

THE PADDINGTON PAPER

PEOPLE PASSIONATE FOR PADDINGTON

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Over the Palisade

☞ Word is that the L'Etoile Restaurant in Five Ways will be reopening very soon as a European restaurant - with new owners, chef and culinary team.

☞ The Four in Hand Restaurant is currently undergoing significant renovations to their dining room which will give chef Colin Fassnidge an even greater opportunity to strut his culinary expertise.

☞ Another top-notch chef Guillaume Brahimi will open his new restaurant at what was the iconic Darcy's Restaurant on the corner of Hargrave and Elizabeth Streets.

☞ Justin Hemmes has recently taken possession of the Paddington Arms in Oxford Street opposite the Paddington Markets. Hemmes has indicated a major redevelopment of the site but as yet, there has been no decision on the food focus for this venue. Word has it that the family owns two properties on the Oxford Street strip, and intends opening both as restaurants.

☞ Sir Peter Cosgrove, Australia's 26th Governor-General spent his childhood in Paddington.

☞ Vicki Joyner received an award Council's citizenship reception for her tireless work on Paddington's community garden.

☞ The pedestrian/cyclist bridge over Anzac Parade planned, prepared, approved and commissioned we understand, without tender process by the RMS (beneficiary the SCG Trust) has many opponents across all levels. Alex Greenwich MP, BIKESydney, BIKEast, City of Sydney, Centennial Park Community Consultative Committee, The Paddington Society and several local resident associations all agree it's poor design in the wrong place.



RMS photomontage of proposed bridge over Anzac Parade.

☞ Woollahra Council's upgrade of Elizabeth and Underwood Streets is a great improvement.

Update - NSW Planning Bill

A review of the proposed NSW Planning Legislation by The Paddington Society revealed, among other matters, that:

- Protection of Heritage Conservation Areas, like Paddington would be threatened as it was unclear whether the status of existing Heritage Development Control Plans would be retained.
- The role of the Heritage Council to protect NSW's Heritage would have been greatly diminished.
- A significant curtailing of the opportunity for the community to challenge details of developments at the DA stage which threatened the loss and destruction of elements of architectural heritage items and inappropriate alterations to buildings within the Paddington Conservation Area.

In our submission to the Planning Reform White Paper and Exposure Bill in June 2013 we also stated the need to prohibit the use of Private Certifiers in Conservation Areas or, at least require those to be registered as having the necessary heritage expertise and skills.

The Planning Bill 2013 prepared in response to submissions was a disappointment. The Minister did announce that the role of the Heritage Council would be retained, did not pursue the Code Assessable category of development and no changes were introduced to the role of Private Certifiers in Conservation Areas.

The Bill was introduced to the NSW Parliament in October 2013. In November, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, announced that he would withdraw the Planning Bills until February 2014 as a result of heavy amendments made to these Bills in the Upper House by the Labor, Greens and Shooters and Fishers parties.

The Government has been considering its options and undertaking further negotiations with 'stakeholders'. The new Minister is yet to indicate what she intends to do with the Planning Bills. However, media reports suggest that one option is to use the existing planning legislation to achieve change. This has been given credence by recently gazetted changes to State Environmental Planning Policy-Exempt and Complying Development, which was amended to expand the categories that could be certified as complying development.

The Paddington Society has requested to make direct representation to the Minister or to the Planning New South Wales to further advocate its position.

In this edition...

- Paddington Society's 50th Anniversary Celebrations
- NSW Planning Bill update
- Children's Photo Comp
- Saving Our Public Laneways
- Paddington Bowling Club

The Paddington Society is 50 years old this year!

Monday 11 August 2014

Celebrate at our grand Anniversary Feast at Paddington Town Hall.

Living legend, actor **Jack Thompson**, son of founding members of the Society John and Pat Thompson is guest speaker. Come and party with neighbours and friends in the beautifully renovated Town Hall, great food and wine too, all welcome! Let's mark 50 years well.

It's not every day that community organisations survive fifty years in a rapidly changing world of vested interests. The Paddington Society, formed in 1964, has been representing community interests, protecting heritage, fighting over-development and for people's amenity in this unique village of international renown... and is one of the oldest community advocate organisations in Australia.



