



Glebe Society Bulletin

6/2003 July/August

Members gather at Blacket's family home

About 40 members of the Glebe Society took the opportunity provided by the Department of Community Services (DoCS) to visit *Bidura* on Wednesday 23 July. This large two-storey Victorian Regency residence, with a magnificent free-standing ballroom, was built by Edmund Blacket in the 1860s as a home for his family of nine children.

Andrew Craig, our President, welcomed Grant Taylor (of G K Taylor Pty Ltd) and Donna Reigate, Director of DoCS, on behalf of the Glebe Society.

Grant, who has recently restored *Bidura* to house DoCS' NSW Centre for Parenting and Research, asked Glebe Society members to imagine themselves visiting the house in its

Pictures page 2

former life. Guests arrived in horse-drawn carriages, using the elegant curved drive leading from Glebe Point Road. The women wore the voluminous gowns of the Victorian era. The house was lit by gas.

Grant described the challenges involved in his work on the house, balancing historical accuracy with modern workplace requirements and budget restraints. The original colours revealed by paint scrapings would have been too dark for day-long office use. It was not practical to restore the very tall painted skirting boards and sash windows to the original waxed cedar. The choice of curtain fabric was limited by fire-retardant rules. Gaslight was not appropriate. In spite of these restraints, Grant Taylor has achieved a pleasing result. His work, which took him 12 months to complete, includes a carefully restored painted wooden ceiling in the ballroom, new floors in the ballroom and ground floor of the house, extensive paintwork, black and white marble tiling which match the original and concealing visible pipes by putting them in the floors.

After Grant had talked about his restoration work, and answered several questions, we were invited to walk across to the main house. There

Continued on page 2

34th Annual General Meeting

Notice of Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of The Glebe Society Incorporated will be held at 11 am on Sunday 24 August 2003 at *Benledi*, 186 Glebe Point Road (next to Glebe Library). The agenda for the meeting is published on page 2 of this Bulletin.

Nominations for Committee

Office bearers of the Society and other members of the Management Committee will be elected at the AGM, and a nomination form is enclosed with this Bulletin. Nomina-

tions close on Friday 15 August 2003.

Invitation

All members of the Society are invited to the AGM, and financial members are entitled to vote. Society membership runs from July to June each year (unless membership commenced in the current calendar year). You can check the address label on this Bulletin for the expiry date of your membership. If you have not yet renewed,

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

Bidura function

are eight rooms on the ground floor linked by a central corridor. A staircase leads to the servants' quarters in the basement, now mainly the location for toilets and other facilities.



Blacket moved to Glebe in 1853 when he began work on the Great Hall of Sydney University.

Another, surprisingly narrow, staircase leads to the upper storey, which we were not able to visit but which we were told has a similar layout to the ground floor.

The evening continued back in the

Ballroom, with lively conversation helped by liberal servings of bubbles and brie.

We were delighted to find that Grant's sister Pat is a member of the Society.

- Edwina Doe



Members inspect Bidura

Above: Architect Grant Taylor explains how the renovations to Bidura were carried out.

Left: Cynthia Jones and Professor John Buck inspect one of the rooms converted to an office.

The Glebe Society Incorporated 34th Annual General Meeting

to be held at *Benledi*, 186 Glebe Point Road, Glebe (next door to Glebe Library) on Sunday 24 August 2003 at 11 am

AGENDA

- 1 Present
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Confirmation of the minutes of the 33rd Annual General Meeting held on 25 August 2002
- 4 President's report
- 5 Subcommittee reports

Reports are published in the Society's *Bulletin*. However Chairmen and Convenors will be present to provide updates and/or answer questions.

6 Treasurer's report

MOTION: That the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2003, the TGSI Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 30 June 2003 be received.

7 Election of Office Bearers

8 Awards

The Management Committee commends the following special resolutions* to the Annual General Meeting:

MOTION: That Mr Tom Uren be elected an Honorary Life Member of the Glebe Society in recognition of his contribution to the heritage character of Glebe, in particular The Glebe Estate.

