



# Glebe Society Bulletin

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## Bays Precinct task force report: worth the effort?



Blackwattle Bay (Image: Nick Moir)

The long awaited Bays Precinct Taskforce Report<sup>1</sup> and the Government's response to it, was released in late March. The Report is a mixed bag. It makes some very significant findings and recommendations - although these are often loose and open to many interpretations. Jane Marceau and I considered refusing to sign-off on the report, but, as important gains could still be achieved if the Government responded positively to key recommendations, we made an on-balance decision to stay inside the tent.

The Report and the fate of the Bays Precinct (Bays) are inextricably linked with the Government's overall new planning regime. The shape and intent of this regime are now disturbingly clear. My apprehension is that the potential positive outcomes in the Bays Report will be translated so as to privilege developers over community, private benefit over public interest on all the big decisions, and generally dispense with effective community (or Council) input into these decisions.

### Positives in the Report

The Report is quite strong on many things the community has long campaigned for. Many of the community planning principles are accepted and recommended to 'be adopted and applied to decision making in the Bays Precinct'. (R3) These include the important principle that publicly-owned foreshore lands and harbour waters be retained in public ownership. (R1).

There is, however, one hugely disturbing exception. The longstanding, overarching principle, giving *public good* precedence over *private benefit* for any development relating to Sydney Harbour or its foreshores was removed from Report *after* the Taskforce had disbanded. The Sydney Harbour REP 2005 established this as the overarching principle for the whole harbour: 'Sydney Harbour is to be recognised as a public resource, owned by the public, to be protected for the public good' and "The public good has precedence over the private good whenever and whatever change be proposed for Sydney Harbour or its foreshores'.

This strong protecting principle was replaced (post hoc and after our vociferous complaints) with a much weaker one referencing 'the social and economic welfare of the community' rather than public good. They have quite different meanings - and the replacement does not provide suitable protection for the Bays Precinct.

Jane and I could not think of a single positive reason for public servants to deliberately and provocatively remove a principle which affirms public good over private benefit from a Report. We could think of a few disturbing reasons.

### Upcoming Glebe Society Event Saturday 1 June, 12 midday

Discover Chippendale's thriving art galleries.

See website for details.

The report recommends the existing Master Plans, Sydney Harbour REP, SREP 26 and Sydney LEP 2005, should be retained as the key planning instruments for the Bays Precinct. (R2, R4). This is important given that these will have no ongoing legal status for most developments.

Not surprisingly, greater community access to the foreshores is affirmed (R18, R19), but we could not get agreement to a 20 metre standard setback for buildings wherever possible.

Strategic uses, requiring proximity/access to a waterway, are given priority for the Bay foreshores and harbour. Residential development is specifically given a low priority. (R24, R25, R13). Foolishly, we thought these might protect the Bays from commercial entertainment uses and expensive, high rise residential developments.

Community unease about lack of transparency in agency/government decisions - especially with regard to lease arrangements for publicly owned lands, waterways and buildings - is clearly recognised and greater transparency is recommended. (p.52)

### Government response

The Government's response was outlined in a media release from Ministers Hazzard and Gay<sup>2</sup>. They made generally positive noises about the Report and committed to five priority tasks:

- Consolidating the concrete and bulk aggregate storage on Glebe Island freeing up foreshore land at Blackwattle Bay for 'public access and appropriate urban renewal'.
- A new waterway management plan investigating locations for recreational and passive boating facilities.
- Investigating potential recreational and open space at head of Rozelle Bay.
- Review of leasing to ensure policy and procedures are open and transparent.
- Investigate the potential for a new port access road.

These are important matters with the potential to deliver positives for the community - depending on how they are implemented.

The Government has set up an Implementation Committee under the Government Architect to act on these tasks and make recommendations on other matters raised in the taskforce report. We understand the Committee and five working groups

are in action. We have no information on these and whether there is any community representation. Questions to Minister Hazard's office have not been answered. This does not augur well.

*Most significantly, the Government was silent on the key planning parameters that are imperative to achieve integrated, strategic planning decisions and protection of the Bays Precinct from inappropriate development. This is alarming given there is no Government commitment to hold off on new proposals pending decisions on these core matters.*

### What has been achieved?

There is potential for significant gains *IF* the Government responds positively and swiftly to the central issues raised in the Report. But right now, after two review processes and years of effort, the Bays Precinct is *without any statutory or policy protections from predatory development.*

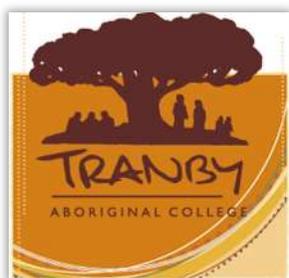
Given the inside lobbying of the Urban Taskforce and developers, the demonstrated propensity of the O'Farrell government to approve unsolicited development proposals involving public lands, the shape of the Government's overall planning regime and the extraordinary location of these foreshores, the community should be very worried about the fate of the Bays over the next few years.

There is real potential that this 'once-in-a-century' opportunity for strategic development of a unique public harbour asset will be squandered and the foreshores and Glebe Island will be surrendered to developers for the greatest profits and the least public good - more expensive, high-rise residential development and entertainment facilities such as the ones associated with the super yacht marina and possibly with the B1B2 Elias Group development.

*Dr Lesley Lynch*

Sources: 1. [http://www.shfa.nsw.gov.au/sydney-Our\\_places\\_and\\_projects-Our\\_projects-Bays\\_Precinct.htm](http://www.shfa.nsw.gov.au/sydney-Our_places_and_projects-Our_projects-Bays_Precinct.htm);

2. 26/03/13 Ministerial media release: New era for Bays Precinct. [http://www.shfa.nsw.gov.au/sydney-Our\\_places\\_and\\_projects-Our\\_projects-Bays\\_Precinct.htm](http://www.shfa.nsw.gov.au/sydney-Our_places_and_projects-Our_projects-Bays_Precinct.htm)



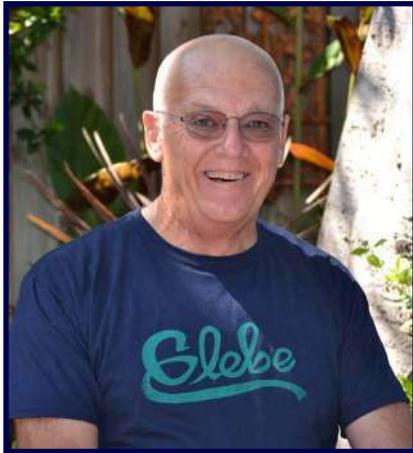
### Open Week at Tranby Aboriginal College

8.30am to 5pm; Monday 3 June to Friday 7 June 2013

Tours of the College, access to Tranby's Library and a BBQ sausage sizzle.