Paddington Town Hall - built 1891 and refurbished 2012 by City of Sydney.



Laneway now completely gated

Paddington Bowling Club redevelopment update

For more than a decade local residents, Councillors, Independent State Members and friends of Quarry Street, have been trying to get to the bottom of what is really happening at the Paddington Bowling Club. There's much more to the story than a DA for a child care centre.

Recently an excellent expose by respected journalist and activist Wendy Bacon, researched and summarised this complex tale revealing how private developers can 'acquire' Crown land masquerading as concerned citizens - first published by the New Matilda, a nonprofit, independent media.

Here's the summary intro:

'At one level, this is a community story about a development application for a child care centre on Crown land in the inner city suburb of Paddington. On another, it's a story about how state authorities and corporate regulators failed residents and local Councillors who struggled to hold politicians, developers, and public servants accountable for dealings with publically owned open space.

It's a tangled web of closed-door negotiations and business deals that disadvantaged a community club, leaving older members feeling overrun, some residents intimidated and the local council sidelined...'

Read the full catastrophe online:

- <http://www.wendybacon.com/2014/how-developers-got-hold-of-prime-sydney-land/>
- <http://www.wendybacon.com/2014/padd-bowls-inquiry-first-media-report/>
- <http://www.wendybacon.com/2014/how-did-public-land-end-up-in-hands-of-developer-minister-stoner-reviews-deal/> and there's more.....

Paddington is a walking suburb and the intricate network of laneways is part of a rich urban fabric. This historic feature of Paddington developed over 180 years from the original land grants in the Colony, to the gentry villas, to subdivisions of the late 19th century - a process which more by accident than by intent, has resulted in a complex environment that can never be reproduced today - no matter how hard we might try - no matter how skillfully we might plan.

As local resident and global leader in town planning Greg Young said recently "Paddington, the laneways, the twists, that's its history - it's our Venice".

Yet in the last month a section of our laneway network connecting two streets has been gated to stop public access for exclusive private use. The laneway in question may be on the title of a neighbour, but it has been a public walkway since the subdivision of last century.

It was a common practice in earlier times for public laneways to be placed on neighbouring property titles with the proviso of a right-of-way for access and that there be no building work on the land to obstruct this. It would never have been the intention of this old legal practice to see these laneways closed from general public use.

Modern legal practice would not manage laneways in this manner. These laneways, archaic as the title of ownership arrangements may be, are part of the character of Paddington. This is why *Woollahra Council's Heritage Conservation Area DCP* for Paddington calls for laneway

preservation - 'The pedestrian network of laneways..... have great historic significance and should be retained.'

In decades past, some sections of this pedestrian network have been quietly eroded - here and there the rear courtyard fence moved a metre or two into a dunny lane and taken into private property, no one cared too much, Paddington as a place wasn't valued then as it is now. Now we do care. This is encroachment by stealth.

The issue is about a public right-of-way rather than a private monopoly.

While the notion of public interest may have diminished today - no one would dream of trusting responsibility for shared laneways to an individual's title - for that reason we still have Local Government to play a role in advocating public interest for the local community.

The Paddington Society is seeking further legal advice on public access closures. Council has previously acted in the public interest to keep these laneways open as was the original intention. It is Council's duty to ensure that such public amenities are preserved from private monopoly - the right of public access for all residents must be protected. Otherwise our laneway network could become an extinct species in our world class heritage suburb

The current owners of Paddington are merely custodians of this wonderful heritage - and it is our responsibility, each and every one of us, to protect this precious commodity and ensure that it is passed on to future generations in the most intact state possible.

Did You Know?

Celebrating 50 years

This year The Paddington Society celebrates its 50th anniversary.

From the outset, the aims of the Paddington Society have been almost entirely concerned with preserving the environmental and social amenity of the Paddington Area for its residents, with a strong emphasis on conservation.

It has often been stated that The Paddington Society, founded in 1964, was the first resident action group to have been formed in Australia. Its founding members were John Thompson as President, Pat Thompson, Don and Marea Gazzard, Viva Murphy and Sheila Rowan.