MOTION: That Mr Peru Perumal be elected an Honorary Life Member of the Glebe Society in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the Society.

9 Close of meeting

* Refer Rules of the Glebe Society Inc, paragraphs 6.6 and 35(a).

Continued from page 1

Notice of AGM

we would be glad to receive your prompt payment.

Awards

Two special resolutions will be put to the AGM. These motions emanate from the Awards Subcommittee's recommendation to the Management Committee that Mr Tom Uren and Mr Peru Perumal be awarded Honorary Life Membership of The Glebe Society Inc.

Guest speaker

We are delighted that Mr Tom Uren has accepted our invitation to speak to members, following the conclusion of the formal meeting agenda.

Refreshments will be served after Tom Uren's talk.

“Village in a City”

Revitalising Glebe Point Road

The Glebe Society commissioned the Macquarie Graduate School of Management to research means of revitalising Glebe Point Road, which has declined during the last decade or so. Vacant premises, under-used shop spaces, unkempt streetscape, parking meters, changed demographics, and minor crime, have combined to cause loss of amenity to Glebe.

MGSM agreed to assign four graduate students to inquire into the business decline of the street during April to June 2003.

Further research into this and other aspects of

Glebe's amenity will proceed in subsequent years, so this work has laid down databases and methods for replication in the future.

The students produced a report which will be available on the Society's Website soon. It lays out very carefully the bases of the research and its delimitations. It deserves to be read as an ensemble rather than in summary but for the purposes of this journal I will sketch key findings.

Glebe Point Road has potential competitive advantage over Norton Street and King Street in arts, culture and entertainment. Its bookshops, music shops, and streetscape, add to its long-term image as egalitarian and Bohemian. Yet it is effectively domiciliary with little daytime commerce and industry. Its Commerce, Council and Community (such as the Glebe Society and the Chamber of Commerce) are so heavily committed that they spend insufficient time talking together, and building their community. Some special crisis or innovation is needed to mobilise these groups strategically.

The Glebe Society used the Clarence Street offices of the University of Western Sydney's city research



centre, the Australian Expert Group in Industry Studies, to meet with the students, and representatives from business and the Chamber of Commerce. During these meetings, which were conducted by the students, the group set out impressions of what GPR is and what it could be within three years. These and other details from the research informed a report that the Society has produced *Partnerships to a Vibrant Community* and provided to Council and Commerce. In it the Society says, “This is what we want. This is what we can do. What do you intend? Can we help?”

I was really impressed with the students' work. Unexpectedly I was away from Sydney repeatedly during the study, but they just got on with it. They beavered away in ABS data, interviewed furiously, observed street sites, brainstormed, and conducted community focus groups and brought a research lens to our community. I am enriched by having met Kate Convey, Chris Henry, Matt Milward, and Alison Strange. Glebe has good friends at MGSM.

What next? See the next issue.

- John Gray

TGSI Annual Dinner

2003 marks the 400th Anniversary of the death of the first Queen Elizabeth of England, and we thought it would be interesting to take the opportunity of this year's Society dinner to commemorate the occasion with an Elizabethan Banquet. This will be held in the Forest Lodge School Hall on Saturday, 18 October as foreshadowed in the last *Bulletin*. So please confirm the date in your diary and start looking out your period costume if you want to really get into the spirit of things.

Why Elizabeth I? Apart from being a favourite of one of the members of the committee, we think she does have something to say to us today. In her reign began the period of ocean exploration. Francis Drake circumnavigated the world in the *Golden Hind*, even if he failed to find Australia on that occasion! As for Her Majesty herself, she must be an inspiration to modern day feminists – one of the people who broke through the glass ceiling with a vengeance, a Renaissance princess of scholarly and musical accomplishment, who survived a traumatic childhood and, particularly, adolescence, who steered her country through religious and international upheavals, and who could take the “hard decisions”. She chose her ministers and staff well and inspired personal affection in her close associates. In the days when it was more fashionable to do so, she was one of the monarchs who attracted the adjective “Great” to her name. Come and drink a toast to her.

