

THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY • YOUR RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

# NEWS BULLETIN

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November 2008  
email: [heritage@paddingtonsociety.org.au](mailto:heritage@paddingtonsociety.org.au)

The Paddington Society  
requests the pleasure of your company at the

## Christmas Party

on Sunday, 7 December 2008

in the front garden of Juniper Hall - drinks, music & fine food

from 5.00pm to 7.00pm

Donation \$12.50; Concession \$7.50; Non-member \$15

RSVP 3 December 2008

Francis 9360 6159 or Leone 0409 361 378

**The Annual General Meeting** was held on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> November in the upstairs foyer of the Paddington Town Hall. The 2006/07 AGM was held in February 2008, but it was decided to bring the date forward for 2007/08 to better relate to the end of the Society's financial year 31<sup>st</sup> August. Bill Morrison welcomed our guest speaker Elsa Atkin former Executive Director of the National Trust of Australia (NSW). After this interesting and entertaining talk, members crossed over to the Chauvel where they gathered for drinks and supper. The convivial environment encouraged members to linger and talk.

### **AGM President's Report** – *Robyn Attuell*

"The big issues we have dealt with this year are White City, the Paddington Development Control Plan, our unique pedestrian passageways and heritage conservation and sustainable development.

"**White City** - Since our well attended public meeting on White City in June, we still don't know what the future holds for the site. We objected to the size and scale of the development – currently the gross floor area is 3,000sq m, proposed is 17,000sq m. The development application doesn't comply on a number of counts with Woollahra Council's site specific development control plan.

"The update: Council required an Independent Traffic Report on the impact of extra vehicles on the surrounding residential streets; now data is needed for this vehicular movement during school term, not just the holiday period – we believe there would be a marked increase seeing White City is adjacent to Sydney Grammar Prep School. A further complication is that Council doesn't have the landowners' consent for the development, since the land is still held in joint ownership by Sydney Grammar School, Poplar Holdings and Maccabi. It is unlikely that we will see any decision on the project this year.

"**On Oxford Street** there is much activity on two major sites in the City of Sydney's council area. Nearing completion is the *Paddington Reservoir Gardens incorporating Walter Read and John Thompson Reserves*; the naming was recommended by the Society and adopted through a Lord Mayoral minute. The restoration of this historic reservoir with its magnificent arches will bring to life its beauty, and its importance in early Sydney's water supply. The John Thompson (founding member of the Society) fountain will be returned resplendent in working order.

“Further up Oxford Street on the St John’s Church site, we welcome the restoration of significant heritage buildings dating back to the 1820s, and their adaptive re-use for retail and restaurant, after lying dormant for many years. However, latterly we do have concerns over potential increased intensification of use, as there has been a recent DA and two liquor licence applications conflicting with what was approved in the Land & Environment Court. Recently we have also been active in the City’s Revitalisation project for Oxford Street from Hyde Park to Centennial Park; this included the getting together of businesses and residents in the naming of Three Saints Square – the area bounded by South Dowling and Barcom Streets.

“**Development Applications** - The Society played an active role in revising the Woollahra Council’s Paddington Development Control Plan which came into operation in May this year. The main changes are on excavation, solar panels and the gutting of buildings; the implications on amenity and heritage with lofts over garages is still being considered. The Society took a photographic record of all laneways and lofts and we are working with Council’s heritage officer and staff on this matter.

“We continue to monitor and comment on all development applications for Paddington on a weekly basis, an onerous task. In the last 12 months approximately 150 objection letters have been submitted because proposals don’t comply with Council’s Paddington DCP. John Mant and Adrian Boss have represented the Society’s position on DAs which have gone to the Land & Environment Court.

“**Private Building Certifiers**, not Council, now control most building approvals and supervise construction – often with little knowledge or regard to heritage detail thus causing much grief. It is only after the damage is done that Council’s compliance officers are called in; it is all too late, a retrospective DA is often submitted to have illegal works officially approved, rarely is the work undone. We strongly believe that Council must retain control in heritage conservation areas.

“**Public Walkways** - We are currently facing two contentious issues. First, the application to close the public walkway linking Glenmore Road with Cooper Street which has been used by many residents to access shops and buses at Five Ways for over 100 years. This narrow passage between two terraces has been found to be on private title and the owner now wishes to exert his right to exclude public use. This is the thin end of the wedge eroding Paddington’s unique, intricate, pedestrian network of passageways.

“The update: Woollahra Council is currently seeking legal advice. We will need your support and attendance when this goes before Council and we go public on the matter. We are currently mapping and photographing all pedestrian walkway linkages and will present to Council staff within the next two weeks, a huge undertaking... ownership of them can then be established. It may be necessary for councils to acquire some of these small parcels of land to secure them for future public use. As Bill Morrison has said - this is possibly the biggest threat to Paddington’s heritage fabric since the formation of the Society in the early 60s.