In its formative years, the Society organised an effective and successful fight against the proposed Neild Avenue/Liverpool Street expressway. It obtained special protective zoning for North Paddington. This was later extended to south of Oxford Street as more and more terrace houses were threatened by development. It defended Centennial Park against the proposal to build a sports

stadium in the park.

As early as 1965 the Paddington Society first came up with the idea of Paddington as a unique area, both architecturally and historically, and emphasised the need for it to be preserved and that Paddington be zoned as a Special Area of Outstanding Architectural and Historical Interest. However, in 1967 when the City Planning Scheme was exhibited, zoning was unchanged allowing high-rise low-cost building, and alarmingly there were several road widening proposals including Jersey Road, an act which would have destroyed many terrace houses, as well as having a divisive effect on the whole suburb.

The *Bunning Report* - 1968, prepared by an independent commissioner was a positive result for the Society. Bunning recognised the merit of such proposals and recommended:

'That the Paddington Area, including West Woollahra, bounded by Ocean Street the northern boundary of Moore Park Road, Oatley Road, Oxford Street to the eastern side of the new Barcom-Boundary road alignment and New South Head Road, should be declared a precinct of architectural merit.'

Darcy's – a fond farewell

Farewell to Darcy's restaurant and the legendary Attilio Marinangeli who, along with Aldo Zuzza, transformed d'Arcy Glover's original 1968 Swiss Restaurant on the corner of Hargrave and Elizabeth Streets, into its inspired, understated, Italian form in 1975.

Attilio set the standard for the finest food developed from the freshest ingredients and complemented it with the fabulous cellar and his extraordinary depth of wine knowledge. Unlike many of today's Sydney restaurants, in true Italian fashion, Attilio welcomed you at any hour and was there till you were ready to depart, no matter what the time. A wonderful inspiring era. We wish Attilio and Aldo well and thank them for forty years of memorable dining experiences.



Attilio Marinangeli with John Richardson 2013.

The Society started a vigorous campaign for a public enquiry into these proposals and formed the Paddington Society Special Area Committee. This dedicated team of experts, with Don Gazzard at the helm, produced a 57 page report in 1970, *Paddington - A Plan for Preservation*, which was a milestone for planning for inner-city living. In September 1970 the Minister for Local Government announced that Jersey Road would not be widened.

Today, the Paddington Society, comprised of Paddington resident volunteers, continues to be a non-political and non-sectarian vibrant and active resident action group. It continues to be involved in an ever-increasing number of activities on behalf of the Paddington area community.

Check the Society's website to find out more about the events planned throughout the year to celebrate our 50th Anniversary.

Find your house's origin online - the City of Sydney website now has a searchable set of Sands Directory - no need to go through microfiche in the State Library <http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/learn/history/search-our-collections/sands-directory>

Revitalised Oxford Street Plan gets a hearing by RMS

Last October we were fortunate to present our proposed plan for Oxford Street's transformation into a people and vehicle friendly street (prepared jointly with BIKEast) to members of the new Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) including Paul McNeal, Navan Prasad, and Stephen Brown. Paddington Society presenters included Will Mrongovius, Geoff Ludowyke, Robyn Attuell, Bill Morrison, and Adrian Boss representing BIKEast.

A specially prepared presentation took the RMS through the objectives, the vital issues, our concept, and internationally proven precedents. Our concept is based upon reducing the speed limit to 40 kph, reducing the number of traffic lanes in each direction, minimising traffic lane markings, and introducing a wide pedestrian friendly median. It's called 'The Naked Street' in similar, internationally successful, urban projects. Traffic count studies subsequently released by Woollahra Council suggest that fewer traffic lanes are feasible without having a detrimental effect on vehicle flow. The result of fewer unmarked lanes lowers the speed of traffic and a wider median allows pedestrians to cross safely, supporting increased business levels on both sides of the village. Truly a 'high street' that can be enjoyed.

The presentation was enthusiastically received by the RMS. They suggested the plan needed modelling to be fully assessed. It was also suggested we should present this plan to the City Council and to the CEO of RMS which are being followed up.

