

THE PADDINGTON SOCIETY • YOUR RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

# NEWS BULLETIN

PO Box 99 PADDINGTON NSW 2021 Phone 9360 6159 Fax: Fax 9363 9572 July 2007  
<http://www.paddingtonsociety.org.au> email: [heritage@paddingtonsociety.org.au](mailto:heritage@paddingtonsociety.org.au)

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.

***Are you coming to the dinner?*** Leonie Furber with her usual flair, is organising another dinner in the Sergeants Mess, Victoria Barracks. This has become a very popular event and the last two years we have booked out with a waiting list. We must keep to our 120 maximum so we ask everyone to please book early.

## THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### **Comment on Council's meeting on Monday night 23 July at the Paddington Town Hall**

Several members of the Society attended the workshop on the Paddington, Moore Park etc, urban design study which Council is conducting for the various villages that make up the City.

These consultation meetings are to be welcomed, although we have some concerns about the role of the current study and how its output will fit with other studies and control documents being prepared by Council

We raised these issues when the City prepared its Heritage DCP. At the time we did not receive a clear explanation as to how the Heritage, Planning and Urban Design Plans would come together into a clear and simple set of controls for development in South Paddington.

In discussions on Monday night there did not seem to be a clear set of answers either. Indeed some of the things proposed by this latest study are disturbing. For example, in the interests of achieving a 'City wide' plan rather than a set of specific controls for South Paddington, there was a view that Floor Space Ratio and Height controls should apply in South Paddington.

Some of us have a view that achieving the full potential of FSR and height controls can become the primary objectives of designers, rather than the preservation of specific building forms. It is possible that these numeric controls do more harm than good. We will be following up the Council officers with a discussion paper on the issues. This time we will work hard at not being fobbed off with assurances that it will all come together in the end. We want to know now what the end product will do and how it will do it. Surely it is not that hard to achieve a clear set of place specific controls for our area.

**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 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 Attuel 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. Water tables can be disturbed. 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 a 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 façade 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 whimperish 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. Those 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.

**John Mant      President**

**Oxford Street – Paddington's Main Street** The Urban Design Project the City of Sydney Council currently has under way is to consider the future built-form and streetscape Paddington, including along Oxford Street between South Dowling Street and Centennial Park. This provides an opportunity for the community to be heard. As our 'Main Street' it should ultimately provide for better amenity and shopping for us and visitors.

The City council wants to put the bus lanes in the middle of the roadway with separate bus-stop refuges as happens in Melbourne along the tram routes. This is desirable as part of a traffic calming and re-landscaping project. Provision of permanent kerb-side parking and incorporation of bicycle lanes should be possible, with traffic slowed from 60 down to 40km/h.

Fundamental outcomes of the study and its plans must be: urban streetscape and future building form measures that protect and enhance heritage values and improved the open spaces and public places in between. This requires, among other things, defining sites having any re-development potential and setting very clear building envelopes for such sites and developing a consistent streetscape landscaping and civic improvements scheme for the entire street.

The vision is: A high amenity Victorian urban streetscape for Paddington.  
Call for the replacement of the current car sewer!

To have your say – contact Kate Paterson at the City Council

Phone: 9246 7761; or

Address late submissions to her attention:

City of Sydney Council

GPO Box 1591

Sydney NSW 200

**Adrian Boss      Committee**

**Unveiling of the George Clarke plaque** The plaque commemorating George Clarke's contribution to our area, is scheduled to be unveiled at 10.30pm on Saturday 11 August 2007. This will take place in the park at the Napier Street end of Selwyn street. George Clarke, 17 Feb 1932 – 23 Feb 2005, Urbanist , Activist, Inquirer.

Many communities benefited from George Clarke's skills and energies. In our part of Paddington-Darlinghurst we were very fortunate to have George as a resident. George loved life and he loved living in our area. He had immense skills and energy- at times it was daunting and frightening. He was generous with his time and knowledge, unselfish, and a great teacher. He taught us how to work with Councils. With his attention to detail, energy, boundless enthusiasm to improve the Amenity he not only helped prevent unsympathetic development but he was active in improving our living conditions.

Everyone who can attend the unveiling is urged to be there.

**Will Mrongovius Committee**

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### **A PERIODIC PEEK AT PADDINGTON'S PAST No. 3 by Ron Johnson**

*Don't Believe Everything You Hear.* Robert Cooper built Juniper Hall and because he was a successful gin distiller later in Blackwattle Bay and the juniper berry is used in the production of gin, it is natural to assume that Cooper operated and produced gin at the Glenmore Distillery in Paddington. The story is somewhat different. Cooper, Forbes and Underwood were granted one hundred acres of land in Paddington by Governor Brisbane in 1823 and authorized to build the colony's first legal distillery. Forbes got into financial difficulties and sold out to Underwood who now owned two thirds of the business. Playing junior partner was not easy for Cooper. The Distillery was officially opened, by Cooper, in a lavish ceremony in 1824. The arguments between Cooper and Underwood became so intense that the matter went to arbitration. The decision went Underwood's way, so he became the owner of the one hundred acres (known as the Paddington Estate or Underwood's Paddock) and Cooper retained three acres on which he built Juniper Hall. Underwood held the licence and produced the grog. Cooper never did distill in Paddington.