Established in 1958, Tranby is a supportive and independent learning environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

## PRESIDENTS COLUMN



The community representatives who were members of The Wentworth Park Trust from 2004 to May 2013 are worthy of our great thanks. Wentworth Park is now a beautiful place which shows its heritage and celebrates its character as a community asset, not an asset for special interests only, as it was. Three members of the Society, Susie Cleary, Jeremy Gilling and Ted McKeown, enacted community values on the Trust. Susie strategically chaired the Trust through this time of re-development whilst building up fund reserves - no mean feat. Ted is the only community member re-appointed. The racing industry is very well represented on the new Board but the NSW government has made no announcements of these

fundamental changes nor the community treasure that Susie chaired from its despair to its glory. Thanks Susie. Thanks Jeremy. Thanks Ted. The community knows what you have done. Glebe is proud of you.

I am proud to announce that The Glebe Society has appointed three community ambassadors: Geraldine Barnes is ambassador to Schools and Community Centres; Shirley Fitzgerald is ambassador to Centipede; Jan Macindoe is ambassador to the Glebe Community Development Project. The ambassadors connect the Glebe Society to community agencies so we improve amenity. They will help agencies gather data and construct grant applications, examine whether a common database may be constructed and go between the community, agencies and the Society.

As this will be my last page until August here is a tip: Go and meet Nicolo and staff at Ombretta, the new Italian restaurant on GPR near the Toxteth. Fresh produce from Galluzzo's and other providers, chefs from Italy who have not 'learned' to modify dishes for Oz taste. Nicely priced, truly authentic provincial food. Support the local economy and enjoy yourselves.

*John Gray*

## PLANNING MATTERS

### Planning White Paper

By the time you read this the Community Planning Forum, organised by the Society together with the residents groups for Pyrmont and Ultimo scheduled for Thursday, 16 May will have taken place. However, if you were away or unable to attend there is still time to have your views heard. Comments on the White Paper don't close until 28 June. The Better Planning Network, now with 370 member organisations, has produced a useful email letter for you to send to an MP (our own MLA, Jamie Parker, is supportive, so you may prefer to choose one or more others you think could be influenced) on its website, <http://betterplanningnetwork.good.do/>. Or you may prefer to write your own. The BPN website also lists many useful points you may wish to use.

### Community Planning Forum resolves to fight proposed NSW planning changes

An audience of over 120 people attended the Town Hall meeting on Thursday night, 16 May, to learn more about the proposed changes to the NSW Planning laws. The meeting was organised by the Glebe Society, Pyrmont Action and Ultimo Village Voice, resident groups that are all members of the Better Planning Network. The meeting was ably chaired by John Gray, President of the Society.

The meeting was addressed by James Ryan from the Nature Conservation Council, Corinne Fisher, founder and coordinator of the Better Planning Network, and Elizabeth Elenius of Pyrmont Action. The speakers outlined the major changes proposed by the Planning White Paper and draft legislation, including:

- placing economic growth at the centre of all planning policies and instruments and relegating sustainability and public good to minor consideration;
- introducing a hierarchy of plans from the statewide to the local, and requiring all plans to conform to those above them in the hierarchy;
- increasing public participation in drawing up plans but taking away the right for the public to object at the development application stage;
- reducing the number of zones, and replacing environmental and heritage protection with local character zones;
- and aiming to have 80% of developments approved in ten days, within five years.



Corinne Fisher, founder and coordinator of the Better Planning Network (Image: Bruce Davis)

The meeting was then thrown open for questions, and those who spoke made it clear that these changes were all, to some degree, unacceptable, and constituted easing the path for development while reducing the role of both local councils and residents.

Neil Macindoe of the Glebe Society then proposed a resolution that outlined an approach to planning that would improve public participation and outcomes without the negative effects of the proposed legislation. It was approved unanimously, and has been forwarded to the Minister for Planning and other parliamentarians. The resolution can be viewed on the Glebe Society website.

The meeting was the first community event to be held in the newly renovated Glebe Town Hall, and both speakers and audience were impressed by the fine surroundings. The meeting was attended by the Mayor, Clover Moore, Deputy Mayor, Robyn Kemmis some other councillors and staff.

More information about the proposed changes to planning laws can be found on the Glebe Society website, and the website of the Better Planning Network.

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### **Glebe Affordable Housing Project**

This proposal has been in abeyance for some time, but has now reappeared in the form of an application that gives the building envelopes and locations, but still does not include details of the actual units. The proposal is little changed from the one to which we objected last year. There is a very slight reduction in height and the removal of a storey or two on a couple of buildings.

The proposal has a long history. Originally it was to be a joint project between the Department of Housing and the City, and in that form, spread over a much larger area, the proposed density and height were correspondingly lower. Also, a fundamental objection, that public housing land was being given to developers, did not apply, or at least was less of an issue. The problems began when the City withdrew and the proposal was limited entirely to land that had been owned by Housing since the end of World War II.

As it now stands, half the apartments are proposed to be privately owned, and the other half a combination of affordable rental housing, owned by a housing organisation, and rental welfare housing owned by the Department. The Society will renew its objections.

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### **87 Bay Street**

Between the Affordable Housing site and Wentworth Park is an old industrial site, formerly the NSW Government Garage. Before that, the part of the site on the corner of Bay Street housed the Glebe Ragged School, which moved there from the corner of Glebe Street in 1890. Currently the buildings house a private fashion school and other businesses.

The owner is seeking to amend the City Town Plan 2012, the first amendment to be considered. The reason for the amendment is to enable him to build a mixed use building of nine storeys, with the ground floor remaining commercial and the upper floors residential, and including 7.5% affordable rental units, as required by the City's affordable housing strategy.

Council planners and the owner gave a presentation on the proposal at the Glebe Society Committee Meeting of 10 April. It was clear the proposed amendment was influenced by the Affordable Housing Project next door, especially in height and

density. While it may not be as objectionable from the point of view of ownership as that proposal, it is equally objectionable in its design and impact. The proposed density is twice the current Business Zoning.

