



## A Plaque for Ernie the Fridge Man

The Governor of NSW, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir, AC CVO, paid an official visit to Glebe on Tuesday 18 September to unveil a plaque in honour of the Late Ernie the Fridge Man, the well-known eccentric resident of Glebe who died in 2001.

Glebe Society member Joe Mannix has worked tirelessly for four years to achieve this memorial to his friend Ernie. At last he has succeeded, with the help of the Glebe Chamber of Commerce. A plaque, mounted on a simple sandstone plinth, has been placed beneath a gum tree in the Glebe Community Garden next to Record Reign Hall. As a reminder of Ernie, an old fridge was placed on a bench beneath the tree. On the fridge was an old pair of glasses, beside a packet of rice and some apples which represented his vegetarian diet.

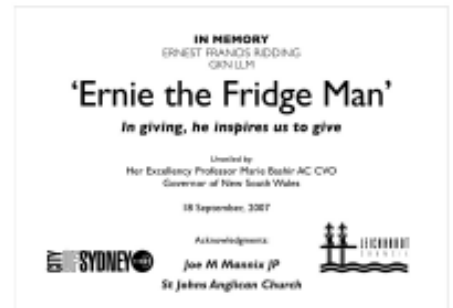
The extent of the interest in Ernie was revealed by the gathering of over 100 people, including Dame Leone Kramer, our local State Member Verity Firth, Mayor of Leichhardt Cr Alice Murphy, Sydney Councillor Robyn Kemmis, the Glebe Society's President Jan Macindoe and many other Glebe Society members.

-Edwina Doe



**Above:** Joe Mannix and the Governor at the unveiling ceremony. Photo: Danny Aarons, *The Glebe* newspaper.

**Below:** Ernie's plaque.



## 38th Annual General Meeting



Bruce Lay (left) receiving his Glebe Society commendation from Neil Macindoe.

Photo: Bruce Davis

The Glebe Society's 38th Annual general meeting, held at Benledi on Sunday 26 August, was attended by over 40 members.

Our President, Jan Macindoe, was in the chair. This year we had two Presidents' Reports, as Bob Armstrong, who stood down in December 2006, reported on the Society's activities in 2006, and Jan, who took over in January 2007,

brought the story up to date. Their reports, together with other Sub-committee reports, are included in this Bulletin.

In the Election of Officers, which followed, there were no changes to the Management Committee and no additional nominations were received for the two vacancies which remain. As no nominations for Vice President were received, Bruce Davis agreed to continue to act in the position whilst a new Vice President is sought. Any volunteers?

This year Glebe Society commendations were presented to three people, Cynthia Jones, Liz Simpson-Booker and Bruce Lay. We congratulate them all.

The citations for Cynthia and Liz are shown on page three. Neil wrote extensively about Bruce Lay, Architect/Planner at Leichhardt Council, in *Bulletin 3/2007*.

In discussions at the end of the meeting, Alison McKeown raised the issue of the extension of the M4 and tunnel filtering (or lack of it) and Joe Mannix expressed concerns about traffic management at the corner of Glebe Point Road and Wigram Road.

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The meeting discussed a previously circulated draft position statement prepared by the Glebe Society regarding the future of Harold Park. Issues discussed included:

- open space should be appropriately integrated into existing waterfront parkland;
- the necessity for thorough monitoring of any proposals for the site;
- the need for low cost housing; and
- the need to recognise legitimate and conflicting interests of members in formulating a position. (See further comments on Harold Park on this page.)

The gathering was then addressed by Bruce Lay. An edited version of his speech appears on pages 5 and 6 of this *Bulletin*.

Those present then adjourned to enjoy the refreshments. We thank Dorothy Davis and her team for the catering.

- **Edwina Doe**

## Harold Park - news and views

The draft position statement on Harold Park, published in the last *Bulletin*, was discussed at the AGM, with a range of views expressed, and the matter was left open for further deliberation. Indeed, there is little point in rushing to a particular position when there hasn't even been a final decision by Harold Park Harness Racing Club on the possible sale.

Further information has been provided by Council planning staff in response to a question on notice from Councillor Robyn Kemmis about the status of the Harold Park and Tramsheds site. Members can find the full response at Item 10 on the agenda paper for Council meeting of September 17, at [www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/Council/MeetingsAndCommittees/2007](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/Council/MeetingsAndCommittees/2007).

Some key points from that advice are:

- The current zoning, under Leichhardt LEP 2000, is Open Space, and "it is not intended that the permissible land uses of the site will significantly change under the draft Sydney LEP 2007 that is currently being prepared."
- If an application was made for a rezoning of the site, Council would

need to consider that application on its merits and have regard to the legislative requirements. No applications have been made nor have any discussions occurred between the NSW Harness Racing Club and relevant Council staff in relation to any proposed rezoning of the site.

- Types of uses permitted under the Open Space zoning include community facilities. "In this regard, any proposal for 'community facilities' is capable of being broadly categorised as any use that has a community benefit. This could be, for example, a medical research facility, student housing associated with a tertiary institution, child care centre, tertiary education facilities or other such uses."
- The site could fall under Section 3A of the Environmental Planning Policy, concerning Major Projects. "However, the Act provides that the Minister cannot approve development (that is not critical infrastructure) which is prohibited under an environmental planning instrument. The Minister is generally required to observe existing prohibitions."
- In addition, under the provisions of the Major Projects SEPP, the Minister has the authority to declare a site state significant, which could authorise development that would otherwise be considered prohibited development under the any existing LEP.

- **Jan Macindoe**

## Views from two members

Two members have written to give their ideas about appropriate development for the Harold Park site. Extracts from their letters are given below. For a further view, see Bruce Lay's talk to the AGM in this *Bulletin*.

### Harold Park Village

Why not turn some area of the park (closest to Ross Street) into a sort of medium-sized piazza. Oval-shaped - in memory of the racetrack - and covered with hard-pack gravel. Around it could be federation-style buildings, the ground floor being used for some cafes, restaurant(s), and a convenience shop. On the first floor of these buildings could be office space (undercover parking would be accessed from Minogue Crescent), such that the area would be used during the day and to provide business. This would provide a focal point for the

residents and users of Harold Park Village, as well as for residents of the area up to Forest Lodge and along Wigram Road.