“The other contentious issue is **heritage conservation and sustainable development**, namely the installation of photo voltaic solar panels on rear roofs. The roofscape of Paddington is integral to its overall National Heritage significance and the introduction of uncharacteristic solar panels will have a detrimental impact. The Paddington DCP says ‘no’ if visible from the public domain – streets, lanes or Trumper Park, but some Councillors are wanting to review this position. We all want sustainable development, energy efficiency and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions - technology is getting smarter and we believe there are other ways of achieving this. We have requested Council (that’s the previous Council) to prepare a policy on Sustainable Development Guidelines for Victorian Heritage Conservation Areas consulting with the Local Government Association and neighbouring Councils.

“**Traffic** - We convene with representatives from the RTA, Sydney Buses, local police and council’s traffic engineers on the Paddington Traffic Working Party and while we have seen the implementation of a 40km limit, speed humps will be introduced in some streets where it’s being disregarded. This is still under discussion with Sydney Buses who are not in favour of speed humps because of the

damage caused to their vehicles and the added difficulty of staying on schedule. We have seen new pedestrian crossings during the year - the next one will be on Glenmore Road crossing Campbell Street.

“Much research and effort has gone into the establishment of **Paddington’s Community Garden** on Council land north of the tennis courts at Trumper Park. The Society has given financial support and we have members on the steering committee and plots will soon be up for hire.

“At our second well attended **public meeting** in September everyone had the opportunity to meet the **new candidates** who would represent us on Woollahra Council.

“When the trial period was up for review in January, we reiterated our position that dogs should not be allowed off-leash in the **Royal Hospital for Women Park**. This position is based the results of extensive community consultation before the construction of the park.

“**Our website** has been upgraded so that we can more easily update information to keep you informed of the latest news, views and events.

“*The Paddington Pictures* book is still selling through local bookshops and we have taken a stall at the Paddington markets leading up to Christmas; we would appreciate some help on manning the stall. You can also purchase these beautiful books through our website [www.paddingtonsociety.org.au](http://www.paddingtonsociety.org.au).

“During the year, Leone Morrison enthusiastically organised a variety of **social events** with the aim to embrace a broader membership and community. There have been *Know your Local Pub* nights, guided *Heritage Walks* - and there will be more to come with guided *Passageway Walks*; *Gallery Exhibitions*, *Film Evenings* next door at the Chauvel and *Restoration Workshops*. We celebrated History Week, but this year *Letters from the New Chums* at Juniper Hall was washed out and our *Big Picnic* was also thwarted by rain and turned into a small picnic. Our very successful Annual Dinner at Victoria Barracks with local guest speaker, actor and director Robyn Nevin was a great success. Our last gathering for the year is our Christmas Party on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December in the Juniper Hall garden .

“And finally I wish to thank the entire committee for putting in a big effort during the past year - Leone I’ve mentioned who also puts together the Bulletins, to Bill, John and Adrian who help so much with submissions, to Virginia Richardson who checks all the Woollahra DAs, to Francis who looks after the numbers and more, Michael who tends the garden at Juniper Hall, Josephine Revai who has become our resident caterer, Linda on the southside and Krystyna – you all do your bit to make it a productive and cohesive group – thank you.”

### **Treasurer’s Report For The Financial Year 2007-2008 – Francis Walsh**

“The Society produced a loss of \$329.36 (\$799.18 last year) after contributing \$500 to the starting fund of the Community Garden in Trumper Park. Our member subscriptions were up \$660 and will be much higher this coming year after our recent membership update. Interest income on the term deposit (now standing at \$21,800) has increased by \$600 due to higher interest rates and the larger amount on deposit. Printing and postage costs were higher than last year as we distributed hard copies of the Bulletin to encourage readership, subscription renewals and new members. We expect to reduce these costs by using email again this coming year. The Society invested in a new website programme to enable us to make our own updates and save in the future on consultant fees. There have been 54 sales of *The Paddington Pictures* book in the period which yielded a similar profit to last year as there were fewer promotional costs and last year the stock was written down to half of cost. There are 243 books still to sell.”

### **Meet Elsa Atkin guest speaker at the AGM – a brief account from the meeting**

Elsa is a highly respected company director and management consultant who will be known to many for her various roles as change agent, public advocate, senior executive and board director. Elsa recently retired after 12 years as Executive

Director of the National Trust NSW Division. During this time she directed the Trust with a strong will and informed leadership, managing the many issues of heritage conservation, the many properties which come under the wing of the Trust, which includes Juniper Hall, and developing the Trust's highly respected advocacy reputation.