Janice Challinor, from the Planning Subcommittee, has been especially helpful writing our submissions while I have been preoccupied with the Planning Forum.

Neil Macindoe

## FROM THE TERRACES

### QVB and the Harold Park tramsheds – huh??

*Q : What is the connection between the American Romanesque grandeur of the Queen Victoria Building (1893-98) and the somewhat more humble, but nevertheless massive, Harold Park Tramsheds (1904)?*

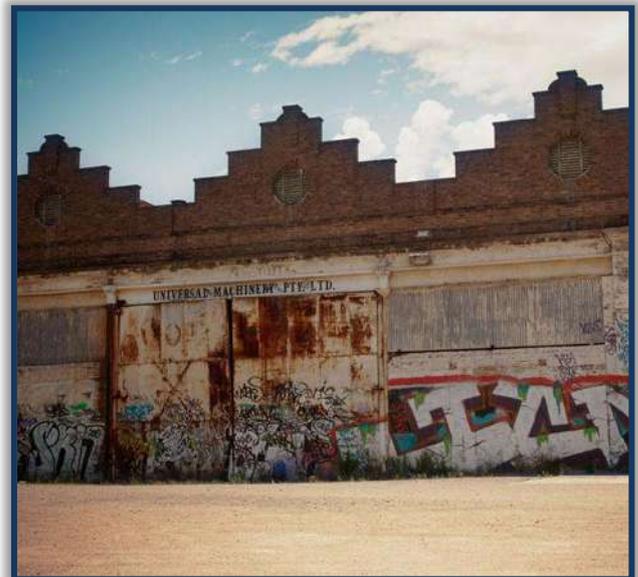
*A :* The architect, George McRae (1858-1923) was an Edinburgh-born architect who migrated to Australia, arriving in Sydney in 1884. He was appointed Assistant Architect in the City Architect's Office, becoming City Architect and City Building Surveyor in 1889. In 1897 McRae was appointed Principal Assistant Architect to the Government Architect, Walter Liberty Vernon. He succeeded Vernon as NSW Government Architect in 1911 and was regarded as 'a fine stamp of a man' with a kindly disposition<sup>1</sup>. McRae held the position of NSW Government Architect for 12 years until his death in 1923.

Among McRae's other notable buildings are the former Parcels Post Office (1913) in Railway Square (now restored and reopened as an executive hotel) and the Education Department Building (1912) in Bridge Street, City.

It is obvious that QVB and the Tramsheds could hardly be more dissimilar, given that they were designed to fulfil vastly different functions. The contrast could not be more marked between the smooth-faced sandstone of the original Queen Victoria Market with its grouped, rounded-headed windows, strong vertical lines and coppered domes and the Tramshed's austere functionality characterised by its saw-tooth, corrugated iron roof concealed by a brick stepped parapet structure which was designed to house 200 electric tramcars.

But QVB and the Tramsheds were both prey to changing fortunes and both fell into disuse and significant disrepair. The fact that both buildings survived to be reinvented is surely partly due to the strength, purposefulness, appropriateness and adaptability of the original design by George McRae. QVB reopened in 1986 after a major

restoration and has since flourished as an elegant city shopping destination. We eagerly await the reopening of the restored Tramsheds to see how well it might serve the needs and aspirations of the local community.



Tramsheds (Image: Russell Perkins)

### David Jones: Exhibition to celebrate 175 years

The City of Sydney Historical Association has advised that to celebrate their 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, David Jones will be holding an exhibition of archival material in their Elizabeth Street Store (*On Seven*). This retrospective will run from 25<sup>th</sup> May to 23<sup>rd</sup> June and will be open during store trading hours. It will include vintage looks, exclusive prints from Florence Broadhurst, early packaging, hat boxes and original photographs and illustrations from Australian photographer, Max Dupain. *On Seven* has been restored to echo its original 1920s glory.

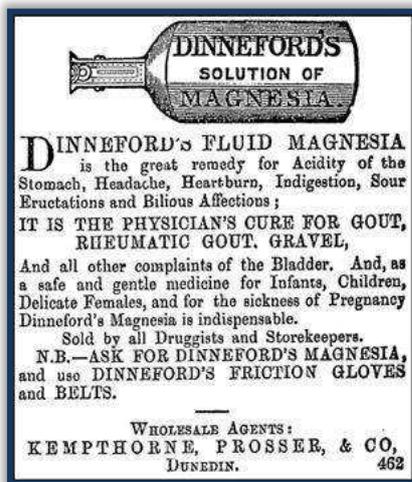
Liz Simpson-Booker

Sources: 1. Johnson, Chris, *Shaping Sydney : Public Architecture and Civic Decorum*, Hale & Iremonger, 1999, p 35.

## WHO LIVED IN YOUR STREET?

### Ellen Mary Neely (1872-1887)

In an age before regular garbage collection services, mandatory labelling of products and the disposal of items after only one use, accidental death by poisoning was not uncommon. On the afternoon of 3 January 1887 fourteen-year-old Nellie Neely had a headache and drank the contents of a medicine bottle. What she swallowed was not Dinneford's fluid magnesia as indicated by the label but a mixture of nitric acid and mercury.



The substance that didn't kill Nellie Neely

Doctors McCormick, Service of Newtown, and John Walker Smith and William Annesley West of Glebe Rd were called to the bedside but Ellen Neely died that night. The circumstances leading to her death were revealed at the inquest held in the *Currency Lass Hotel* (on the corner of Glebe Rd and Mitchell St, now a supermarket). Two months earlier Ellen's stepmother Elizabeth née Logan had

bought electro-plate cleaning acid ('a prize winner at a London exhibition') from a door-to-door hawker who dispensed it in bulk. Ellen was sent into the house to find an empty bottle. The filled container was then put on the mantelpiece with the family's medicines, out of reach of the younger children, and forgotten. The recommendation of the jury at the inquest that hawkers be compelled to sell poison only in bottles so labelled was not taken up by the Attorney-General who decided that the substance in question did not fall within the meaning of the relevant Act.

Ellen Mary Neely lived her short life at 1 Catherine St, a combined grocery and greengrocery on the corner of Derwent St, a few doors away from another grocer Edward Horne and wholesale grocers W J Norris and Sons. Her father James had set up business there in 1871, shortly after moving from St John's Rd. Her mother Isabella died in December 1879 leaving Ellen with four siblings: Annie, James Alexander, Isabella and William. In 1881 James senior remarried and had another son, Samuel (1883-1930). The Neelys remained at 1 Catherine St until 1895 when they moved to Kogarah where James died in 1910 and his widow in 1918. James' first-born son returned to Glebe. Survived by Elizabeth née Bennett and their daughter Gladys, James Alexander Neely died at 172 St John's Rd in May 1913.