Along the Eastern side of the park could be terraced apartments, total building height not exceeding the level of buildings along Rock lane, Glen Lane and Maxwell Road. This would allow more young couples and families to live in Glebe. Part of the development should also include some townhouses. All buildings should be constructed according to eco-guidelines with energy conservation a key focus of the development.

Half the park, the western side along The Crescent and Minogue Crescent, should be retained as open space, with trees and paths, shielding the residents from road noise, and providing a link to Jubilee Park and the Glebe Foreshore track...

- **Gregor Ptok**

### Housing affordability

What I'd like to say is that the crisis of housing affordability in Sydney is a major social problem. The only solution is a very substantial increase in supply in suburbs that are already settled. Unfortunately, a number of factors combine to make that almost impossible, given that the land is almost all held in very small parcels. Making more accommodation available is not in the interest of property owners, since it is intended to bring prices down, or at least keep rises under control. I don't think many property owners are concerned principally about that effect, but they are certainly not inclined to favour it, if only because they don't want change ...

Opposition to development is inevitably sanctified by reference to the environment, heritage and nostalgia. The rhetoric of opposition to development drowns out all other considerations.

I can't help seeing the draft comments on Harold Park in the latest newsletter as an example of this tendency, an automatic reaction. It is extremely rare for a substantial piece of land that can support an integrated and diversified development to become available in our area. It offers the possibility of improving the opportunities of thousands of people. But that is of no interest. What I would like to see is a substantial retirement and aged care complex, together with a high density development incorporating a mix of accommodation, ranging from cheap studios to large family apartments.

- **John Burnheim**

## Citations for Glebe Society Commendations

# Cynthia Jones - Webmaster

Cynthia Jones joined the Management Committee in 1989 and has been a member of the committee ever since. During this time she has filled several roles, briefly as Secretary, then as Junior Vice President (1991-1999), as new members' contact and, most recently, as the Society's Webmaster.

In addition to these "formal" positions, Cynthia organised several of the Society's House Inspections. These were a major fund-raising source for many years, but when they were discontinued as a result of reduced attendances, Cynthia continued to be actively involved in the organisation of social activities and in other fund-raising projects, such as a series of progressive dinner parties and, in the past few years, the auctions and raffles held in conjunction with our Christmas parties. Her work has contributed significantly to the healthy financial position in which the Society currently finds itself.

She has been most generous in making available her home for social events and for our monthly Bulletin mail-out operations. She has attended most of the functions organised by the Society and has been a particularly welcoming face for new members on these occasions.

All these things have continued against a



Cynthia proudly displays her Commendation. Photo: Bruce Davis

background of health problems that Cynthia has had to overcome in order to give time, effort and ingenuity to support the aims and activities of the Glebe Society.

Cynthia Jones is well-deserving of this recognition by the Society.

- Jeanette Knox

# Liz Simpson-Booker - Secretary

Our President, Jan Macindoe, has given me the honour of speaking in support of the award of the Glebe Society's Commendation to Liz Simpson-Booker.

Liz has been a member of the Glebe Society since 1989. Her talents and energy had her marked early in the piece for higher duties on the Management Committee as Secretary. In that capacity she has been the saviour/guide/mentor of at least six Presidents. I would not have managed without her - in her role as keeper of the truths, the secrets, the rules, the conventions of the Society. Her clear thinking and organised approach were just what I needed as President, and her impish good humour always made it so much easier to get on with the job.

There are so many ways that Liz has supported the Glebe/Forest Lodge community through her work on the Management Committee and its Sub-committees and through her willingness to initiate and participate so energetically in a whole

range of social activities.

Liz, it is my great pleasure to commend you heartily for this special award.

I am sure I speak for all here today when I say that we look forward to many more years of your contributions to the Glebe Society and to your friendship that we so value.



Bob Armstrong presents Liz with her Commendation. Photo: Bruce Davis

# Update on Crown Land in Forest Lodge

Prompted by a request from the forestlodgetrees community group, Councillor Verity Firth asked a question on notice at Sydney City Council's meeting on 27 August 2007 as follows.

"Could I get an update from the CEO regarding negotiations the City has undertaken with the State Government to secure the Crown land at 9 Alfred Road, Forest Lodge in public ownership for public open space, in particular:

(i) any negotiations since representatives of the forestlodgetrees community group met with the CEO on 23 November 2006; and

(ii) any negotiations since the Local Action Plan North West was unanimously adopted on 19 February 2007, which included at item 23 that '... Council will continue to negotiate with the State government to preserve public ownership of the Crown land at 9 Alfred Road Forest Lodge'."

### The Lord Mayor answered:

"The community's concern about the Crown land at 9 Alfred Street is that the State Government proposes to sell the site.

The State Government should respond directly to the local community's campaign to preserve this site in public hands under the current arrangements. However, the City has offered to maintain this site on behalf of the Government or to have it transferred to the City at a peppercorn rate for use as publicly accessible open space. The State Government has not accepted the City's offer of assistance.

I urge Minister Firth to work with her own Government to ensure that the site is retained in public ownership."

### Next Steps:

forestlodgetrees community group has requested a meeting with Councillor Firth to discuss the way forward with our campaign.

For further information our blogspot is <http://forestlodgetrees.blogspot.com> which is regularly updated. We can be contacted at [forestlodgetrees@yahoo.com.au](mailto:forestlodgetrees@yahoo.com.au).

- Mary Pollard

# Planning Matters

## Wood Street Parklands

On Monday, 20 August, Council approved the remediation and replanting of this large area adjacent to the Orphan School Creek, much of it recently purchased by the City. As I have previously written, the proposal, developed over eleven years and strongly supported by the Society, is a very detailed and comprehensive program of bush regeneration with the aim of producing a habitat for wildlife, as well as additional parkland for new residential development, most notably on the Children's Hospital site, a bushland buffer between this site and the lower-rise Forest Lodge, and an enlarged green corridor linking the area north of Bridge Road, and potentially Parramatta Road, to the waterfront.