It is often said that Paddington was originally a working class suburb. Considerable interest is generated by stories about Paddington during the Depression and contemporary folklore reinforces this belief. The stories are just within living memory and have given Paddington a niche in time. Constant reference to gentrification beds down the impression. However a look at the facts produces a different picture

The first houses in Paddington were built for the stonemasons and other skilled workers who were working on the building of Victoria Barracks. Their houses can be seen opposite the Barracks in the area now known as Paddington Village. In those days society was divided into persons of rank and persons of non-rank. The so-called workers of non-rank were in fact skilled craftsmen. The labouring work was done by convicts. A glance at the Victorian houses in Paddington show homes of a greater standard of construction and wealth than the labouring poor's hovels in the Rocks for example. Max Kelly in his "Paddock Full of Houses" pointed out that for their time the terraces were well constructed and built by owner builders. In 1910 Paddington was regarded as a prosperous suburb and desirable. The last subdivisions took place in 1929. By then the garden suburb idea was in and the building stock of Paddington was in need of care and attention, which it didn't get. The Great Depression completed the downfall. For a while it was a workers suburb. By 1970 gentrification had begun, assisted very much by the efforts of the Paddington Society who saw clearly the heritage value. For most of its life Paddington was certainly not a workers suburb.

Some publications have located the Rushcutter Bay Gentry mansions in Jersey Road and called them the houses of prosperous merchants. These mansions were however off Glenmore Road and were owned by top public servants rewarded by Governor Bourke in

1834-36, who sought to establish aristocratic estates overlooking Rushcutter Bay. Only three of these colonial mansions remain Engehurst in Ormond Street, Olive Bank Villa in Heely Street and the Terraces, now part of the Scottish Hospital.

Jersey Road was originally the road leading to Captain Piper's Henrietta Villa on Point Piper. It separated the Cooper Estate from the Paddington Estate. It is now a Ward Boundary. So houses on the West side are in Paddington and houses on the east side are in Woollahra. There is confusion because it is easier for all residences to use a Woollahra address in view of the nearness of Woollahra post office. But the west side has always been in Paddington, despite the opinion of the old hands in the Lord Dudley!

So now you know!!

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**PADDINGTON SOCIETY COMMITTEE 2007**

President: John Mant • Vice Presidents: Bill Morrison • Nina Mistilis  
Secretary: Leone Morrison Treasurer: Francis Walsh

Members: Robyn Attuell; Adrian Boss; Bill Fraser; Linda Gosling; Krystyna Luczak; Will Mrongovius; John Richardson; Graham Stewart; Michael Wilson.

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

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

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If you are not already a member, would you like to join the Society?

**SUBSCRIPTION FORM**

Please mail to the Secretary, P O Box 99, Paddington, 2021 or fax Credit Card Details to 9363 9572.

Enquiries: Francis Walsh 9363 9572

Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone: ..... Email: .....

New Member  or Renewal

Annual Subscription: \$40 Family  \$30 Single  \$15 Concession

3 Year Subscription: \$120 Family  \$90 Single  \$45 Concession

Payment by: Cheque  Credit Card  Total Amount: \$ .....

Credit Card Details: Visa  Mastercard

Card No: / . . . . / . . . . / . . . . / . . . . / Expiry Date: .....

Name on Card .....

## **PADDINGTON TITBITS**

**History Week.** Last year members were wonderful looking through their “attics” for objects to set up in our kitchen at Juniper Hall for history week . We are asking you again to be so generous for this year’s event in September. Also for help on the day.

We are making a difference to our usual picnic, featuring it in History Week and combining it with the led bike ride and heritage. Michael Wilson has come up with the idea, building on his experience with previous celebrations of Australian Heritage. We invite members to assist Michael with the Big Picnic in Centennial Park either in the planning stage or on the day. Details are set out on our events page. His contact is phone 9 331 3714.

**Since our last bulleting in March we have enjoyed several events.** Numbers were disappointing for the performance of *Curious Tales and Songs of old Paddington* on March 22<sup>nd</sup> but those who did attend, had a fun night at the Eastside Arts production with Warren Fahey and musicians Marcus Holden and Gary Steel.

Second hand Sunday was enthusiastically embraced by residents in Zone 1 of Woollahra Municipal Council Paddington Ward. The resident for the most successful sale result took \$400 for the day. The Council put on a BBQ for participating residents, in the Royal Hospital for Women Park, Glenmore Road. It has been decided that there are more people around on Saturdays and that Secondhand Sunday will change to Secondhand Saturday for Zone 2 residents in October. Contact: Nina Mistilis 9363 5685 (h)

Then on Saturday 5 May we had a big roll up for the Book Launch and Exhibition for *The Paddington Pictures*, water colours and book by John Haycraft. The exhibition was opened by The Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, MP for Vaucluse, Minister for the Environment and Water Resources and honoured guests were Barry Stern, Peter Sculthorpe and contributors of the book, Keri Huxley and Andrew Starr. The Paddington Society is sponsoring this collectors’ edition by Australia’s best architectural illustrator. Enquiries for the book: Leone Morrison 0409 361 378 or Francis Walsh 9360 6159.