*Lyn Collingwood*

Sources: NSW births, deaths, marriages registry; Sands directories; *Sydney Morning Herald* 7.1.1887, 3.1.1888.

### Feral shopping trolleys

The Glebe Society has run a long, although intermittent, campaign aimed at keeping shopping trolleys within the bounds of our supermarkets. Recently I noted that my trolley ground to a halt at the boundary of the Broadway shopping centre. Hallelujah! I rejoiced - we've finally won the battle with Coles Myer! However not long after I spotted a Pyrmont IGA trolley abandoned near the Sydney University Rowing Club, then a Broadway trolley abandoned outside the Blackwattle Secondary College - both fitted with the new hi-tech wheel clamps. Place not thy faith in technology!

*Bruce Davis*

(Image: Bruce Davis)



## WHAT IS THE HERITAGE OF THE GLEBE ESTATE?

*This article by John Gray and Vanessa Witton continues The Glebe Estate series by concentrating upon on the heritage and community of the precinct.*

The Heritage of Glebe was saved during *The Great Age of Demolition*<sup>1</sup> from an outrage similar to “the plans of the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority .... to raze the Rocks and hand the sites over to international hoteliers, bankers and insurance brokers.” As was the case in the Rocks, it was saved by “an unlikely alliance of middle class professionals ... and ‘green bans’ imposed by the Builders Labourers Federation (BLF), under the leadership of Jack Munday”. The Glebe Society was established in 1969 when the Askin government had plans to cut freeways through the suburb and destroy its heritage. (As we explained in our previous article, the network of influential people and agencies was much broader than this simple story but, in our view, complexity loses impact).

The Glebe Society was founded in activism to conserve heritage because community and heritage are intertwined; declining heritage diminishes community; engaging community enhances heritage. We know that, “conserving the natural

and cultural assets of the existing environment is ... a key part of planning for sustainable development. Heritage places are an irreplaceable asset – a non-renewable resource – with benefits to society, the environment and the economy. For society, heritage places represent those places most valued by communities because of their contribution to the sense of place and identity of neighbourhoods and as tangible links to Australia’s past and its culture.”<sup>2</sup> Read the aims of the Glebe Society and you will see this is explicitly noted. When we talk about ‘heritage’ it is more than *built*; it is more than *grand*.

### Architectural Styles on the Glebe Estate

The Glebe Estate speaks to us in the vernacular of a simple Australian townscape of the 1850s goldrush and 1880s building boom but continues to contain common architecture and styles from an earlier Sydney of the 1820s-40s. This makes the Glebe Estate unique, living evidence of the residential growth of Colonial Sydney.

| Styles  | St Phillips <sup>3</sup>   | Bishopthorpe   |
|---|--|--|
|   | East of Glebe Point Road, South of St Johns Road   | West of Glebe Point Road, South of St Johns Road   |
| <p><b>Georgian</b> (Old Colonial Period to c. 1840)</p> <p><b>Victorian</b> (c. 1840 – c. 1890)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gothic Revival</li> <li>• Italianate</li> </ul> <p><b>Federation</b> (c. 1890 – c. 1915)</p> | <p>The townscape is defined by a strong grid pattern of streets and narrow service lanes. In St Phillips the continuous rooflines of the terraces, with repetitive facades set back only slightly from the street, reinforce this urban geometry.</p> <p>This geometry is accented by a striking sameness in roofs, doors, windows, chimneys and even door knockers.</p> <p>Functional cottages with few front gardens, and backyard brick toilets with curved tin roofs. Some dwellings have bargeboards lining the eaves, attics with dormer windows, or columns of simple wrought-iron.</p> | <p>Larger Villas and Houses exist alongside the small cottages and terraces. Dwellings are mainly single storey in tree-lined wider streets, reminiscent of old Australian country towns. Cottages of single storey, brick, double-fronted with verandah are the earliest surviving type. Also found are free-standing cottages, larger than single-storey terraced dwelling, verandah and hip-roof, set further back from the street.</p> <p>Some two storey terraces, most c. 1870s, verandahs and balconies, based on London prototypes are also found.</p> |

## WHAT IS THE HERITAGE OF THE GLEBE ESTATE? CONT.

### Rehabilitation and Preservation of the Glebe Estate post 1974

The Society's first Vice President, Robert Darroch, tried very hard to involve the Glebe Estate community with the Society as it worked towards stopping freeways and conserving the precinct. He reports little success for many tenants yearned to resettle in the outer suburbs. Many distrusted the new arrivals. Many had a sense of disempowerment. The Church had not maintained its houses and the tenants suffered lack of respect as much as lack of conditions. There was a sense of threat as Askin planned to raze Glebe for freeways. Add to this the general admiration for the outer suburban life at that time and you begin to understand the tenants' motivations. This is the wonder of what was done from 1974 to save The Glebe Estate and its social housing.



House before rehabilitation<sup>3</sup>

The Glebe Estate was in total disrepair by the 1960s and was saved by an internationally famous rejuvenation led by Tom Uren AC as an Urban Renewal Project. This represented a challenge in town planning, architecture and social policy never before attempted in Australia. In terms of historic preservation, house facades and streetscapes were the focus. Terraced houses were said to be particularly suited. Restoration of dwelling style, architectural features, details, colours, and giving tenants a contemporary, comfortable home were considered a priority. The Glebe Project Board aimed to rehabilitate all

dwellings to the minimum standard of NSW Housing Commission. The minimum

requirements included: demolition of external toilets/sheds/lean-tos, excavation for sewerage/garden area, new bathrooms and kitchens, redecoration and repair, site works such as fences, clotheslines, trees. A 1974 inspection showed that most houses had leaking roofs which had caused damage to electrical wiring. So reroofing the entire Estate was the first improvement to set The Glebe Project off to a great start. Rusty brown corrugated iron roofs were replaced with slate or grey 'Colorbond' steel. Tenants were interviewed to show tradesmen where the leaks were.