As well as the banquet, the evening will feature music and literature of the era, and, on a commercial note, the opportunity to tender for a variety of “monopolies”. The committee would be pleased to hear from any members who are able to offer goods or services (Jeanette 9660 7781, Fay 9552 4172, Yolanda 9660 8606, Hilary 9660 5845, Cynthia 9660 2451 or Liz 9518 6186).

Out and about in our parks

Kirsova Park

History

Madam Kirsova was distressed by the living conditions of inner city families, and was particularly concerned with lack of play space for the children. Using her own money she bought properties in the inner west and turned them into children's playgrounds. One of these was Kirsova Park, which was formed from the stables of two houses in Hereford Street.

Present day

The Glebe Society and neighbours of Kirsova Park have been concerned by its neglected state and the run down and possibly unsafe condition of its playground equipment. It is interesting to note that although Kirsova Park is a very small area, it contains one of the suburb's landmark trees.

Progress to date

Since Glebe has joined The Sydney City Council considerable progress has been made. A recent site meeting with the Landscape Architect and Assistant Manager Contracts and Assets has resulted in agreement on works to be done and a timetable for their completion. In the mean time, the Playground is being maintained by Council Workmen and local residents and we are all optimistic about its future.

- Fay Mander Jones

Foley Park

History

Foley Rest Park on the corner of Bridge and Glebe Point Roads is the remnant garden of *Hereford House*, one of the first Regency houses in Glebe built in 1829. The City Council renamed it Dr. H.J. Foley Rest Park in 1964 in recognition of the work of a former City Council Alderman.

Present day

We prepared a 'vision' statement for the Park (see *Bulletin* 1/2003, p 4), and with assistance from Leichhardt Council replanted and maintained

three large garden beds, and the War Memorial Garden adjoining the Park. Students at the University of Technology undertook a survey which indicated that 79% of people believed the park needs improvements (see below for a fuller report).

Progress to date

With the City of Sydney Council now responsible for Glebe, we met with Marcello Massi (Glebe Place Manager) in June, and gave him some brief written details on our work to date, a copy of the survey, and our proposals for both Foley Park and Kirsova Playground. He undertook to present the matter to the Council's General Manager, and this resulted in a meeting in the parks on 26 June with Marcello and Council Officers.

We have recently been advised that Council is currently looking at the full scope of works for Foley Park, including our proposal, but has not yet formulated a response. However, a maintenance schedule is in operation and up to date. The garden beds have been prepared and weeded, the War Memorial has been cleaned and rid of weeds and overgrown foliage, grass will be planted in the coming weeks, and playground mulch deposited in the playground area. Lighting issues are also being addressed.

We appreciate this action. Already Foley Park looks much better!

- Bobbie Burke

Park survey results

The survey undertaken by UTS students was to determine how Foley Park could be better utilised as a public space. The total number of respondents was 117, comprising:

- people walking through the park or passing by on Glebe Point Road
- those who own or work in shops opposite the Park
- members of the Glebe Society

- those who visit the Early Childhood Health Centre
- residents of St Johns Village

The sub-samples show some slight differences and indicate the special interest of Glebe Society members in the landscaping, the low use of the Park by the retirement village, and the safety concerns of users of the Early Childhood Health Centre, despite their familiarity with the space.

Significant results:

- 65% of respondents use the park
- the majority of users are female
- 33% believed the park was unsafe or dangerous. The main reasons women give are that the park is too "enclosed", and the presence of "undesirable people"
- 34% knew the park existed, but did not know its name
- 79% believe the park needs improvements; principally improving or adding facilities; landscaping; better lighting; improved toilets and the need for it to be 'opened up', allowing people in the park to be seen from the street
- 49% of those who use the park spend less than 30 minutes there

The researchers comment that:

