

# NEWS BULLETIN

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March, 2000

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*As incoming President, I extend our warmest thanks to Penny Carle who has been our President for the last 4 years. Penny has been our public image on numerous committees, sub-committees, working parties and reference groups, from dog-poo problems, to traffic overload, to the onslaught of major developments. She has worked tirelessly to try and maintain a reasonable environment in which we can live.*

*Currently, there are several large building developments in Paddington which will impact heavily on our environment with increased traffic, loss of open space, and therefore quality of life. The proposed White City rezoning from open space, to allow 190 residential dwellings, a new club house of 6,000m<sup>2</sup> of which half may be used for serviced apartments, is of major concern; the Scottish Hospital site; the Water Board site on Moore Park Road; the other Water Board site with retail on Oxford Street and residential at the back with the only access through one-way Renny Lane, and almost next door, St John's Church retail/residential development also facing Renny Lane. Amended plans of the St John's Church site are now on view at the Town Hall.*

*Heritage Week is from 1st to 9th April and this year's theme is "Our Sporting Heritage". We are holding a picnic in Trumper Park Oval to honour Victor Trumper one of Paddington's greatest sportsmen. Please join us on Sunday 9th April.*

*It's a long time since we've published the aims of The Paddington Society which were compiled in 1964 when the Society was founded to 'save' Paddington. They are just as relevant today as they were 36 years ago. It was at this time that Victorian terraces were being torn down and replaced with blocks of flats. New roads and roads widenings were being proposed, which would have completely ruined the character of Paddington, most famous of these was the threat to widen Jersey Road.*

*Robyn Attuell*

## DO YOU KNOW WHAT WE STAND FOR?

The stated aims of the Society are almost entirely concerned with environmental amenity, with a strong emphasis on conservation. The following statements are taken from the constitution.

*The Society shall be non-political and non-sectarian. Paddington shall for the purposes of the Society, be taken to embrace the area roughly bounded by New South Head Road on the north, Ocean Street on the east, Moore Park Road on the South and South Dowling Street and Boundary Street on the west.*

The Society shall exist to aid:

- The maintenance of all features of Paddington having beauty, architectural and/or historical value;
- **To preserve existing open spaces and to increase open spaces for the health and enjoyment of the community in general;**
- To maintain harmony with existing architectural patterns when new buildings are constructed;
- To prevent the disfigurement of premises, streets and open places by ugly advertisements, poles, wires, and unseemly structures;
- To protect the residents from smoke, noise and other nuisances detrimental to the quiet enjoyment of their homes;
- To protect and add to the amenities of Paddington;

## HERITAGE WEEK PICNIC

**Join us at Trumper Park Oval for a picnic to honour Victor Trumper. There will be a sausage sizzle and soft drinks will be for sale. Bring your own wine, a cricket bat and ball or anything else to make the day enjoyable.**

**Where: Trumper Park Oval**

**Date: Sunday, 9th April, 2000**

**Time: 11 am**

- To ensure the safety and convenience of pedestrians and vehicles using the street;
- To encourage the development of cultural activities;
- To compile and record the history of the area.

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### VICTOR TRUMPER 1877-1915

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*...Trumper's remarkable character was all the more remarkable on learning that he was brought up in a suburb of Sydney, parts of which were rightly regarded as slum areas. Paddington, as the suburb was called, together with its neighbour, Darlinghurst, were the haunts of larrikins... The denizens of Paddington were known as the cockneys of Sydney - quick with a quid and a quip.*

Victor Trumper, the first of 8 children was brought up at 112 Paddington Street, Paddington. It was not until he went to Crown Street Superior Public School that his father became aware of his son's cricketing talent and encouraged him by bowling to him on a concrete pitch in Moore Park before work and school...

Trumper's success in the Crown Street team began to attract a lot of attention, resulting in boys of the Paddington area being invited in 1894 to bowl in the Sydney Cricket Ground nets against the visiting English team of Andrew Stoddart. Two shillings were put on the stumps, and if any of the boys hit the stumps, the money was theirs. Trumper was more than a fair medium-fast bowler at this time. Trumper's most remarkable season was with the Australian team in England in 1902, when in 53 innings he scored 2,570 runs, without a single not out. It was said of him that *he opened the windows of the mind to a new vision of what batting could be...*

It seems an odd thing that so little has been named after Trumper. The Grandstand at Chatswood Oval where Trumper finished his club cricket with a string of single centuries, was named Trumper Oval but nothing at the Sydney Cricket Ground where he had played so brilliantly. The only reminder there of him is something out of sight behind the Sheridan Stand where people of the Hill contributed towards a grey marble plaque with gold lettering In memory of Victor Trumper died on 28th June 1915, aged 38.