Fencing before rehabilitation<sup>3</sup>



Fencing after rehabilitation<sup>3</sup>

Sydney architects Fisher Lucas, who had experience in restoration, undertook two studies making recommendations about Victorian/Edwardian timber and iron/steel palisade fencing and the appropriate external colours of buildings. Their illuminating research showed that colours used for late 19th century exteriors were usually darker than the whites and pastels that were being used in the rehabilitation of Paddington. So walls needed to be colours ranging from cream to ochre and some as dark as ox-blood. Joinery needed to be Brunswick green or crimson. Balcony/verandah canopies needed to be painted thick stripes of cream and bold, contrasting colours. Roof fascias, bargeboards, dormer windows, parapets and chimney pots were restored.

Architects were commissioned to identify essential features to be preserved, and presented working drawings and materials to make sure repairs were historically authentic. Rear service lanescapes were designed to be historically consistent. Inside toilets were built to replace outhouses, and existing rows of outhouses (eg Mitchell Street terraces) were kept as garden storage sheds. By December 1978 the re-roofing program was finished, 102 buildings were entirely rehabilitated, urgent minor maintenance was completed on all dwellings, and 1/5 of all fences had been completed. The most important wet areas of the homes were restored to contemporary standards that were designed to last 40 years.

### Conclusion

People living in the Glebe Estate had experienced a long decline in amenity by the late 1960s. The Church Landlord had not maintained property and tenants felt this lack of respect for their rights. After the Glebe Project restoration some tenants from the Church properties remained in social housing on the estate and NSW Housing Commission tenants also moved in as it took the head lease. In 1983 the Hawke government handed back ownership of The Glebe Estate to NSW. Chris Hurford, Federal Minister for Housing, wrote to tenants saying he was personally responsible and guaranteeing they would not be worse off under new arrangements. They would be. They were. They are.



Fencing today – cnr St Johns Rd and Derwent St (Image: Phil Young)

NSW Housing was initially energetic in its efforts to maintain the Estate but this was short lived. A steady decline occurred from about 1985 onwards and now the community faces conditions approaching the worst of the 1960s. So we have seen cycles in the conditions on the Glebe Estate. It has always been working class and social housing. It has been tough and rough. It has been solid. It had a landlord who would not or could not maintain the properties and its community suffered. For a brief time it was rejuvenated by Tom Uren's Urban Renewal Project and consequent maintenance by NSW Housing Commission. Then the Commission would not or could not maintain the properties. Now the decline continues at a quickening pace.

The heritage of the Glebe Estate is a largely intact Victorian townscape that tells a proud story of working class people and social housing. It is not grand as Lyndhurst or Montana are grand. It is grand because it tells a story of Glebe's character. This character is under threat. This is a threat to Glebe. In our next article we will set out current circumstances and analyse the problems, "How can the Glebe Estate be properly maintained for its current tenants?" and "How can The Glebe Estate be retained in the long term?"

Sources: 1. Spearritt, Peter, *What is Heritage?* Australian Heritage Strategy; [www.environment.gov.au/heritage/strategy/documents.html](http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/strategy/documents.html);  
 2. From *Heritage Council of NSW submission to the NSW Planning System Review (28/2/2012)*.  
 3. Department of Housing and Construction. *Glebe Project*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1980.

## The Wai Sing sign

In the May 2013 Glebe Society Bulletin, Liz Simpson-Booker drew attention to the painted sign on the side wall of 26 Glebe Point Road and wondered if anyone remembered the establishment. Actually, there are two signs – an older, identifying the *Busy Bee Cafe*, overpainted with the *Wai Sing* sign.

**Busy Bee Cafe:** I have not been able to find any information on the *Busy Bee Cafe* in Glebe and do not remember it from my student days. A Google search reveals a few *Busy Bee Cafes*: the one in Gunnedah closed down only recently and has now been re-constructed in the National Museum in Canberra. I suspect that there may be an interesting story waiting to be discovered here.

**Wai Sing:** I remember the Wai Sing well. It was a Chinese restaurant and a popular eating place for adventurous Sydney University students in the 1950s. I say "adventurous" because, at that time, Chinese restaurants were considered quite exotic, both literally and socially. An example of this exoticism is the humour of the ambiguity of the line "these days more and more people are eating Chinese", from a university revue of that era.

It was close to the University Hotel and May's Family Hotel (in Mount Vernon Street) and it was where I had my first Chinese meal, probably in 1955. I went with some colleagues on a Friday night and was utterly mystified by the menu. How can soup be both "short" and "long"? I settled for fried rice, eaten with a fork and spoon of course!

I've been past the fading sign almost every day for the past forty years and I always remember fried rice. I would never have believed that in less than

ten years I would be a habitué of Dixon Street and a whiz with chopsticks.

**The Yen family:** The story of the Yen family's migration to Australia is related by Robert Yen in a talk to the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia given in 2006. A copy of this story, entitled *From Toishan to Sydney: the Journey of the Yen Family* can be downloaded from <http://www.yen.net.au/>.

The Yen family established the *Wai Sing* in 1955 and the relationship between the family and the *Sze Yup* temple, at the northern end of Glebe, is given in some detail. After all these years I've discovered that *Sze Yup* means "four counties" and refers to Toishan, Hoiping, Sunwui and Yanping counties in Guangdong Province.

Anton Crouch

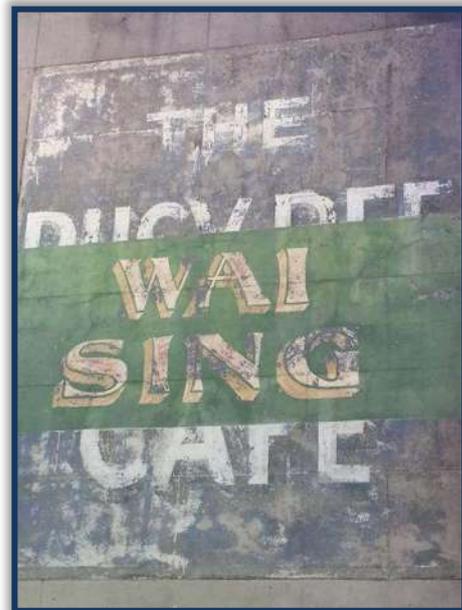


Image: V. Simpson-Young

## Rewind to 1969

Rob and Sandra Darroch, the Glebe Society's first Vice President and first Secretary, joined us at St Scholastica's on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May for a fascinating Conversation, moderated by Ted McKeown, about the formation of The Glebe Society.