- its neglected state suggests it has been forgotten by residents and there is no affiliation between the community and the Park
- it has a negative reputation in the area which contributes to the under-usage of this public space
- children play an important role in contributing to the usage of the park (parents and grandparents are the largest users)
- as both the toilets and the Early Childhood Health Centre appear neglected, unlit, hidden away and with threatening security bars, a number of people viewed this back section of the park as a security threat that, in turn, affects the ambience of the park

Continued on page 5



City of Sydney

Despite the views expressed by Bunyip in *The Glebe* (9 July 2003), Glebe Society volunteers who have been working in our parks have had nothing but courtesy and consideration from staff at the City of Sydney. Foley and Kirsova parks have been the subject of specific submissions to Council. Already significant results have been achieved in opening up Foley Park, with pruning, weeding, mulching and footpath repairs having been undertaken.

- Elizabeth Simpson-Booker

Bicentennial Park Figs

The report in the last Bulletin on the Lord Mayor's visit to Glebe included her comment on the close planting of the fig trees in Bicentennial Park. From memory I believe that this was an intentional part of the design for the park and was done deliberately to create the avenue, but with a view to thinning the trees at a later stage when they grew. I presume the original plan for the park is on record somewhere, so it could be checked. I assume it was every alternate tree that was to be removed, but it could possibly have been every third.

- Jeanette Knox

Continued from page 5

Results of park survey

- the lack of visibility (from the street) contributes to perceptions regarding people's feelings of isolation once inside the park, and also what people on the outside perceive this closed environment could be harbouring
- many users emphasised the importance of having the quiet, green space available.

Membership matters

Life Members

The Agenda for the Annual General Meeting on Sunday 24 August includes Motions to elect Mr Tom Uren and Mr Peru Perumal as Honorary Life Members of the Glebe Society.

Life Members who are currently active in the Society are John Buckingham, Edwina Doe, Jeanette Knox, Neil Macindoe and Andrew Wood. These people have been "recycled" after a rest from the Society's Committee activities.

Life Members who are not now active Society members are Jim Coombs, the late John Hoddinot, Albert Mispel, Albert Renshaw, Alan Robertson, Bernard Smith and Max Solling.

Membership renewals

The Treasurer thanks all members who have renewed their membership for 2003/4 already. Other Members are reminded that subscriptions are due and payable by 31 July 2003. Don't miss out on your next Bulletin. Mail your renewal today..

New members

We welcome the following new members who have recently joined The Glebe Society. Perhaps they will be Life Members one day.

Dr Geraldine Barnes
Christine and Philip Bates
Deborah and Rod Blay
Pamela and Robert Bruce
Lydia Bushell
Jean Maxwell
Kay and Tom Morrison
Professor Peter Wilson

New Rector at St Johns

Rev Geoffrey Broughton has been appointed to the position of Rector of St Johns Church, Glebe.

Geoffrey Ian Broughton was born in 1967. After leaving school he was a junior accountant before training at Moore College as a youth worker. He was Youth Minister at St Matthew's Pennant Hills from 1989 until 1996. He furthered his theological education at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena USA where he obtained his Master of Theology (Practical Theology) degree in 1998 and then returned to Moore College where he completed the degree Master of Arts (Theology) in 2002. He was ordained Deacon in 2001 and Priest in 2002. He has been an associate Minister at St Johns Darlinghurst since 1999.

There will be a service of induction and a public welcome at St Johns on Friday 29 August 2003 commencing at 7.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

Edmund Barton

The streets are familiar – the names are the same.

But where are the sickly, the halt and the lame,

Manure from the horses, that covered the roads

And young children working and carrying loads?

But great flying engines are crossing the sky

And over the street ugly wires hang up high.

Carts without horses are hurrying past,

I don't know how people can travel so fast.

The streets are familiar – the names are the same,

But life was so different, the first time I came.

-A member

Morton Herman on Edmund Blakett

"He was, in the architectural sense, a copyist...but he was able to arrange the parts with such a sure touch and harmony of materials, scale and proportion, that true architecture resulted. His placing of buildings so that they seemed inevitable on their sites, and adornments to the surrounding countryside, showed a superlative sense of arrangement and fitness..."