As expected there was a lively debate. As often happens when action is too long delayed, there are people who have become attached to the status quo, and others who have arrived too recently to have been involved in developing the plans. Council's decision was tactful and considerate but firm. Efforts would be made to save some mature trees, the removal of others would be delayed as long as possible, and palms would be relocated to more suitable spots, but the remediation and regeneration would proceed as planned. A children's playground will be the subject of a further development application.

## Nag's Head Hotel

As I wrote in the July Bulletin, this pub anticipated the ban on smoking with an ambit claim for a considerable increase in both outside and inside activity

It is to the credit of the City Councillors that they were not swayed by the pub's arguments and even took a firmer line than their own planners, reducing the approval to one small area for smoking only, with strict building and control requirements. The pub has appealed, so we should restrain ourselves until that has been heard, but the City appears determined to send a clear message but the smoking ban should not be used as an excuse to intensify use.

**Derek Barton is looking after planning matters until mid October. Phone him on 9660 8461 if you need to speak to him urgently.**

## Residential development in Glebe

There is an understandable fascination with statistics, especially about your own area, but Census data is notoriously easy to misinterpret. For a start, the Census is just a snapshot of people on one night in midwinter. If you want to find figures about recreational, cultural, educational, commercial or industrial and a host of other areas that affect us all you will have to look elsewhere. Those figures too can be misleading. For example, there has been an increase in open space in Glebe, as the figures will show. What they will not show is that most of that increase is of the highest quality, firstly because most of it is waterfront, and secondly because it is almost all linked and accessible.

Even if you look at just residential development, which may at first appear straightforward, there are traps for the unwary. Fortunately, because I have been closely involved with this issue for thirty years I'm uniquely able to explain what has happened.

It is actually very simple. Glebe's population has increased by about 2,000 over the last twenty years (about 17%). However, most of that increase took place, not because of large developer projects like the Pavilions at the end of Glebe Point Road, or the Fletchers/Australand at the bottom of Forsyth Street and Ferry Road, but because the Department of Housing renovated and extended the existing houses on the Glebe Estate during the 1980s. Only about 120 new dwellings were built, mostly housing for seniors, all low-rise and on existing lots. However, it meant hundreds of houses became available to accommodate families, and that is exactly what happened. It was our largest development project, and it was almost invisible.

Over the following dozen years about one thousand private dwellings have been built or created by conversion of industrial/commercial buildings, increasing the variety of dwelling types, but generally not as suitable for families. However at the same time the occupancy rate, or number of persons per dwelling, has been declining. In the Glebe demographic, what that means is the population is aging and consequently more people are living alone. Hence the increase of about 15% in the number of dwellings has not led to a

substantial further increase in population. There is one guaranteed way of ensuring a long-term increase in population: move more young families into the existing housing.

## Wither the Tramsheds?

Bruce Lay, speaker and award recipient at last month's AGM has obtained copies of a 1999 Feasibility Assessment for Leichhardt Bus Depot (formerly the tramsheds), commissioned by Anne Martin, previously Arts Officer for Leichhardt Council and responsible for most of the current public art in Glebe Point Road.

The Assessment was written by a group of consultants including Tonkin Zulaikha (Peter Tonkin is an award-winning architect who lived in Glebe for many years and designed a unique noticeboard for Glebe Point Road). The study proposes adapting the depot for artists' studios and performance space, using the now demolished Blackwattle Studios as a model. Much of its contents will be useful to The Society's Arts and Media group looking for alternative uses for Glebe's Tramsheds (Sue Ingram, Andrew Craig and myself).

- Neil Macindoe

## Heritage Grants Program

The City of Sydney has recently listed projects successful in obtaining funding under the Heritage Grants Program. Eleven successful applicants will receive grants for 2007/2008; five of which have been awarded for work to private dwellings including the restoration of the original roof, replacement of the front door and external painting of a residence in Forest Lodge.

The Heritage Grants Program is an annual program providing funding up to \$10,000 for small scale conservation/restoration work that improves the quality of the City's heritage and built environment. Applications for 2007/2008 are now closed. However the Heritage Grants Program will again be open for applications in February 2008.

For those requiring further information regarding the Program please contact the City of Sydney Council on 9265 9333 or [communitygrants.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://communitygrants.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au) or talk to me.

- Dianne Gray

# Bruce Lay's address to the 2007 AGM

*Bruce Lay was Architect/Planner at Leichhardt Council for more than two decades.*

*Bruce introduced his talk by telling us about his life and career before he started working with Leichhardt Municipal Council in 1981. He continued ...*

My contribution in Leichhardt was principally in two areas:

1. Open space - the new Council wanted to grasp the evident change on the waterfronts, both de-industrialisation and a wind down of port activities, to achieve foreshore open space - not only more open space, but the potential for networking. I did the planning and facilitation for this. More later on the people and groups involved.

2. Built-form control and conservation planning - the old Council represented renewal of the inner city with flats, with freeways threaded through. The new Council wanted to keep the character and fought the freeways, so substantially new planning controls were required. Harry negotiated a down-zoning to salvage the residential norms, introducing conservation areas etc and I did work on the finer controls - DCPI - precinct based controls for buildings which have since become the norm, not only in Leichhardt but elsewhere in the City. The City's recent UDS for Glebe continues that approach.

None of these outcomes were inevitable, as it may seem to be today. They were the result of a long and concerted struggle by individuals and groups at various levels of action. It certainly helped to have a politically aligned Council and State Government, who were sympathetic to the hand over of public lands to rectify longstanding deficiencies, but who could also envision a different sort of inner Sydney and Harbour. A great deal of that idealism and vision has gone.

**Foreshores Committee** - The Sydney Harbour Foreshores Committee, formed in the late 1970s, was the major player, with Nick and Annette O'Neill (Balmain) being key people, but working with Glebe and Annandale residents and groups. It would be good to find out who these people were, and give due recognition. Nick was elected to the 1980 reformist Council, and became Deputy Mayor. He chaired the new Open Space Committee which drove the transformation that has occurred over the last thirty years,

including the recently completed Glebe foreshores.