We have pursued this concept in order to open up a dialogue with RMS, City of Sydney and Woollahra Council. Whilst Woollahra Council is undertaking a very valuable planning exercise, using outside consultants, which is suggesting a different approach, we all have common objectives: to reduce traffic speeds and to regenerate Oxford Street as a vital people place.

The introduction of new restaurant and pub life to the strip, as mentioned elsewhere, will go a long way to bringing back life and activity. Perhaps it's also up to landlords to seek innovative ways to let their shops in order to reinvent the place.



Announcing the Paddington Children's Photo Comp!

Another Paddo generations' view... Capturing what Paddington means to our children is a way of looking at heritage values through fresh eyes. Paddington primary school children can enter one photo in each of the following categories in the competition:

- My Favourite Street
- My Favourite Shopkeeper
- My Favourite Building

Age divisions:

- Under 12 • Under 8

Entries open: **Friday 20th June**

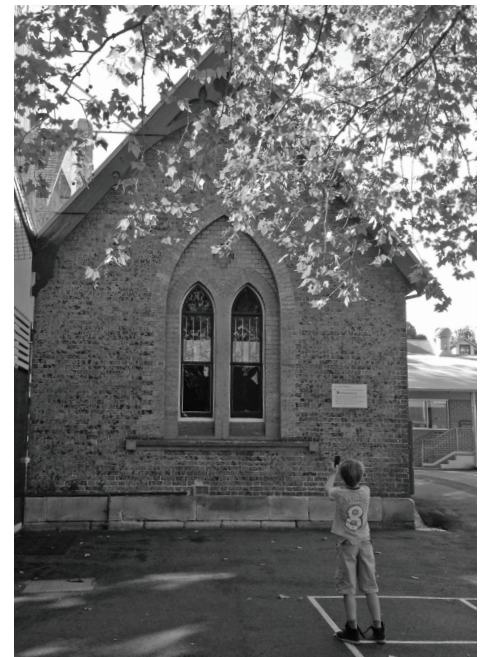
Entries close: **Thursday 31st July**

Submissions: email photo(s) to celebratepaddington@daybukharchitects.com.au with your name, age, school, photo category and brief description.

There will be prizes for each category and age group. Winners will be announced at the Paddington Society's 50th anniversary celebratory dinner in the Town Hall on Monday August 11th. Prizes will be awarded at each winner's school assembly. All photos will be printed for an exhibition – the venue to be confirmed.

All submissions can be viewed online.

For more information go to www.paddingtonslciety.org.au



A favourite Paddington spot

Being a dog lover I tend to connect to places that are doggie friendly, ie cafes and bookshops etc. But the most regular visit is each evening when it's time for the dogs at the RHW park. This friendly oasis in the midst of terraces and high rise is a meeting place for people and dogs. Children kick their balls and small babies crawl on the grass. It's a treasure!

Glenise Head

Renovation Tips

It's good to see there are still some traditional trades and artisans around.

You may recall that a little while back I had a ceiling collapse in the living room at the front of our house. I thought it worth recalling this incident as it was a good demonstration of what is possible in conservation terms.

The collapse resulted from water penetration that happened eons ago before we purchased the property and I had been watching it carefully over the years. A segmental section over the windows had dropped a little resulting in a section of ornate cornice work cracking away.

At 3am one morning I sat bolt upright in bed to the sound of an almighty crash in the room below. As the dense cloud of white dust settled I could see the aftermath, debris across the front parlours, broken lamps, table and chairs a mess, and looking up to the ceiling the broad mass of exposed lath without the plaster.

I found a heritage plasterer through talking with some local heritage architects, being aware that you have to get the right people to tackle these jobs. Even so I was rather cautious and when they inspected to quote they suggested the best way was to replace the whole ceiling my caution increased. So we focused back on the repair task. They would clean up the lost ceiling, remove any loose pieces, screw-fix a sheet of fibrous cement sheeting, apply bondcrete to seal the edges, and, here comes the crafty part, remove a portion of the cornice in order to create a new mould from which to cast a new length.

I was nervous until several weeks later the guys arrived to do stage one, there were three of them, probably in their thirties, but looking aged through a layer of plaster dust, true craftsmen who knew their trade and conscientiously applied their skills to achieve the best results. After preparing all the base work a fourth lightly dusted, rather gnome like member of the team arrived. He was here to do the finishing trade, the setting of the ceiling to a true and level surface. So here was the ultimate artisan.