The Paddington Society owes a debt to the National Trust (and to Elsa) for its watch over Paddington – to this day reference is made to the survey carried out by the National Trust in 1982 which involved an assessment of each one of the houses in Paddington. (*introduction in part from Bill Morrison*)

Elsa was born in Baghdad and educated by the nuns. It was a time of continued protests with banners and marches. She expressed considerable admiration for the nuns and related how they formed a protective wall in their habits when the young men on protest marches tried to come into the school to take the girls on the marches. Her arrival in Sydney was a gentle and light hearted contrast as she saw the news placards announcing Elizabeth Taylor's sixth husband rather than an aggressive news lines.

Her father died suddenly and it was near the time for her to go to London to further her education. Her brother who was lecturing in Sydney University encouraged her mother to bring Elsa and her sister to Sydney University instead.

She joined the Australian Broadcasting Corporation to introduce Equal Opportunity measures. It had become clear that the national broadcaster needed to find its Australian voice. Surveys revealed that Radio Australia was being identified by its listening public as the BBC. Her attempts to have management employ women as news readers was met with the cultural resistance of the time.

She spoke of her time at the National Trust, noting the complexity of the organization and the difficulty of funding without government assistance. She explained its structure through committees of voluntary experts, volunteers supporting properties and the functioning of the Trust, the diversity of the properties and their widespread locations.

The Trust has to raise \$7 million dollars every year. The founder did not believe a Government would look after the properties and set it up to be independent. In contrast, the Historic Houses Trust is supported by the NSW Government and does not do any advocacy. She pointed out that there is no legislation to protect heritage, and the Trust wins its successes through influence. *Leone Morrison*

### **Woollahra Conservation Award 2008**

Bill Morrison participated as a representative of The Paddington Society on the judging panel of the 2008 Woollahra Conservation Award last Saturday. Five nominations were received by Council across three categories, all being of a high standard. Awards will be announced by the Mayor at a function at Council on 1 December 2008 accompanied by an exhibition of entries received.

### **Awareness of Sustainable Development – Adrian Boss**

Sustainable development covers minimising use of resources, implementing energy conservation practices and Greenhouse gas emission reduction. The key words are: reduce, reuse, recycle and repair. This sits well with heritage conservation objectives. Australian communities consume very high levels of resources, including through residential development and this cannot be maintained over time without significant environmental degradation. It is therefore important to raise awareness of what constitutes sustainable development – appropriate building forms and design – that minimise resource use.

In the case of Paddington, the dominant terrace form, if substantially maintained as built, and repaired and improved, performs extremely well under BASIX, particularly if any under floor and roof areas are insulated. The terrace is one of the best sustainable building forms. This is because of a terrace's relatively small windows and door openings and the masonry walls that inhibit heat gain and loss.

Walls store energy that keeps warmth in rooms in winter and, conversely, help cool rooms in summer. Air-conditioning, or heating and cooling requirements, are minimised. However, some of these intrinsic energy conservation and liveability qualities are unwittingly lost during re-development, which also involves a lot of resources being used in demolition and reconstruction. This is particularly so when the terrace is gutted and new additions entail open living areas with large window-walls and openings. The resources and equipment needed to maintain a liveable environment are considerable.

People are not fully aware of the consequences when applying modern housing ideas to Paddington and the resources used with such designs, and often buy and develop without a full appreciation of an existing dwelling's attributes and the heritage context of the place.

Information accessible to the public is therefore needed on the above to promote good contextual and sustainable development and design practices that will complement the Heritage Conservation DCPs. This may be combined with the good information already available on energy conservation, and expected soon on Greenhouse gas emission reduction. This need is not limited to the Woollahra Municipality's heritage conservation areas. The Councils of the City of Sydney, Waverley, Marrickville, Leichhardt, North Sydney and Mosman are all facing similar pressures and may find that preparation of a guide to help identify sustainable development design and practice in the Victorian housing context is useful.

## **(11) A Periodic Peek at Paddington's Past – Ron Johnson**

### **Juniper Hall**

Robert Cooper, an emancipist entrepreneur, was a former London publican who was convicted of smuggling French wine and silk and transported to NSW in 1821. His first wife died in England, his second in childbirth in Australia and he built Juniper Hall for his third wife, Sarah May from Windsor in 1822-23. He needed a mansion since he had 14 children by Sarah May to add to his 14 children by his previous two wives. "Big" Robert Cooper was a rotund man, of ample girth and strong intent. His business included gin distilling, blanket making, gunpowder, brewing, and real estate. Juniper Hall had 15 rooms, stables and servants' quarters. The house was comfortable but undistinguished. Cooper was no architect. Unfortunately the front faced south and caught the winds from Botany Bay and not the northern sunshine. No family, no institution throughout its history has stayed very long living in the building.