The O'Neills were also key players in assembling what became the Bicentennial Park, having ready access to Jack Ferguson. While at that stage, Council could readily achieve the handover of public land gratis, the private land was more difficult. While the leverage that goes with rezonings was useful, a key aspect was using S94. Leichhardt went for broke in arguing and winning legal precedents to get developers to dedicate land - to match the per capita provision rate - which no other Councils have followed. This has allowed up to 35% of sites being dedicated for parks and became an increasingly important mechanism, with the redevelopment of former waterfront industrial lands. Leichhardt's per capita provision rate grew from about 8m<sup>2</sup>/capita in the early '80s to about 24 m<sup>2</sup> now (Glebe is close to the norm). With recent urban consolidation, most Councils have been going backwards on open space.

The amenity societies were of course as active on the open space issues as on heritage conservation. I believe, the Paddington Society was the first, in the mid '60s, followed by the Balmain Association around 1965 and the Glebe Soc. in 1969. In the early 1980s the Annandale Society was also very active, given the important contribution of the Masons. Whereas such groups are fragile, depending on key people, and usually galvanised by hot issues, the Glebe Society has built a depth of talent, embedded in perhaps a more cohesive community than some other inner areas (a sore point as I live in Newtown) and covers a broader range of issues than most, and hence embodies wide support in the community and respect with public agencies.

**The Mural** - the mural in the Crescent Annandale was painted as a community project in 1980, re-painted with some footnotes on change, two years ago, with one of the original artists Rodney Monk, supervising the renewal. I commend it to you as a light hearted statement of the issues of the time, many of which still resonate. It has tended to become urban wallpaper against a busy road but I urge you to have another look. It covers the ground, pretty if gently decaying houses, streetside banter, dogs straining on leads, an abandoned fishing line on a jetty, smoking chimneys (now a memory),

ominous silhouettes of jumbos overhead (they seem more benign now), parrots skimming the water, and the suggestion of rainforest margins to the bays, lots of trucks, crushed cars, and an Aboriginal family fishing from a dugout, added where the bus shelter used to be.

## **The recipe for Sydney**

As you know, new issues constantly arise, the penalty and rewards from living in the middle of a dynamic and beautiful city like Sydney. Key lessons about the nature of a place need to be constantly re-learned in these short grab times. These understandings were outcomes from the green bans and conservation struggles of the 70s and 80s, which I want to examine;

**1. First ingredient** - Sydney, particularly inner Sydney and the Harbour edge, is a built landscape. Buildings emulate the topography - the nineteenth century character was opportunistic, building on the landscape, not carving into it. Street patterns and buildings are sited pragmatically on the stone. Hence the mosaic of inner suburbs with a matrix of grids, rather than a grid placed over the whole landscape, like San Francisco for example. And, of course, it is low rise but with higher buildings on the ridges on the main roads - this also allows the breezes and views to be shared. The hatred of Blues Point Tower derives from this understanding that has been enshrined in density, height, and foreshore controls derived following the battles with redevelopment in Milsons Point, The Rocks and Leichhardt. This is now under threat of crude interventions by the State government, and opportunist high rise development. The tower on the former Children's Hospital site is a case in point.

**2. Fragmented tenure** - Bigger scale development in Sydney has always been frustrated by our culture of home ownership and fragmented tenure that limits site consolidation for the "bigger is better" scenarios - perhaps being a nation of small capitalists is not so bad. This has not only frustrated flat and high rise development, it also underpinned the demise of the inner city freeways, until the road builders discovered tunnels.

**3. The rugged landform and interlacing of land and water** - have also reinforced an inner urban pattern of localities (the City of Villages notion) where there is a strong

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identification with place - Glebites, Balmaniacs, Newtonians etc - that is less evident with the "carpet roll out" suburbs further west. Few large cities have such strong social cohesion combined with social and cultural mix. Many consist of large estates, but these are often socially homogenous rather than mirroring the diversity of the society.

**4. Layers** - the social and cultural diversity, as well as the chronology of development, is expressed in the layers of place such as the estate pattern which is still the main structure of Glebe. The nature of Sydney is intricate, a fine grain to use a planning term. Incremental growth is appropriate, rather than wholesale renewal, making the whole greater than the sum of the parts.

One of the important things for groups such as the Glebe Society to do is to constantly remind the State government, as well as their community, of the way they are, where we have come from and that these things should remain inviolable.

## New Challenges

**1. The Working Harbour** - I have a sentimental attachment to the association of shipping with Sydney Harbour - which perhaps needs revision. The scale of modern cargo shipment is huge and is not compatible with the Harbour and mixing it with the many other demands and opportunities. The challenge is to make exciting new pieces of the city that are real places for work, play and living, and not just luxury residential. The outcomes of the East Darling Harbour Competition are promising in this respect. Keeping the smaller scaled grubbies along Rozelle Bay seems fine, but the scale of the threatened new boat storage sheds, bulk stores and fuelling depots is a problem. It should not be just a choice between one or the other, but how much. Scale is more critical to compatibility than the activities themselves. This seems too subtle for the State Government and its powerful lobbyists.

**2. Harold Park** - is now inappropriately located for its users, so change is inevitable. I have given you a simplified formula for sustaining inner Sydney and Harold Park should be master planned considering these. It should contain a variety of things, be developed by a variety of agencies and include a new public street pattern. The development should not fill

up the valley it sits in, but respect it, even perhaps to the extent of reviving its watercourse. An institutional takeover, as has been suggested by Sydney University, would kill it.

**3. The Tram Sheds** - these are a particular component which embodies an important history that needs interpretation, applying the Burra Charter mantra of "do as little as possible and as much as is necessary". The sheds are a great opportunity for a public access use that could include low rent studio space as an incubator for art making - so sorely needed in Sydney and so much better accommodated in Melbourne and Adelaide. Ann Martin, our cultural planner lost to Parramatta, did a wonderful scheme along these lines for the Leichhardt Tramsheds.

**4. The missing link** - the disgraceful management of the foreshores to the Blackwattle Bay Secondary College is now more apparent with completion of the rest of the foreshore walkway. The State government should be shamed into collaboration, removing the barriers and the cars. Get Verity down there, and shame her!