News and Notes

National Trust concern about 20th Century heritage

The National Trust has signalled its concern about the need to safeguard 'modern' heritage.

The Trust notes that many major contemporary Australian icons are still not protected from demolition or destructive change. They point out how close we came to losing the former Maritime Services Building at Circular Quay, one of the few remaining examples of the *classical moderne* style.

At particular risk are established gardens and landscapes from Federation properties through to the present day, many of which have disappeared due to development.

The Trust is proposing to embark on a project to identify, assess and safeguard our recent history.

For more information, phone the National Trust on 9258 0123.

Glebe Society street stall

We will be holding a street stall soon. Please ring me on 9660 7930 for more details. - **Hilary Wise**

Bicentenary of the Battle of Vinegar Hill : Descendants Day

The 200th anniversary of the Battle of Vinegar Hill will be held in March 2004 with the support of a number of western Sydney councils. The Descendants Day is designed to honour the survivors (rebels, NSW Corps as well as Parramatta and Sydney Loyalists), and their children after them, as the pioneers of our nation.

Further information from:

- (1) Patricia Parker, Coordinator of the Descendants Day, 43 Phillips Street, Alexandria 2015. Ph (02) 9319 1008, or at pparker@netspace.net.au.
- (2) Silver, Lynette Ramsay, *The Battle of Vinegar Hill*, Watermark Press, updated and expanded 2002.

Leichhardt Library moves to the Italian Forum

The Renwick Street Library closed at 2 pm on Saturday 19th July 2003. The new Library on the Piazza Level of the Italian Forum will be open for business on 11th August at 9.30 am.

CoS annual report

Copies of the City of Sydney's 2002/03 report to ratepayers are now available from Glebe Library.

Thirsty Thursdays

All members are invited to meet for dinner in Glebe on the first Thursday of each month, to meet and eat with other people who live in Glebe.

We started well 3 July, when nine people met. Our next two "Thirsty Thursday" dinners will be at the restaurant in the Toxteth Hotel on 7 August and 4 September. No bookings are needed – just turn up at 6.30 for 7 pm. We will pay for our own meals and there is no BYOG.

If you have any suggestions for other "Thirsty Thursday" venues, or suggestions for other social events, please ring Edwina Doe on 9660 7066.

The Glebe Urban Research Association

The Glebe Urban Research Association, a voluntary, non-profit organisation, has recently been formed by a group of local residents dedicated to undertaking primary research on Glebe. The Association's aims and objectives include distribution of a newsletter, publication of monographs, articles and larger studies, compilation of a bibliography of sources on Glebe, cataloguing photographs, maps and plans, and conducting occasional lectures. Contact Max Solling on 9660 1160 for further information.



Sydney City Councillors

Cr Lucy Turnbull, Lord Mayor LLB (Syd), MBA (UNSW)
Telephone: 9265 9706
Fax: 9265 9416

Cr Dixie Coulton, Deputy Lord Mayor BA, LIM
Telephone: 9265 9706
Fax: 9265 9416

Cr Fabian Marsden BPHARM, MPS
Telephone: 9265 9706
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Cr Robert Ho OAM, JP
Telephone: 9265 9678
Fax: 9265 9188

Cr Kathryn Greiner AO, B. Soc.Work (UNSW)
Telephone: 9265 9701
Fax: 02 9265 9204

Cr Nick Farr-Jones AO, LLB (Syd)
Telephone: 9265 9701
Fax: 9265 9204



Forest Lodge Public School

Home of The Glebe Society Archives

Principal: Mrs Elva Salter Phone 9660 3530

For your diary ...