Our latest in the *Know your own Pub* series was at Dirty Nellie’s in Glenmore road on Tuesday 26 June. Despite a bitterly cold, windy and wet night, we had a very good turn up. This is a family owned and run Hotel with a good local pub ambience. One of the sons, Zelman Nissen, gave us a talk about the history of the hotel and about the decorative design of the Print Room restaurant upstairs. The difference in the hotel in Paddington is that the pictures are fraed whereas in the original irish tradition, they are pasted and be-ribboned direct on to the walls. A number of the gathering stayed on to enjoy dinner.

Due to the delay in getting screening rights, we were running close to time for our *Night at the Movies* at the Chauvel . We had to abandon our plans for having our own screening. Instead Linda booked us into one of the scheduled programmes with an arrangement to include a glass of wine with the purchase of the ticket. We gathered early for the double feature screening of “Dirty Harry” & “Bullitt, when over a glass of wine and sandwiches, Bill Fraser entertained us with his flashes of history *Going to the “pictures” in old Paddo..* Remembering how alarmed we were when the Chauvel closed its doors and appeared to be folded for good, we believe that the support of the Society is worthwhile to encourage its viability.

***Our events Calendar follows on the next page . . . . .***

## EVENTS CALENDAR

### Annual Society Dinner

**Paddington Society Annual Dinner  
Wednesday 22 August  
Sergeants Mess  
VICTORIA BARRACKS**

Optional conducted tour of the Barracks 6.30 pm  
Welcome drinks and hors d'oeuvre in the ante room of the Mess 7.15 pm for dinner 7.45 pm  
Guest speaker: John Haycraft  
Raffles to include an original water colour of a Paddington streetscape  
Ticket includes welcome drinks and hors d'oeuvres . Mess prices for spirits and dinner wines  
Please advise dietary restrictions  
\$70 members \$80 non members  
Bookings essential: Francis Walsh 9360 6159 or Leone Morrison 0409 361 378

### History Week Saturday 15 to Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> September

**Saturday 15 September  
Paddington History Stroll  
10.00 am – 2.00 pm**

Juniper Hall, Cnr Oxford and Underwood Streets, Paddington 2021  
Enter from back entrance from Underwood Street  
(regret no parking available)

Visit the Paddington Society Rooms, "The Kitchen" Juniper Hall  
for coffee and muffins before setting out in groups for walking tours.

*Paddington Stroll,  
Paddington's Colourful Past  
South of the Border (including Victoria Barracks)*  
\$15 for morning coffee and guided walk

Booking recommended: Francis Walsh 9360 6159 or Leone Morrison 0409 361 378

**Sunday 23 The Big Picnic  
Federation Valley North, Centennial Park**

We are making a difference to our usual picnic, combining it with the led bike ride and heritage.

*A day of picnicking in the spring sunshine. with activities for the wider community. Pack your picnic basket, games, musical instrument.*

*If you would like to join the bike ride, bring your own or hire a bike at the park.*

*Enjoy the beautiful park secured for our recreation by a handful of far sighted men.*

*Federation Valley North, Between Grand Drive and Loch Avenue, Centennial Park, Paddington*

**Organizations and individuals interested in contributing to a programme of dance and music will be welcome to add to the delight of the day.** Please ring Michael Wilson 9 331 3714 .

Free, no bookings required

### Saturday 6 October

*Secondhand Saturday (Please note due to popular demand, the event will be held on Saturday, not Sunday)*

WMC Zone 2 Paddington

Zone 2 includes the following Paddington streets: Arthur, Broughton St (odd), Caledonia, Cambridge St and Lane, Cascade, Cecil St and Lane, Duxford, Elizabeth St and Lane, Forbes, Glebe, Glenmore Rd, Gurner, Hampton, Hargrave St and Lane, Harris, Hopetoun, Jersey (even numbers), McGarvie, McLaughlin Place, Norfolk, Paddington Street and Lane, Queen Rd (actually Zone 1), Suffolk, Sutherland St and Avenue, Taylor, Tivoli, Underwood (even numbers), Wentworth St and Lane, Windsor St and Lane)

On registration with WMC to participate in Secondhand Saturday and be a part of this event residents receive:

- Free advertising in the WMC Mayoral page Wentworth Courier & on the WMC Website
- A free poster to promote your participation for your fence, house or garage door.

To register, you must live within the borders of zone 2. Anything you do not sell and do not wish to keep is put out for the free Council clean-up collection on Sunday evening for Monday 8 October

A free BBQ lunch is provided by WMC in RHW Park; house sales list & map will be available on the day at our Fiveways street stall. For more information phone Nina Mistilis 9363 5685;

or Pamela Mina 93917966 Email: [pamela.mina@woollahra.nsw.gov.au](mailto:pamela.mina@woollahra.nsw.gov.au)

**Sunday 2 December, Christmas Party, details to be advised**