The Coopers left for a period in Europe in 1831, and Judge Kinchella rented the house and changed its name to Ormond Hall. The judge, mindful of his reputation, did not like the name Juniper, since the juniper berry was used in making gin. Cooper owned a distillery at Blackwattle Bay. When the Coopers returned they lived there again until the family hit hard times in the 1840s depression. The children's extravagances did not help. The family moved into Ormond Lodge. It still exists behind the Imperial Hotel and was later known as Roslyn Cottage. They also had Ormond Cottage built. Both were in Underwood Street opposite Ormond Hall.

While the family lived next door, Ormond Hall was rented in 1852 to the Society for the Relief of Destitute Children to establish an asylum for orphaned children before it moved to the purpose built Randwick Asylum for Destitute Children. Robert died in 1857, aged 81. Sarah moved back into Ormond Hall and made changes to the windows, installed new fireplaces and joined two rooms, possibly with a view to selling the house.

Sarah died in 1863 and for quite a while the house was in the hands of the family executors. It was leased out once more. In 1862 a Mrs Blaxland opened a school for girls offering "a thorough and accomplished" education, on moderate terms! The curriculum was to be: English, Latin, Arithmetic, Drawing, French, German and the pianoforte. There were morning classes and weekly boarders. This did not last for long. In 1868, the Benevolent Society of NSW was using the hall as a school for deaf

and dumb children, adding education for blind children in 1869. The institution moved to larger premises in 1872. In 1877, Morris Asher bought the place presumably from the executors of the Cooper's estate. The original estate had narrowed from over 3 acres to just over 1 acre. Asher sold it almost immediately to the Begg family who constructed Begg Street, now Ormond Street, to give access to their properties from South Head Road. The Beggs were land developers and soon sold the house to a Mr Moore, coach-builder. While ownership of the estate thus changed, from 1873-1879 the house itself was used again as a girl's school. However, in 1884 the Government bought Ormond Hall as the main home for the new Children's Relief Board and added the eastern wing in 1891. This provided extra accommodation for "delinquent" children and wards of state and divided the house into two. Under the Neglected Children and Juvenile Offenders Act 1905, Ormond Hall was selected as the building for the state's first Children's Court. "A small front room on the ground floor was used, hardly big enough for the business carried on there". Access was limited to the special magistrate, a policeman and parents. Later a Probation Officer was placed there. In 1921 the court was discontinued and Joe Gardiner purchased Ormond Hall (the name changed back to Juniper after 1945)

Gardiner turned the house into 11 flats and built six shops in the front facing Oxford Street. The two Norfolk Island pine trees were cut down. It is said that these had guided sailing ships entering Sydney Harbour as the masters navigated their ships between the two on the horizon. When Juniper Hall was sold to a finance company in 1981 a long and complicated struggle ensued before finally the National Trust bought the building with government sponsorship, and some help from the Paddington Society and Woollahra Council. The house was restored. Unfortunately the National Trust could not sustain the expense of maintenance nor find a financial use for the property. Juniper Hall is now leased privately and is seldom open to the public. But it is still there behind its tall fence and a wonderful reminder of our early history, the oldest standing Georgian villa in Australia.

*Postscript: At the Save Juniper Hall protest rally in 1984 (a Saturday morning march along Oxford Street from Juniper Hall to Jersey Road and back), it was announced that the State Government would grant \$750,000 to the National Trust for the restoration of Australia's oldest house. Woollahra Council contributed \$200,000, a founding member of the Paddington Society, Ms Lesley Bridle bequeathed \$500,000 from the sale of her house, the Society \$5,000 and the National Trust's determined effort raised \$1million in sponsorships and \$500,000 from its own resources.*

#### **PADDINGTON SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2008/2009**

<b>President:</b>	<b>Robyn Attuell</b>	9361 3877
<b>Vice Presidents:</b>	Bill Morrison	9331 1405
	Krystyna Luczak	9360 4849
<b>Secretary:</b>	Leone Morrison	9361 0864
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Francis Walsh	9363 9572
<b>Members:</b>	Adrian Boss 9363 9131	Bill Fraser 9331 3729
	Linda Gosling 9332 2111	Will Mrongovius 9331 5954
	Keri Huxley 0422 235 255	John Richardson 9360 2548
	Graham Stewart 9036 9018	Michael Wilson 9331 3714

Email: [heritage@paddington society.org.au](mailto:heritage@paddington society.org.au)    <http://www.paddington society.org.au>

#### **Three of Paddington's Designer Gardens Open**

**Saturday 29 & Sunday 30 November from 10am to 3.30pm**

**By pre-paid ticket only \$20.00 – includes entry to three gardens**

Book online via a secure website [www.opengarden.org.au](http://www.opengarden.org.au) or ring (02) 9983 1836 during office hours.

*Australia's Open Garden Scheme – a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to promoting the knowledge and pleasure of gardens and gardening*