Wednesday 13 August, 7.30pm - Glebe Society Management Committee Meeting, upstairs meeting room, Toxteth Hotel

Monday 28 July, 5.30pm - City of Sydney Council Meeting – Level One, Town Hall

Thursday 7 August, 6.30 for 7pm – “Thirsty Thursday” Dinner at the Toxteth Hotel Restaurant

Friday 15 August, Closing date for Glebe Society Committee nominations - see enclosed form

Monday 18 August, 5.30pm - City of Sydney Council Meeting – Level One, Town Hall

Sunday 24 August, 11 am - Annual General Meeting of The Glebe Society Inc.

Thursday 4 September, 6.30 for 7pm – “Thirsty Thursday” Dinner at the Toxteth Hotel Restaurant

Monday 8 September, 5.30pm - City of Sydney Council Meeting – Level One, Town Hall

Saturday 18 October, The Glebe Society Annual Dinner - Elizabethan Banquet in the Forest Lodge School Hall – see page 3

Saturday 8 – Sunday 23 November, Glebe Music Festival – see enclosed flyer



We are glad to publish letters or articles on any matters of interest to Glebe, any topic raised in the *Bulletin*, or any issues relating The Glebe Society.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Glebe Society Inc
PO Box 100
Glebe 2037

or editor@glebesociety.org.au

Disclaimer

Views expressed in this *Bulletin* are not necessarily those of The Glebe Society Inc.

Copy deadline for the next issue:

Tuesday 19 August, 2003

Website

The Society also has a growing website (www.glebesociety.org.au) for the information of members and anyone with an interest in Glebe.

The website will only flourish if members send comments and contributions to editor@glebesociety.org.au

The Glebe Society Inc

www.glebesociety.org.au

Management Committee

President	Andrew Craig	9566 1746
Vice-President	Hilary Wise	9660 5845
Immediate Past President	John Buckingham	9660 7780
Secretary	Liz Simpson-Booker	9518 6186
Treasurer	Bruce Davis	9660 7873

Committee Members:

Cynthia Jones 9660 2451	Jeanette Knox 9660 7781
David Mander Jones 9552 4172	Edwina Doe 9660 7066
Andrew Wood 9660 6104	Bob Armstrong 9660 4189 (<i>ex officio</i>)

Sub-Committee Convenors

All convenors are *ex officio* members of the Management Committee

Bays and Foreshores	Collin Hills	9660 8608
Environment	Andrew Wood	9660 6104
including Noise Pollution	Andrew Craig	9566 1746
Planning	Neil Macindoe	9660 0208
Transport and Traffic	Steve Stewart	9660 5845

Project Teams

Clean Up Glebe	Andrew Wood	9660 6104
Conserving Glebe Heritage	David Mander Jones	9552 4172
Reporting infrastructure defects	Margaret Sheppard	9660 4121
Wentworth Park	Judy Vergison	9692 9200
Glebe Point Road	John Gray	9518 7253

Contacts

Archivist	Lyn Milton	9660 7930
Historian	Max Solling	9660 1160
New members	Hilary Wise	9660 5845
Bulletin Editor	Edwina Doe	9660 7066
Webmaster	Cynthia Jones	9660 2451

In this issue

- Members gather at Blacket's family home - pp 1-2
- Annual General Meeting - pp 1-2
- Revitalising Glebe Point Road - p 3
- Annual dinner - p 3
- Out and about in our parks - p 4
- Reports to AGM 2003 - liftout



The GLEBE SOCIETY Inc
PO Box 100 Glebe 2037

POSTAGE
PAID

MEMBERSHIP OF THE GLEBE SOCIETY

Ordinary member	\$45
Joint (2 people, one address)	\$55
Household (2+ adults and/or children, one address)	\$60
Concession (student or pensioner)	\$20
Business or institution	\$110

Write to PO Box 100, Glebe, 2037 or phone the Secretary, Liz Simpson-Booker, on 9518 6186.

If you have a matter that you would like to discuss with the Management Committee, please phone the Secretary to attend a meeting.

CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY

Sydney City Council Customer Service
Telephone (24 hours): 1300 651301

email: council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au
website: www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

Dumped supermarket trolleys: 1800 641 497 (BiLo trolleys 9281 4511)

Aircraft noise: 1800 802 584