Trumper died of Bright's disease in St Vincent's Private Hospital, Darlinghurst. His funeral cortege was said to have stretched for three and a half miles with many of the mourners marching to

Regent Street Paddington and then taking the tram to Charing Cross. Here they regrouped and marched ahead to Waverley Cemetery. It was the biggest known funeral at Waverley.

Trumper Park Oval was firstly named Hampden Oval, after Viscount Hampden, Governor of NSW. It was originally an old quarry and garbage dump and had to be built up by as much as 13 feet in some places in order to turn it into a cricket oval. The name of the oval was changed in 1931 to honour Victor Trumper. At the opening of the oval there was a great demonstration of community feeling - *the owners of produce stores gave bags of potatoes, butchers in the district gave a sheep each, bakers gave bread and grocers gave jams and tea. A bullock was roasted whole and various games were held... including a fancy dress cricket match in which Trumper played.*

Information found in *The Immortal Victor Trumper* by JH Fingleton, Sydney, Collins, 1978. Woollahra Library Reference Desk.

Anne Fraser

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### YOUR COMMITTEE FOR 2000

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<b>President:</b>	Robyn Attuell
37 Paddington St.	9361 3877 (H)
<b>Secretary:</b>	Mary J de Merindol
7 Stewart Place	9331 5777
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Francis Walsh
133 Windsor St.	9363 9572
<b>Committee:</b>	
Penny Carle	19 Glenview St. 9331 5365
Stephen Fitzgerald	128 Paddington St. 9362 4619
Anne Fraser	33 Bent St. 9331 1445
Leonie Furber	5 Hargrave Lane 9380 8327
Bill Garrett	68 Ormond St. 9331 1903
Lorine Marsh	21 Glenview St. 9331 6525
Bill Morrison	29 Brown St. 9331 1405
Drew Robertson	158 Jersey Rd. 9328 7792
David Saywell	150 Windsor St. 9363 0317
Loys Thompson	4 Cooper St. 9360 4877
Susan Tooth	108 Jersey Rd. 9363 3136

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## WHITE CITY

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The development of White City hinges on Woollahra Council's decision to accept Manboom's application to rezone the site, currently zoned Private Open Space. This would allow the building of 9 multi-storey blocks of flats, increased commercial space and a sports club three times the size of the existing clubhouse including serviced apartments.

The Action Community for the Environment (ACE), regards the Manboom (Kerry Packer, John Singleton, Robert Whyte, Michael Milman) proposal as a gross over-development of the site with all the attendant traffic, noise and loss of green space disadvantages to the public. Woollahra Council has agreed on an assessment process of the development application, with community consultation in the form of a community reference group; the reference group has not yet been established. The preferred Master Plan is now on display at the Council chambers in New South Head Road and at Woollahra Library.

ACE and its support groups will hold a rally on Sunday, 2nd April 10:30am at Alma Street where there will be keynote speakers, and a barbeque. The Rally needs your support to give direction to both Council and State Government to show leadership and vision in keeping our open space so as to preserve the quality of life for us and for our children. Please come and join us there.

We must win this fight to preserve the Open Space zoning of White City. Council must be made to see the importance of preserving the heritage qualities of Paddington. Council must not be afraid of State government intervention nor any potential Land and Environment Court legal action by Manboom, should they reject this proposal which does not in any way conform to Council's LEP guidelines. In fact, the Premier and the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning have publicly stated that Councils should stand by their planning guidelines and make decisions in the interests of preserving precious urban green space.

Any member wishing to be more actively involved with the SAVE WHITE CITY campaign, please phone Richard Wood on 9363 1601 or email: savewhitecity@ozemail.com.au.

If we give up our open space we lose it forever.  
*June Cummings*

## SAVE WHITE CITY'S OPEN SPACE

**RALLY, RALLY, RALLY, RALLY**

**Keynote speakers!**

**Fundraiser barbeque! Save White City T-shirts and badges for sale!**

**COME AND GIVE YOUR SUPPORT**

**Where: Alma Street**

**Date: Sunday, 2nd April, 2000**

**Time: 10.30 am**

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## SOUTH PADDINGTON DEVELOPMENTS

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The Water Board site residential development on Moore Park Road was passed by South Sydney Council in December.