They returned with the cornice and again after the prep work, the artisan arrived to put on the finishing touches and sign off. It was a great result, a lesson in how to go about retaining the heritage interior of our houses. It reinforced my belief that you should never give in to a short term fix or a tradie who wants to take a short cut. The right people are around to do the job, you've just got to sniff them out. *Ron the Renovator*

Another Viewpoint

St John's Update

For almost 10 years we have all been bemused by the excavated, but neglected site of St Johns, while owners changed and plans were altered.

Well-reputed Sydney builders have finally started 'filling in the hole' at this heritage precinct on Oxford Street. Screens have gone up (you can still take a peek from Renny Lane), and those of us in Regent Street are now watching the daily trucks delivering machinery, steel reinforcing and concrete. Footings at the base of the excavation have been poured.

The 1845 Old Manse and 1859 stone Church have been meticulously restored, with the south facade still to be done. The result will be eight new residences including the New Manse, with retail and a cafe/restaurant onto Oxford Street.

COFA Update

Late last year maintenance and restoration works commenced on the Heritage listed Buildings A and C – the old public school buildings on the site. The repair to the external facades of these noted buildings has progressed well and should be completed soon.

The UNSW has commenced work on electronically controlling the gates on the residential Selwyn Street frontage. We also understand that a DA will be lodged soon to enclose the southern stairwell which is currently an echo chamber 24/7.

Vale June Poland 1935-2013

The Society was saddened at the loss last year of June Poland, founding member of the Woollahra History and Heritage Society. June was well known for her extraordinary contribution to the conservation movement which included, amongst her many achievements, assisting with the survey of Paddington terrace house facades during the 1970s to provide a baseline for restoration. June was perhaps best known for her tireless campaign to save Strickland House in Vacluse from disposal by government for private development.

There was seldom a year when June, husband Peter, and the Paddington Society were not united in a common conservation cause including major developments in Paddington such as the redevelopment of the Royal Hospital for Women, and the reinvention of the Paddington Reservoir. June will be sadly missed.

Why Paddington feels so good

The quality of Paddington that every alert visitor, resident or tourist is aware of, is that traversing the suburb brings untold pleasures to the eye. The fact that Paddington is so visually attractive is due to the happy accident of the predominant building type, the Victorian terrace house, being constructed in a coherent and consistent style over a short, intensive period of building during the last two decades of the 19th century. That this rapid development took place on a sloping terrain resulted in an almost Mediterranean hilltop town. The sheer visual delight of looking at and walking around Paddington is the quality that the Paddington Heritage Development Control Plan aims to preserve.

The Paddington Heritage DCP is effectively a design guide that identifies in an analytical way the elements that together create the urban streetscape of Paddington. Drawing on this analysis it sets out objectives and controls regarding form, proportions, colour and materials appropriate for ongoing building work to ensure that such work makes a harmonious contribution to the existing built environment. Effectively the DCP describes a kit of parts for the well-mannered design of new building work in an existing heritage context.

The overall objective of the DCP is to preserve, strengthen and contribute to the urban environment of Paddington based on, but not limited to, the townscape we have inherited from our Victorian forebears. While controls in the DCP affect individual buildings, the objectives are aimed at preserving not just individual buildings but more importantly the overall streetscape. To this end the design rules apply just as much to buildings in Paddington that are not Victorian terrace houses. While later built work may have its own architectural style, harmonising visually with the predominant building type should be the guiding design objective of any new work.

The aim of the DCP is to make each modern insertion or modification to fit into the townscape in a manner respectful of the existing grammar of form and proportion prevailing in the street. This is the test that should be applied to the appearance of every proposed development on every site in Paddington.

The Paddington Society 2014 Committee

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The Paddington Paper is the official newsletter of The Paddington Society providing news and informed comment on local issues. Views expressed are those of the editorial committee and not necessarily those of the membership of the Paddington Society.

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Passionate for Paddington? Then join us and get involved! www.paddingtonsociety.org.au