**5. Wentworth Park** - this is a more shameful story than Harold Park, as it was a great inner city Park, eroded by gradual alienation to a sectional interest. While there have been some steps towards recovery, it remains a purpose built but hugely underutilised venue for a specific purpose and it remains a problem. The recent demolition of the Stadium in Redfern Park and recovery of the original park provides a model on how to proceed with Wentworth Park. A site visit by the Society inviting City representatives and locals involved with the struggle, may be good timing. Also invite Verity.

Now that I have told you how to suck eggs, I'd better make a quick exit.

- Bruce Lay

### A request

I am researching an aspect of community activism associated with The Mural in The Crescent, including the role of the Sydney Harbour Foreshores Committee, around 1980. I do not know much about the people in Glebe who participated in this, and I would appreciate your assistance, in the recovery of that history.

**Bruce Lay (lay.heritage@gmail.com)**

## Wentworth Park Sporting Complex - the Tower



The tower before restoration. Photos courtesy of the WPSCT.

Residents and those travelling through Glebe could hardly fail to notice the rather imposing and unusual tower positioned at the junction of Wentworth Park Road and St. Johns Road.

Until recently the base of the tower was encased in a rather dilapidated corrugated iron structure that served as the turnstiles for greyhound racing. The recent demolition of the old turnstile building has revealed the tower in all its glory and has also revealed some previously hidden ornamentation.

The tower's origins lie with greyhound racing. The first greyhound racing was conducted at Wentworth Park in 1932 and in the early years facilities were no doubt somewhat makeshift. Racing however must have prospered because by the end of the decade the Trust granted a lease to the NSW National Coursing Association. The Tower was completed in 1939 and its ornate facade suggests that apart from its functionality it was intended to provide an imposing entranceway symbolic of the success and popularity of greyhound racing. This is however somewhat speculative.

The basic functions of the tower were twofold. First it was necessary to provide an elevated position from which the lure driver could control the speed of the lure (or bunny). For the uninitiated the role is

# Basket Weavers and True Believers

## - a history by Tony Harris

by Tony Larkum

No prizes for recognising who coined (or at least popularised) those phrases. They neatly bracket the approximate entry and exit points of Paul Keating into the political life of our country. In 1981 Paul Keating made a vitriolic attack in the NSW ALP Council on the new Labor Left of the inner city as believing in “wider nature strips, more trees and let’s go back to making wicker baskets in Balmain”. The “True Believers” phrase needs no reference.

This “Basket Weavers” phrase was of course not a dig at all at the Labor Left but to the new wave of inner city dwellers, who thought both the right and left, of the Labor Party and the Liberal Party, to have outlived their day in local politics. It was due to the actions of such people in the late 60s and early 70s that the ALP lost control of Leichhardt Council to be replaced for the greater part by an independent-dominated Council. As documented in this book, this came about in 1971 by the Campaign for a Better Council (CBC). Older members of the Society will remember the names of David Young and Eric Sandblom, both members of the Society, who became the local aldermen, and fought for many values of the Society, including parks and open space, but also for so much more.

Tony Harris’s book is a history of the Labor movement in Leichhardt, in the 1970s and 1980s. Later like many others he left the Labor party and joined the Greens and then left politics altogether to pursue a career as a historian. So the book deals more with the Labor movement in the 70s, and broadens out to other movements in the 80s and 90s. When in the Labor movement, Tony lived in Annandale and breathed the politics of Annandale, becoming an alderman, briefly, for that suburb. Not surprisingly, therefore, Annandale features prominently in this book. However, this has advantages, for although the Glebe Society tends to view local politics through a Glebe perspective, seeing the world through others’ eyes can have its benefits. Thus there was much here which I learnt for the first time and which helped to explain several enigmas, especially that of Hall Greenland who played such a quixotic role in the 1980s.

But to get back to the beginning: the Glebe Society was formed in 1969, just at the time that the ALP through Gough Whitlam was mounting a come-back. However, for those of us who joined the Glebe North Branch of the ALP in this period, times had not changed since before WWII. Doctor Foley ran the branch, even though for the later part, he did not reside in the Municipality or hold any office. And while the Branch covered the Glebe Point end of Glebe there always seemed to be enough rumbustious supporters of Doc Foley to defeat any motions put forward by the Left. And Meredith Burgmann relates that she was excluded from the Branch for over a year on the basis that its membership was “full”. What “Left” stood for was, for many, anything that was not supported by the Right-leaning Head Office, such as height restrictions on new buildings, opposition to motorways through the suburb, environmental controls, etc, etc. For those of us who joined the Glebe Society to foster such changes - and joined the ALP to see a fairer society in Australia and an exit policy from Vietnam - these times were hard to take.

Then in 1971 all this changed with the election of the Campaign for a Better Council. Nick Origlass was elected Mayor and the days of “Open Council” began. These were heady times but it was like riding a wild horse. Council meetings would be frequent and go on interminably, everybody being allowed a “say”. So the Glebe Society had to arrange for a member to be there at all sittings and all times. Although I cannot claim to have done the lion’s share of this, I found what I did do fascinating but very exhausting. Nevertheless, the policy paid off, and the Council adopted the far-seeing planning regulations and opposition to motorways, etc that have largely made Glebe what it is today. Then in 1972 the first Whitlam Government was elected. Key members of the Glebe Society and Leichhardt Council persuaded Tom Uren and the Federal Government to take over the Glebe Estate and save it from “development”. At the same time alliances with the Builders Labourers Federation started the “Green Bans” which saved Glebe from the Western Distributor Motorway!

Continued on next page ...

more technical and certainly more important than might be imagined. The lure should be kept at a constant speed and as far as possible a constant distance from the lead greyhound. Slowing of the lure will slow the leader, thus allowing the greyhounds racing further back to gain ground. This is sometimes called “stacking the field” and may well be another reason for the lure driver to be up a tower - protection from irate punters. Speeding away too far ahead of the greyhounds may cause those in the rear of the field to lose sight of the bunny, thus lose interest in the race. This is known as “not chasing” resulting in “not happy” owners and trainers. It’s an often thankless job being a lure driver.

The second advantage of a tower is that it provided an elevated position from which information could be semaphored to the patrons. The original semaphore on the Wentworth Park tower lies on the northern side and provides for the result to be posted by sliding in 1st, 2nd or 3rd against the number (or box) of the greyhound. A more sophisticated electronic board is on the eastern facade. Wentworth Park has seen at least five generations of semaphore board. Modern boards indicate running times, betting information, plus a host of other information.