I understand that the development on the old Telstra site in Stewart Street is proceeding, with the residents of Stewart Place keeping a watchful eye on it. The problem of the narrow access from Stewart Place has been resolved, and entry will be from Leinster Street. A tree will be lost from the site which we hoped could have been preserved, but it is now hoped that it will be replaced with one of advanced growth.

Water Board site on Oxford Street

This site has had a partial DA approved - for a commercial development facing Oxford Street, a two storey building, the shops are said to have been taken by Country Road Homewares and by Laura Ashley, with no underground parking approved.

The remaining battle axe section of the land will be residential, and will face Renny Lane.

It would appear that the developers have agreed to be part of a working party to discuss the development, and will consist of two residents from Oatley Road and two residents from Renny Street, and I think Councillor Margaret Deftereos, who negotiated the setting up of the working party.

## St John's Church Development

The developers have submitted another set of plans, which were available for viewing at Paddington Library in Paddington Town Hall for two weeks until March 21st. As I mentioned at the AGM, submissions have to be made to Council on this new development, any earlier submissions will not be counted.

I also understand that a DA is before council for the development of the building behind La Mensa restaurant and the Photography Centre. It is to be on two levels, plus garages.

All of these developments will be built onto Renny Lane - a narrow lane, with an attractive stand of trees. If the development makes no provision for any setback, whatever is built will drastically affect the appearance of the lane, as well as severely affecting the light, privacy and general amenity of the people who live in Renny Street.

It certainly seems to be South Paddington's turn for development, with the Market development on the OTC site still to come.

*Anne Fraser*

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## EXCERPTS FROM ADDRESS GIVEN BY

### CLOVER MOORE MP TO THE PADDINGTON

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#### SOCIETY AGM ON 29 FEBRUARY 2000

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The early battles and indeed the reasons for founding the Paddington Society were about promoting an appreciation and a greater understanding of this unique and historic area. It was about encouraging a renaissance of inner city living at a time when central Sydney had been all but abandoned for the suburbs.

It is ironic that the major concerns now are about its desirability and popularity. The task in Paddington and other fast consolidating inner city areas is when and how to put the brakes on booming development. The critical concern is that impacts such as excessive traffic and parking generation, and significant pressures on residential amenity such as noise, loss of sunlight, and privacy, will degrade quality of life and ultimately create an unbearable environment .

The question is: are there limits to continuing urban consolidation beyond which there is a marked decline in the urban environment, and is Paddington's desirability slowly killing the goose that lays the golden egg which balances amenity and vitality?

Urban consolidation is coming under increasing criticism in Sydney and is seen as one of the principle catalysts for over development. This policy is also blamed for poor standards of design and loss of neighbourhood amenity and character...

However urban consolidation in itself is a valid policy aimed at slowing urban sprawl by utilising developed land and existing infrastructure and services, and the recycling of redundant uses closer to the city centre.

The danger is that there's no one in control!

There's no agency with responsibility to put the brakes on over development and ever increasing densities on the basis of damaging urban impacts such as unacceptable traffic and parking generation.

There is no monitoring mechanism to ensure that amenities and open space keep pace with increasing pressures and demands...

Councils usually confine development assessment on the basis of single application by single application. Any efforts by councils to exercise control over design and densities, or to tailor conditions of approval to particular local conditions, are invariably scuttled by the courts whose only yardstick is whether the development is legal or not!

The State Government which is responsible for the urban consolidation policy, plays no part in its implementation other than to check that Councils fulfil their quotas, and to collect development taxes and charges which in the current climate are a substantial boost to revenue.

Similarly the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning seems to have no role in balancing higher residential densities with public facilities, amenities and open space....

Despite the Premier's "road to Damascus" concern about design, the Government and its agencies are not heeding calls to reform the Land and Environment Court and the Planning and Assessment Act, and are not responding to environmental, amenity and increase-in-services issues.

The government is just taking the money.

The current big issue in Paddington, the future of White City site, is a good example of the lack of a watching brief for the future of the area. In the context of increasing population densities in inner Sydney, and in a neighbourhood where large buildings are being recycled from commercial to residential use, it is proposed to change the current open space zoning of White City so the land can be developed.