At that time, Rob and Sandra were journalists, working on different papers. Rob was also a post-graduate student at Sydney University when he and Sandra bought their first house in Glebe. They found themselves swept up with fellow residents in protesting against State Government proposals to bisect Glebe with freeways and Church of England proposals to flog off the Glebe Estate.

As the jobs were handed out to the newly-formed Society's members, Rob was tasked with looking after "the politics"; Sandra dealt with all the minutiae of setting up a community organisation.

Many thanks to Archivist Lyn Milton and Phil Young for the display of archival material and to Dorothy Davis and the Events team for the refreshments.

Liz Simpson-Booker



Robert Darroch (Image: Bruce Davis)

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## Albert Mispel and the Anti-Expressway Campaign (1970-1977), continued

Neil Macindoe's interview with Albert Mispel continues from the May Bulletin. This is part of the Society's Oral History Project.

*So I was glad to come back to the inner city. Yes, it was the people of the suburb, the houses themselves, all of those things that made me resolve to stay in the inner city.*

**Q:** What stage had the Department of Main Roads plans reached when you bought your house in Cardigan Street?

*A: The DMR, right next to Grace Bros going down the hill, there was a huge block of land, and that was land that had been taken for the Western Expressway. It was vacant for many, many years. That was the only evidence in Glebe of something that was going to happen. There was nothing in Glebe that I know of that was obvious, except for the fact you could almost trace the route of the expressway by the dilapidated state of the houses, because nobody was going to fix up a house that was going to be demolished. Our house when we bought it was not affected. It was made affected when the Wentworth Park Dogs said they planned to build a grandstand, which wasn't built until years later, and that the NW Expressway would make it difficult for them to build this high grandstand, so the road was shifted across, away from the track which meant it went through our house. It also went through Lyndhurst, which at the time no one really treated as an historic house. There was actually a debate about whether there was enough of it left to regard it as an historic house.*

**Q:** How concerned were people in your immediate area about these plans? Were they seriously affected?

*A: They were seriously affected. They were very concerned. They were incredibly worried. I'd say there were two old people who died from worry about the whole thing. But at the same time they thought they were powerless to do anything about it. What happened later on as the expressway got closer and closer and they were starting to demolish in the area, the DMR would do what we called 'missing teeth' demolition. They would get a house in the middle of a row of terraces and demolish it. That really made the people on either side really nervous. So they only had to buy one house at a time and demolish one house at a time.*

*So it was a campaign of terror, if you like. The other thing that happened is that people who were approached by the DMR were offered very low prices for what they could get for the houses. Glebe was very cheap at that time anyhow, but the sort of money they were offered when they owned their own house, and most people did, was not enough for them to settle anywhere else. They'd probably be paying rent for the rest of their life. Some of us intervened, and we got a local solicitor and we used to take people to him, and they did much better when they were offered money by the DMR. In fact to the point of 100% better than they were first approached. I think what was happening was, these houses were cheap acquisitions, but at this point there was interest happening from people moving into Glebe in the late 60s early 70s, so the DMR realised it would cost them too much to acquire the properties.*

**Q:** When did the squatting start?

*A: The squatting started after the DMR had acquired quite a few houses, and what they would do when they acquired them was smash the toilets, and sometimes they would do some damage to the roof as well, so they would become uninhabitable, which was a tactic to make the rats move in and the rest of the area want to get out. Now squatters moved in and they repaired toilets and they fixed the houses up and they squatted. Now the actual stopping of the NW expressway wasn't until 1977. It was paused back in 1972 so these houses belonged to the DMR for five years, so there was no move one way or the other to do anything about them. The squatters were not necessarily terribly active in the anti-Expressway movement. It didn't follow.*

**Q:** But you did establish quite close links with some of them didn't you?

*A: Oh yes. We tried to establish close links with everybody. Alan (Rees) and John (Fisher) worked very hard at grassroots level to talk to everybody involved and get them onside. And I think they called themselves another group, the Glebe Anti-Expressway Committee.*

*They worked from a local activism point of view. They were the people who were arrested at Fig Street later on. These young people would defy the*

rules, climb on the rooves and defy the police. The Glebe Society (and we have jumped ahead to Fig Street) sat in front of the bulldozers but they didn't go round getting arrested. It was a respectable arm of the protest. It was quite humorous to see. We wore ties to protests, suits and ties. There's a lot to be said for what Alan and John did in attempting to stop the expressway. I might say that while we are talking about the local grass roots activation group the level that I got most involved with, which included (Nick) Origlass in Leichhardt Council as mayor, we called ourselves the Anti Urban Radial

Expressway Committee, and we had to do that because the charges against us from organisations like the NRMA's Open Road and so forth who dared to say we had blood on our hands because of people who will die if we don't build these expressways, we wanted to say we weren't against roadbuilding expressways, we wanted to say we weren't even necessarily against urban expressways. We were promoting a more ring road approach. We were against expressways that went right into the City, and that was the thrust of our intellectual argument, if you like.

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## Earth Day in Glebe 2013 – small bird habitat working bee



Young habitat planters (Image: V. Simpson-Young)

On 21 April, a wonderful sunny Sunday morning, around 35 residents, together with City of Sydney supporters including our Glebe councillor, Robyn Kemmis, joined together to celebrate Earth Day in Paddy Gray Reserve, Glebe, in one of over a billion Earth Day events across the world.

The Glebe Society's Blue Wren Group has led past similar events aimed at creating and extending small bird habitat in and around the identified Blue

Wren corridor in Glebe and Forest Lodge. This event marks six years of involvement in Paddy Gray Reserve.

As volunteers rolled in, in sturdy shoes, hats & sunscreen, Raewyn Broadfoot, Council's Community Gardens & Volunteer Co-ordinator gave us OHS instructions & a brief history of Earth Day. John Gray, nephew of Paddy, after whom the park was named, gave us a little of the inside story of his councillor uncle, the eldest of the 8 Gray children.

Volunteers enthusiastically planted around 600 shrubs, grasses & scramblers, so important for the layering of plants in a habitat environment. Then there was an excellent morning tea.

City of Sydney is providing follow-up in the form of two part-time workers from bushcare company, Bush-It, who for the next 6 weeks are weeding, watering, checking on mulch and planting up areas missed.

For more information about the Blue Wren group and its activities contact Madeleine Bowman on [madeleine.bowman@gmail.com](mailto:madeleine.bowman@gmail.com), ph 9660 4826.