The tower was commissioned by the NSW National Coursing Association Committee, Patron J. Wardale and President G.Bailey. Interestingly it was G Bailey’s son Neville, who as President commissioned the current grandstand. The tower builder was R M Bowcock and the architect C Clancy. It was completed in 1939. The vertical lettering on the western side, visible as you come down St Johns Road, is presumed to stand for Wentworth Park Coursing.

**Peter Mann**  
Chief Executive  
Wentworth Park Sporting Complex Trust



The now-demolished entrance plaza seen from Wentworth Park Road.

... continued from previous page

Thus while “left-wing trendies” were having their noses rubbed into dirt in the Glebe North Branch of the ALP, there was enough “air” outside to enable them to breathe.

All that changed with the Dismissal in November, 1975. Not only did the country have a conservative government back in power, and the state a moribund conservative government, but the ALP managed to get the mayoral position in Leichhardt, which led to the end of “Open Council”. It looked as if progress and innovation in Glebe would be stalled. However, with the momentum that had been built up, the Glebe Society went from strength to strength. Also the Wran Labor Government was elected in 1976, and one of the immediate results of this, among many welcome moves, was the finding of a safe home for the Glebe Estate in the NSW Housing Commission. It was at this time, too, that, with Nick O’Neill, the Society established its foreshore policy and stopped Parks Developments from demolishing *Bellevue* and the warehouses that were to become Blackwattle Bay Studios, at the end of Glebe Point Road. Height limits were established on new apartment blocks and in many cases a condition of development was making over of some of the land to “Open Space” ie pocket parks; the Western Distributor was dumped and *Elsie*, the Women’s Refuge was established on the Glebe Estate, to name but a few of the achievements.

There is no need to go on as “the rest is history”. This will be a book that many members will want to buy and savour, because it touches on a vital period of the history of the Glebe Society, and incidentally the Annandale Association, which started in 1971, but which sadly is no longer active. This is an oral history with interviews with some 80 persons, including myself, so it is not history from any one single person’s perspective and neither does it dwell too much on political intrigue. Yes, you can read about the making of *Rats in the Ranks* and the Mayoralty of Larry Hand, but there is no sense of political correctness; the viewpoint is many layered and empathetic. A great read - and now all we need is a history of Glebe and the Glebe Society in these times! Many of the names of Glebe Society members who in those times made Glebe what it is today are missing from this book - John Buckingham, John

Hoddinott, Albert Renshaw, Alan Robertson, and many others, although to be sure Bernard and Kate Smith and Neil and Jan Macindoe get good mention, as well as the Glebe Society.

Published by Left Bank Publishing, Newtown, September 2007. \$35.

## Art and About

Images from Glebe Primary School workshops have been incorporated into our first roll of “wallpaper” (see picture below) for display in selected empty shopfronts along Glebe Point Road, for Glebe on Track (Art and About).



Printing of the “wallpaper” came about through the heroic efforts of Nick Vickers who organised a sponsorship agreement with Epson and the College of Fine Arts (COFA). Epson donated ink and paper then COFA did the printing, enabling this striking showpiece to come to fruition. Thank you Nick, Epson and COFA!

Glebe on Track will also be seen in Glebe Library, where a CD of images will be played continuously, and in the Art Almanac gallery window where a photographic print exhibition will be on show. Images from community workshops at the Mitchell Street/Hope Street centre, CafTchurch in St Johns Road, Glebe Youth Service and individuals from the broader community will all be included in the follow up wall paper rolls adding to the show.

Displays will be set up on 2-3 October and will run until the end of October.

- Susan Ingram

Convenor, the Art and About committee

## Counting the Superb Fairy-wrens



Sue Stevens (centre), giving the group background information.

Photo: Fiona Campbell

Over 20 people attended the Superb Fairy-wren (aka Blue Wren) “snapshot” on Sunday morning, 23 September. Sue Stevens, the project manager, gave an excellent overview of the life and times of the fantastic Superb Fairy-wrens and presented information on where sightings have been made by Glebe and Forest Lodge residents. Thanks to everyone who has provided sightings so far.

Sightings tended to form clusters, occurring around Toxteth and Boyce Lanes, in Ferry Road, near Glebe Street and Jarocin Avenue. There were isolated sightings in one or two other spots.

The stronghold for Superb Fairy-wrens appears to be back lanes and back yards where they have been spotted in tangled vines, lemon trees, bougainvilleas or banksia roses. However where there are tallish trees (especially eucalypts) and open space beneath the trees, noisy miners or currawongs are likely to dominate, at the expense of the wrens.

Sue divided Glebe and Forest Lodge into areas for people to go forth and spot’ the birds. We all headed out in comfortable walking shoes, with our maps and sheets for recording data. The “snapshot” took place between 10am and 11.30am to make sure that there would be no double counting of birds. Sue also handed out information sheets on how we can all make our garden more Superb Fairy-wren friendly. After returning from all our walking we shared notes, coffee and good conversation.

Please keep sending in details of any sightings to [glebe.wrens@gmail.com](mailto:glebe.wrens@gmail.com) or phone David Mander Jones on 9552 4172. And watch this space for more information.

- Hilary Wise



# Glebe News

## 18th Annual Glebe Music Festival - some highlights

Full details of this year's festival are shown in the flyer enclosed with this Bulletin, but please note these highlights.

- Two expatriate doctors currently resident in London, David McIntosh (Director of the Festival) and Rex Melville, will perform their new cabaret show at Gleebooks, 49 Glebe Point Road, on **Saturday 10 November at 7.30pm.**
- Tickets \$15 (concessions \$10) include refreshments.
- David McIntosh has called Concert 2 on **Thursday 15 November at 7 pm** in the Great Hall "The Glebe Society Concert".
- Admission is free for this concert, given by the Sydney Conservatorium of Music Ensembles Studies Unit.
- As it will be daylight saving by then, bring a picnic to eat on the lawns prior to the concert. See you there?
- For lovers of jazz, the group Quantum Theory will perform at The Old Court House, corner of St John's Road and Talfourd Street, on **Friday 16 November at 7.30pm.** This is a rare opportunity to experience the interior of this marvellous historic building. The repertoire will include original music - "Look and Smile", "In the End", "Bill's Tune", "Sustainable Energy", "Quin" - and more. Tickets \$10.
- Chamber Recital, St Scholastica Chapel, Avenue Road, Glebe, **3pm on Sunday 25 November 2007**

Tickets will be available at the door for all these concerts but advance bookings can be made at [www.glebemusicfestival.com](http://www.glebemusicfestival.com) or by emailing [mcintosh@glebemusicfestival.com](mailto:mcintosh@glebemusicfestival.com) or by phoning 9416-6136.