You would have thought that given the new facilities and headquarters being provided for Tennis NSW at Homebush with the hefty subsidy of \$30M of taxpayer's money, that the State Government might have required the redundant Paddington site to remain as open space for public use in perpetuity!

You would have thought that here in the inner city where urban consolidation is exceeding targets and where opportunities for supplementing open space are limited, that the Government would have required the land in return for our investment in tennis and as a lasting Olympic legacy.

This expectation, you might have thought, would be reinforced by the appropriation of a large proportion of nearby Rushcutters Bay for Olympic Sailing, and the decade of battling to get some public benefit out of the transfer of the Maritime Reserve from the Commonwealth to the State.

But no... letters to Government on this issue remain unanswered and petitions expressing community concern have not been responded to...

If you believe that the governments we elect are duty bound to promote our interests, think again!

The reality is that Governments have no inclination or interest to put any holds on over-development and burgeoning population densities. Development keeps money rolling in to the treasury coffers....and developers keep the money rolling in to political party coffers.

Perusal of the last State Election returns, which have recently become publicly available, reveals the extent to which development and construction companies fund political parties. This time Labor was by far the favourite both state-wide and here in Bligh. Have a look. All our old favourites are there:

- Leighton gave the Labour Party \$85,000, the Liberals \$20,000 and the Nationals \$5,000.
- Macquarie gave Labor \$75,000.
- Lendlease gave Labor \$180,000 & Liberal \$40,000.
- Meriton gave \$75,000 to Labor and \$30,000 to Liberal. They then found another \$4,000 for the Bligh Labor candidate.
- Manboom gave \$2,500 to the Liberal Party, but splurged another \$5,000 on the Labor candidate for Bligh.
- Multiplex gave \$145,000 to Labor and \$30,000 to Liberal.

When it comes to a choice between commercial activity and residential amenity, Governments of both political camps go for the money every time. Jobs and revenue will always win hands down over amenity and environment.

But Governments are sensitive to public opinion and ultimately to the voters...

So it's really up to us. We must know what is going on in our area and respond to decisions and proposals which have the potential to degrade our environment and undermine our quality of life. It's up to us to stand up for and promote our best interests and those of our communities.

As an agency for community action the Paddington Society is just as relevant now as it was when it took on the then Department of Main Roads' plans to destroy much of this area almost four decades ago and the broad tasks are just as big.

There has to be continuing attention to individual sites and heritage issues, and a lot of time and effort spent on the bigger urban renewal battles such as the RHW development, which thanks to the Society, resulted in a new park for Paddington, and now the White City rezoning application campaign.

But we also should be lobbying as hard as we can to get the ground rules changed which favour development at all costs, and leave residents and communities continuously vulnerable to a degraded quality of life.

- We have to get Governments to properly monitor the urban consolidation process. With financial benefits to Government we should expect environmental responsibility.
- We have to insist on statutory minimum standards as yardsticks to measure the adequacy or otherwise of residential amenity.

This would include air quality, sunlight and light penetration, ambient noise levels and adequacy and access to open space.

- We should be able to get environmental impact information on a precinct and neighbourhood basis so that the combined and progressive affects, of say traffic generation and parking, can be obtained.
- We have to get ourselves included in the currently closed shop dialogues about what is proposed for our neighbourhood and suburb. The excuse of "commercial in confidence" is being increasingly used to keep development details secret. Also it has been suggested to me that Councils should be required to have a planning ombudsman to inform and liaise with the community about planning and development proposals and to interpret and assess often complex plans.

And importantly...

- We have to establish community control and sometimes veto over development approvals, by reforming the operation and the charter of the Land and Environment Court and reinforcing public rights and environmental protection provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act

It's a tough ask, but the time is right. There is a lot of unrest throughout Sydney about the uncontrolled effects of urban consolidation and the pro development effect of the Land and Environment Court. I am usually tied down to Bligh where everything is happening, but I have spoken at a rally in Sutherland and I have been asked for a message to be read out at a Lane Cove rally next weekend.

If enough people respond to this challenge, the prize is greater residential security and confidence and indeed more time for living because we don't have to battle for our quality of life, site by site, issue by issue!

I thank the Paddington Society for its continuing efforts to protect and promote Paddington and its communities, and I ask that you the members provide as much active support as you can at this critical time for the area.

*Claver Moore MP*