Report from Woollahra Council officers shows the height for this development desirable at 4-5 stories).

The second and even more concerning issue is the subject of public access to the site – we are concerned that unless sections of the site are dedicated as public open space, there will be no guarantee in the future against further development.

There are indeed many unanswered questions about this proposed development. At a meeting of the Woollahra Council Urban Planning Committee on Monday 10th September, a resolution was moved that Council advise Tennis NSW that any proposal for rezoning and/or development of the White City site should be dependent upon comprehensive reports supporting any rezoning, a detailed master plan and draft development control plan.

There is obviously still a great deal of work ahead before a site specific Development Control Plan, which it has been suggested strongly should be prepared by Woollahra Council and not Tennis NSW, will be completed.

We will continue to assess the situation and keep you informed.

Leonie Furber

SUCCESSFUL WINTER DINNER

This year's annual Winter Dinner was a sell-out, with 70 Members and friends of the Society enjoying a typical "turn of the 19th century" four course meal and excellent wines. Held at the Grand National Hotel in Underwood Street the night was so successful that many who attended have requested repeat performances without waiting until next winter.

Our guest speaker, Colin Bannerman an author and historian of traditional Australian cuisine and local history, painted a delightful word picture of the life and times of early Paddington.

Sincere thanks to the Management and Staff of the Grand National, particularly, Chef Samantha Joel who researched the menu, Colin Bannerman and all who made the evening so successful.

Susan Lenahan

YOUR DIARY

October, 11th, 7.30pm *Bus Review & Policing
with Clover Moore MP
RSL Club, Paddington*

October 16th, 7pm *Paddington Society
"Vision" Workshop
RSL Club, Paddington*

December 2nd, 2.30pm *Woollahra Philharmonic
Orchestra
The Scots College
Bellevue Hill*

December 2nd, 5pm *Paddington Society
Christmas Party
Juniper Hall Garden*