*Madeleine Bowman*

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## Glebe Voices at Tranby in NAIDOC week

Tranby Aboriginal College in Mansfield Street is Australia's oldest Indigenous education provider, operating for some 55 years. A not-for-profit co-operative, the College has seen thousands of students graduate and go on to make lasting changes in their lives and those of their families and communities.

Darlene Hoskins-Mackenzie, Interim Chair of the Board of Directors, will lead a Glebe Voices

session at the College during NAIDOC week and introduce the work of the College and its plans for the future including strengthening ties with the local community.

Please join us at 6pm on July 8 at Tranby, 13 Mansfield St.

Contact: Mairéad Browne 9552 2888.

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## Friends of Centipede - keeping up the momentum!



Centipede has been operating for many years providing crucial out of school hours and extended day care for children attending the Glebe Public Primary School. In November last year, *Friends of Centipede* was launched, with the support of the Glebe Society, to assist with fund-raising events and to raise awareness within our community of this important service. The launch at the Glebe Rowing Club was a great success and generated more than 30 new members of the Friends of Centipede. Several corporate sponsors including the legal company Herbert Smith Freehills are also Friends of Centipede.

At a meeting of the Friends of Centipede committee on 21 March, we learnt that there was a significant funding shortfall in the 2013/14 financial year. Given that most of the expenses go in staff costs, fund raising is seen as the most effective support for the group. The meeting considered a number of initiatives aimed at raising awareness of Centipede in the local community and there was a suggestion that a goal could be that *every* resident of Glebe is aware of the Centipede organisation. A number of alternatives were also discussed to raise funds through the Friends of Centipede and these included:

- ✓ Conducting two events in a calendar year – one similar to the event held last November at the Glebe Rowing Club possibly involving an art show/auction and another aimed at increasing awareness of the activities undertaken at Centipede.
- ✓ A membership drive amongst local businesses.
- ✓ A campaign with existing members to recruit new members.
- ✓ Production and sale of merchandise, potentially T-shirts, calendars and/ or Christmas cards that can be sold to raise funds.
- ✓ Letterbox drops of a flyer that could be distributed by volunteers to local residents and businesses.

A follow up meeting is being planned. If you'd like to participate in some way, contact the Glebe Society President.

*Martin Wandmaker*

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## Wrap with Love – wanted redundant wool

*Wrap with Love* has completed twenty years of operation, having been founded by the late Sonia Gidley-King. The idea is for knitters and craft workers to use leftover wool to knit squares of wool that can be made into blankets to keep people warm. Over 30,000 Wraps are donated every year to bona fide aid agencies and distributed to places that have suffered natural disasters and civil unrest around the world. Volunteers manage the whole operation. The warehouse at Rosebery is an inspiration to see what volunteers all over NSW achieve. Please contact Glebe Society member, Mercia Bush: phone 9660 2613; email [mercia.bush@iinet.net.au](mailto:mercia.bush@iinet.net.au).

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## Vale Helen McMillan

Helen was a resident of St Johns Road and many people would know and remember Helen because of her companion dog. Her 'hearing dog' always accompanied Helen everywhere. As hearing dogs have official status, Helen was easily recognisable with her dog, wearing its official coat. Helen and her companion were entitled to travel on public transport.

During her life in Glebe, Helen had three dogs, Squire, Caddy and Scruffy, each giving Helen loyal support and service. Scruffy is now deregistered and is he organising the life of the Comino family in Croydon.

**Life with a hearing dog:** Owning a hearing dog is different from owning a pet dog. Most importantly, hearing dogs are working dogs. They love to work and it's what they're trained to do. Animals give great emotional and practical support to people with a hearing impairment.

*Jan Wilson*



(Image: About.com)

## OUT AND ABOUT IN GLEBE

### Our Local Carillon

Glebe and Forest Lodge residents who live close to the University have no doubt been hearing the peal of its beautiful carillon bells for many years.

If you visit the University Quadrangle on a Tuesday or Sunday afternoon, you can listen to a full recital of the University's 54-bell War Memorial Carillon performed by honorary carillonists and visiting recitalists. Each recital is followed by a free tour and inspection of the carillon bells in the Clavier Room.

The carillon is located in the Clocktower of the Quadrangle. The best place to listen is in the southwest quarter of the Quadrangle, where you can also view the carillonist on a TV monitor. Why not bring a picnic and sit on the lawn to enjoy this rare musical treat?

The University of Sydney Free Carillon Recitals: Tuesdays 1-1.45pm & Sundays 2-2.45pm;

For details please visit: [sydney.edu.au/carillon](http://sydney.edu.au/carillon)

*Vanessa Witton*



University of Sydney Carillon (Image: Elizabeth Sakker)

### Chamber Music Concerts

The Talmacs Music Network performs the first Saturday of every month at the Cafe Church Space, 37 St Johns Rd Glebe, comfortably furnished with couches and armchairs. On 4 May a quintet of clarinet, two violins and two cellos will perform works by Couperin, Bach, Dvořák, Josquin and traditional works. Tickets \$25 / \$15 include a complimentary glass of wine. Doors open at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start. For more details please visit [www.thomastalmacs.com.au](http://www.thomastalmacs.com.au).

### Players in the Pub

From June our popular series of moved and costumed readings will play on MONDAY nights once a month in the upstairs theatre at the Roxbury Hotel on the corner of St Johns Rd and Forest St Glebe. Admission is free. The kitchen is open for orders from 5pm.

Monday 24 June @ 7pm: **The Admirable Crichton**, a comedy by J M Barrie, directed by Nicholas Gledhill (Downton Abbey meets Survivor!)

### Intimate candlelit jazz in Glebe

Colbourne Ave, held in the Cafe Church Space on the corner of Colbourne Ave and St Johns Road, is a unique and intimate series of jazz concerts putting the emphasis on the musicians and their music. Held each Thursdays from 8pm, Colbourne Ave is BYO food and drink (glasses provided). Cost: \$20 / \$10 concession. Upcoming concerts are:

- ✓ Thursday 6 June: Casey Golden Trio
- ✓ Thursday 13 June: Nic Vardanega
- ✓ Thursday 20 June: Lines of Flight

### Time Out Sydney: Glebe area guide

A useful source of up-to-date information on restaurants, bars, shops and events in Glebe and Forest Lodge is Time Out Sydney's Glebe Area Guide (<http://www.au.timeout.com/sydney/area-guide/glebe/22>). This site would be great for visitors to Glebe and probably worth checking it out next time you're looking for something to do. Alongside pieces on Glebe institutions such as Gleebooks, you'll find pieces on newly-established businesses such as The Works and Ombretta. There's also details on upcoming events such as the intriguingly-named Phukclub (Sunday evenings at the Roxbury Hotel).