**See the enclosed Music Festival flyer**

## Max Solling at gleebooks

Shirley Fitzgerald, Sydney Council's Historian, will be "in conversation" with Max Solling about his book, *Grandeur and Grit: a History of GLEBE at gleebooks* on Saturday 27 October, 3pm for a 3.30pm start.

This event is shown in our newsletter and website as a gleebooks "paid" event, but all Glebe Society members are invited free. So Society members need to book, and to say when they do so that they are Glebe Society members. Then they will be on the free list.

Drinks will be provided and we'd like it to be a lovely community event, so please come along.

- David Gaunt, gleebooks

## Meet the Candidates

When we sent this Bulletin to the printer, The Prime Minister had not yet announced the date of the Federal Election. This won't stop us holding another Meet the Candidates evening though. We have phoned the Forest Lodge Public School and pencilled in every Thursday evening from now to the end of the school term.

Look out for an announcement of the date of the meeting.

## Note Friday 14 December for the Glebe Society Twilight Christmas Party

- to be held at Lyndhurst, in Darghan Street, 5 - 7pm. Lyndhurst, one of two remaining Regency villas in Glebe, was designed by architect John Verge for the Principal Colonial Surgeon Dr James Bowman and his family. It was built between 1833 and 1837 on 36 acres overlooking Blackwattle Bay. After being the headquarters for the Historic Houses Trust for 20 years, it is now in private ownership and has been offered kindly by its owners as the venue for this year's Christmas Party.

- Dorothy Davis

## Champagne High Tea at *The Retreat*

The owners of *The Retreat* have generously offered their house as a venue for a special Glebe Society event: Champagne High Tea and an opportunity for guests to have a treasured item or "antique" valued



*The Retreat.* Photo: Bruce Davis

by John Williams who owns an antique and collectable auction house.

The beautiful gardens and interior of this 1850s house will be open for us to wander through, or sit with champagne and delicacies, and listen to interesting commentaries on the collection of "valuables"

**Where:** 53 Leichhardt Street, Glebe, next to *Bellevue*

**When:** Sunday 4 November 4.30 - 6.30pm

**Cost:** \$30 per person (paid in advance) plus an optional \$10 per item for a valuation (paid at the door).

brought by guests.

Numbers are strictly limited to 40. To book, please phone Dorothy on 9660 7873 or 0417 240 603. Bookings will need to be followed up straight away with payment (cheque, cash or credit card) and will only be confirmed once payment has been received.



Dorothy Davis

Bring along your late Auntie Flo's favourite plate. You never know, it might be worth a fortune!

# News and Notes

## Thirsty Thursdays

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

On Thursday 4 October we will go to the new restaurant opposite St John's Church at 197 Glebe Point Road - Old Mans Hat.

On Thursday 1 November we will return to *Haiphong Harbour*, the Vietnamese restaurant at 28 Glebe Point Road. It is BYO (corkage \$2 per person).

And for the last Thirsty Thursday of 2007, on 6 December, we will explore the City Quarter Village, on the site of the old Children's Hospital, and eat at La Cucina Calabrese.

## Christmas shopping made easy

As reported in last month's Bulletin, gleebooks is offering copies of Max's book *Grandeur and Grit: a History of GLEBE to Society* members for \$42.95 instead of the list price of \$49.95 if it is ordered before 16 October.

The City of Sydney funded the author and partially supported the publication costs of Max Solling's book, through an agreement to purchase a portion of the print run.

So now, thanks to a generous offer by the Council, the Glebe Society will also be able to offer copies at \$42.95. They will be available indefinitely from 17 October onwards, at all Glebe Society functions and stalls. Contact Liz Simpson-Booker for more information.

## Glebe Public School Celebrates 150 Years of Schooling, November, 2008

Glebe Public School will be celebrating a sesquicentenary of schooling next year and is searching for anyone who has connections to our school. Please pass on this information to those who would be interested.

We are collecting photos, memorabilia, stories, anecdotes or anything relevant and would be delighted to hear from you if you can add to our history. Please mark anything you loan us clearly with your name and phone number.

There will be a day and evening of activities. More information will follow and our website will have regular updates about the day.

Please contact the school if you are interested in attending and / or can add to our history.

Vicki Pogulis, Principal

Glebe Public School  
Derwent Street Glebe 2037  
Telephone: 02 9660 4549  
Fax: 02 9552 1703  
Email: [glebe-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:glebe-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

## New Theatre

Coming up in the *Censored!* series of plays, coordinated by Glebe Society member Lyn Collingwood at New Theatre, is *Tartuffe*, by Moliere on **Sunday 14 October at 1pm** -

All tickets \$15. New Theatre - 542 King Street Newtown. The 370 bus passes the door

Visit [www.newtheatre.org.au](http://www.newtheatre.org.au) for details of more New Theatre productions and events.

## Coming events at the Glebe Library

**Saturday 20 October, 2pm.** Heather Bentley talks about Medieval Food.

Contact the Glebe Library, 9518 6055, for more information about these and other events.

## Bulletins by email

If you would like to receive your *Bulletin* by email instead of snail mail, please email [editor@glebesociety.org.au](mailto:editor@glebesociety.org.au)

## Our Local Member of Parliament

State Member for Balmain, Verity Firth MLA

Office address: 112a Glebe Point Road, Glebe 2037.

Senior Electorate Officer: Christina Harlamb, ph 9660 7586, fax 9660 6112, email [christina.harlamb@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:christina.harlamb@parliament.nsw.gov.au),

## City of Sydney Councillors

Lord Mayor

Clover Moore MLA

Councillors

Phillip Black  
Verity Firth  
Chris Harris  
Marcelle Hoff  
Robyn Kemmis  
Michael Lee  
Shayne Mallard  
John McInerney  
Tony Pooley



**For enquiries:**

Please contact the City of Sydney on 9265 9333.

## Forest Lodge Public School

*Home of The Glebe  
Society Archives*

Phone 9660 3530



# For your diary ...

**Thursday 4 October**, 7pm - Thirsty Thursday - *Old Mans Hat* - 197 Glebe Point Road. BYO.

**Wednesday 10 October**, 7.30pm - Glebe Society Management Committee Meeting - The Old Fire Station, 115 Mitchell Street.

**Saturday 27 October**, 3pm for 3.30pm start - gleebooks, 49 Glebe Point Road. Max Solling, author of *Grandeur and Grit: A History of GLEBE* in conversation with Shirley Fitzgerald. Free for Glebe Society members.

**Thursday 1 November**, 7pm - Thirsty Thursday - *Haiphong Harbour*, 28 Glebe Point Road. BYO.

**Sunday 4 November**, 4.30 - 6.30pm - Champagne "High Tea" - *The Retreat*, Leichhardt Street.

**Wednesday 14 November**, 7.30pm - Glebe Society Management Committee Meeting - The Old Fire Station, 115 Mitchell Street.

**10 November to 2 December** - The 18th Annual Glebe Music Festival. See page 9 and the enclosed flyer.

**Thursday 15 November**, 7pm - Glebe Society Concert in the Great Hall of Sydney University. Join us for a picnic first.

**Thursday 6 December**, 7pm - Thirsty Thursday - *La Cucina Calabrese*, the City Quarter Village (old Children's Hospital site).

**Wednesday 12 December**, 7.30pm - Glebe Society Management Committee Meeting - The Old Fire Station, 115 Mitchell Street.

**Friday 14 December**, 5 - 7pm - Glebe Society Christmas Party Drinks - *Lyndhurst*, Darghan Street.

See the Glebe Society Website for our calendar of events in 2007

## Contacting The Glebe Society

### Mail

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Glebe Society Inc

PO Box 100, Glebe NSW 2037

### Website

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

The website will only flourish if members use the site. Send contributions or comments to [webmaster@glebesociety.org.au](mailto:webmaster@glebesociety.org.au)

### The Bulletin

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 to the Glebe Society. Write to the address above or email [editor@glebesociety.org.au](mailto:editor@glebesociety.org.au)

### Disclaimer

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

### Bulletin Deadline

The next edition of the *Bulletin* will be published at the end of October. The deadline for contributions is **17 October**.

## The Glebe Society Inc

Established 1969

### Management Committee:

President	Jan Macindoe	9660 0208
Vice-president	Bruce Davis	9660 7873
Immediate Past President	Bob Armstrong	9660 4189
Secretary	Liz Simpson-Booker	9518 6186
Treasurer	Bruce Davis	9660 7873

<b>Committee Members:</b>	Dorothy Davis 9660 7873	Jan Wilson 9660 2698
	Simon Fraser 9660 7560	

### Sub-committee Convenors:

All sub-committee convenors are *ex officio* members of the Management Committee

Arts, Culture and Media	Sue Ingram	9692 8534
Bays and Foreshores	Tony Larkum	9660 7030
Wentworth Park	Anne Fraser	9660 7560
Blue Wrens	David Mander Jones	9552 4172
Environment and Open Spaces	Andrew Craig	9566 1746
Glebe against Global Warming	Bill McCarthy	9660 5119
Heritage	Dianne Gray	0417 434 814
Infrastructure Defect Reporting	Margaret Sheppard	9660 4121
Membership	Cheryl & Bryan Herden	9660 7371
Planning	Neil Macindoe	9660 0208
Transport and Traffic	Chris Hallam	9660 3670

### Adopt-a-Park Contacts:

**Foley Park:** Bobbie Burke (9692 0343) **Kirsova:** Fay & David Mander Jones  
**Paddy Gray Park:** John Gray

### Other Contacts:

Archivist	Lyn Milton	9660 7930
Blackwattle Cove Coalition (BCC)	Anne Fraser	9660 7560
Bulletin Editor	Edwina Doe	9660 7066
Event Coordination	Dorothy Davis	9660 7873
History of Glebe	Max Solling	9660 1160
History of the Glebe Society	Jeanette Knox	9660 7781
Liaison with CityRags	Bob Armstrong	9660 4189
Liaison with CoGG	Bruce Davis	9660 7873
Liaison with FLAG	Jan Wilson	9660 2698
Publicity	Sue Ingram	9692 8534
Website	Cynthia Jones	9660 2451

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- Reports by Presidents and Sub-committee convenors to the AGM - see insert.

The GLEBE  
PO Box 100



SOCIETY Inc  
Glebe 2037

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## Membership of the Glebe Society

Individual member	\$45
<b>Joint</b> (2 people, one address)	\$55
<b>Household</b> (more than 2 adults and/or children, one address)	\$60
<b>Concession</b> (student or pensioner)	\$20
Business or institution	\$110

Download a Membership Form from our website ([www.glebesociety.org.au/AboutTGSI/Membership/Membership\\_application.pdf](http://www.glebesociety.org.au/AboutTGSI/Membership/Membership_application.pdf)).

Or 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.

## Community Contacts

**Manager-Neighbourhood Services Centre** ; Glebe, Forest Lodge, Camperdown, Ultimo & Pyrmont: Nick Hespe.

**Email:** [nhespe@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nhespe@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

**Glebe Town Hall Office:** 9298 3190 8.30am-5.30pm Mon- Fri

**Sydney City Council Customer Service**

**Telephone (24 hours):** 9265 9333

**email:** [council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

**website:** [www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

**Glebe Point Road upgrade contact (24 hrs):** Grant Donohue 0414 687 101, [grant\\_donohue@gmwurban.com.au](mailto:grant_donohue@gmwurban.com.au)

**Dumped Shopping trolleys:** Trolley Tracker 1800 641 497

**Waterway Garbage:** NSW Maritime response - 9563 8592