The Works, Glebe (Image: Time Out Sydney)

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday 25 May; 4:30pm; *Glebe Voices: Brooke Green; Ombretta*, near Toxteth Hotel.  
 Wednesday, 29 May; 7pm; *Players in the Pub*; Upstairs at the Harold Park Hotel.  
 Thursday 30 May, 8pm; *Colbourne Ave* (Jazz); Cafe Church Space, Colbourne Ave. \$20/\$10.  
 Saturday 1 June; 12 noon; *Off Broadway!* See website for details, or flyer from last Bulletin; \$25.  
 Saturday 1 June, 7:30pm; *Talmacs Orchestra*; Cafe Church; cnr St Johns Rd & Colbourne Ave; \$25/\$15.  
 Tuesday 4 June; 7:30pm; *Word in Hand*, The Friend in Hand Hotel; 58 Cowper Street Glebe.  
 Thursday 6 June; 7pm; Thirsty Thursday: *Sushi-Ya* Japanese restaurant; 166 Glebe Point Rd (The Valhalla).  
 Monday 3 June (for a week); Open Week at Tranby College; 13 Mansfield St Glebe;  
 Tuesday 11 June, 4pm; craft activities for kids; Glebe Library.  
 Wednesday 12 June; 7pm; Management Committee Meeting; Glebe Town Hall.  
 Monday 24 June; 7pm; *Players in the Pub: The Admirable Crichton*; Roxbury Hotel, Glebe.  
 Thursday 4 July; 7pm; Thirsty Thursday: *Na Zdrowie* Polish Restaurant; 161 Glebe Point Rd.  
 Monday 8 July; 6pm *Glebe Voices: Darlene Hoskins-Mackenzie*; Tranby, 13 Mansfield St.  
 Friday 26 July; 6pm; Glebe Society event: *Welcome to New Members*; Harold Park Hotel.

## The Glebe Society Inc

### Established 1969

#### Management Committee

|                     |                 |              |                               |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| President           | John Gray       | 02 9518 7253 | president@glebesociety.org.au |
| Vice President      | Jan Wilson      | 0408 207 784 | janwil@bigpond.com            |
| Past President      | Mairéad Browne  | 02 9552 2888 | browne.mairead@gmail.com      |
| Executive Secretary | Di Gray         | 02 9518 7253 | secretary@glebesociety.org.au |
| Meetings Secretary  | Margaret Cody   | 02 9692 9384 | minutes@glebesociety.org.au   |
| Treasurer           | Laura Forsyth   | 02 9228 9386 | treasurer@glebesociety.org.au |
| Treasurer           | Bridgette Leech | 02 9248 5555 | treasurer@glebesociety.org.au |

#### Committee members

|  |                    |              |                         |
|--|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
|  | Andrew Craig       | 02 9566 1746 | acraig@awedwards.com.au |
|  | Rosalind Hecker    | 02 9660 7056 | rosalindh@alpha.net.au  |
|  | Jeanette Knox      | 02 9660 7781 | jk2037@bigpond.net.au   |
|  | Bill Simpson-Young | 0411 871 214 | bsimyo@gmail.com        |
|  | Phil Young         | 02 9692 9583 | phil@ancest.com.au      |

#### Convenors

|                     |                    |              |                              |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| Bays and Foreshores | Lesley Lynch       | 02 9660 5084 | llynch@bigpond.net.au        |
| Blue Wrens          | Madeleine Bowman   | 02 9660 4826 | madeleine.bowman@gmail.com   |
| Environment         | Jan Macindoe       | 02 9660 0208 | macindoe@bigpond.net.au      |
| Heritage            | Liz Simpson-Booker | 02 9518 6185 | lizsimpsonbooker@bigpond.com |
| Planning            | Neil Macindoe      | 02 9660 0208 | macindoe@bigpond.net.au      |
| Transport & Traffic | Murray Jewell      | 0405 921 945 | mpjewell@gmail.com           |

#### Working Groups & Contacts

|                       |                        |              |                                |
|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Archivist             | Lyn Milton             | 02 9660 7930 | milton.lyn@gmail.com           |
| Bulletin Editor       | Virginia Simpson-Young | 0402 153 074 | editor@glebesociety.org.au     |
| Website Coordinator   | Phil Young             | 02 9692 9583 | webmaster@glebesociety.org.au  |
| Events Coordinator    | Erica Robinson         | 02 9692 8995 | ericarobinson4@optusnet.com.au |
| History               | Lyn Collingwood        | 02 9660 5817 | lyncol1@optusnet.com.au        |
| History of Glebe      | Max Solling            | 02 9660 1160 |                                |
| Glebe Society History | Jeanette Knox          | 02 9660 1160 | jk2037@bigpond.net.au          |
| Membership            | Cheryl & Bryan Herden  | 02 9660 7371 | herden@pacific.net.au          |
| Plaques Project       | Peter Robinson         | 02 9692 9995 | peterrobinson4@optusnet.com.au |

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*Bulletin No.4 of 2013 (June 2013)*

# The Glebe Society Inc

PO Box 100 Glebe NSW 2037

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### Membership of the Glebe Society

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Individual member   | \$45  |
| Joint (2 people, one address)                               | \$55  |
| Household (more than 2 adults and/or children, one address) | \$60  |
| Concession (student or pensioner)                           | \$20  |
| Institution or corporate                                    | \$110 |

### How to join

- ✓ download a membership form from [www.glebesociety.org.au](http://www.glebesociety.org.au); or
- ✓ write to the Secretary at PO Box 100, Glebe, 2037; or
- ✓ email [secretary@glebesociety.org.au](mailto:secretary@glebesociety.org.au).

### Community Contacts

#### Neighbourhood Services Centre

Manager: Nick Hespe  
Office: Glebe Library, 9am-5pm Mon-Fri.  
Phone: 9298 3191 or 0400 627 714.  
Email: [nhespe@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nhespe@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

#### Sydney City Council Customer Service

Telephone: 9265 9333 (24 hours)  
Email: [council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)  
Website: [www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au](http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au)

#### Abandoned shopping trolleys

Trolley Tracker: 1800 641 497