

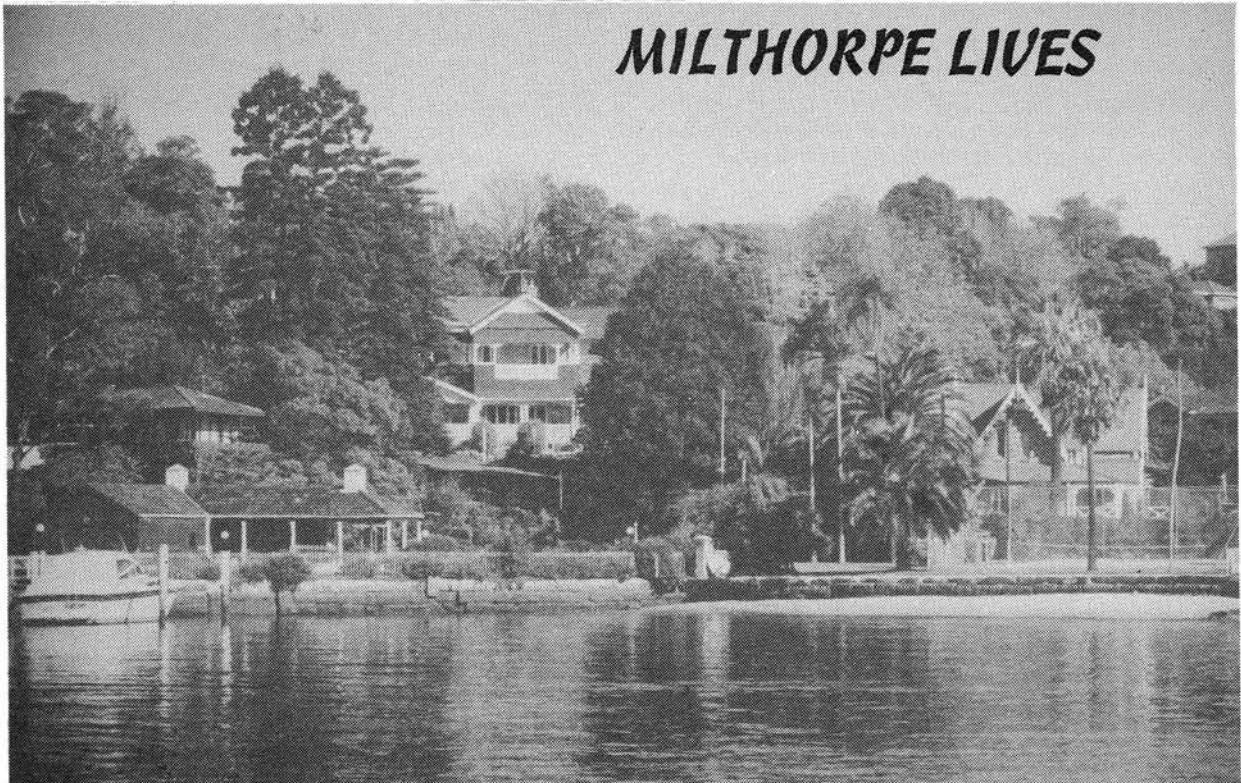


Hunter's Hill Trust Journal

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MILTHORPE LIVES

Milthorpe, with the sides of the house obscured by trees. The photo shows the majority of its frontage to the river from the boat-house and cabana to the tennis court on the right.

Members will be aware that the Heritage Council has taken a significant step in the conservation of Hunters Hill by their placing of an Interim Conservation Order on the Milthorpe estate including its gardens and foreshores. Their initiative supports a major recommendation contained in the Hunters Hill Heritage study which proposed that special subdivisional standards should apply to the land containing historic and architecturally significant homes to ensure their complete preservation.

Milthorpe is a rare remnant of historic Hunters Hill as it is one of the few villa estates with a large area of land and gardens extending to a wide foreshore frontage. It therefore makes a major contribution to the scenic quality of Alexandra Bay because of the harmonious setting of the house with its foreshore and gardens.

The above photograph indicates it is a Federation house but this is not so. Milthorpe was built in 1872 in stone and contained fourteen rooms. Extensive remodelling was carried out in 1900 when Federation features were incorporated in the existing building. While the original property has been reduced in size by subdivision over the years the land area is still one of the largest in Hunters Hill.

At the end of last year an application was lodged with the Council for permission to carry out subdivision of the Milthorpe land fronting the Lane Cove River. When we learned of this we wrote to the Hunters Hill Council stating we 'believed the land properly belongs to and enhances the original house', furthermore we considered the subdivision and subsequent development will not only detract from Milthorpe, but will have a most injurious effect on the increasingly overbuilt foreshore in Alexandra Bay.

The Heritage Council too wrote to the Council (7 February) where they expressed concern that the proposed subdivision would adversely affect the heritage significance of Milthorpe which was identified as an item of environmental heritage in the Hunters Hill Local Environmental Plan Number 1.

A local residents' action group was formed which was active in many areas, including the collection of 110 signatures on a petition to the Council, frequent letters of objection, and the commissioning of a detailed Environmental Assessment Report which recommended that the Hunters Hill Council refuse the subdivision of Milthorpe.

Milthorpe Lives (Cont'd)

When the subdivision was considered by the Hunters Hill Council in February, the voting was 9 to 0 against the proposal. This unanimous vote was also supported by the Council's Environment Heritage Committee (whose Chairman is Alderman Wherry) and followed the Heritage Council recommendation.

It is interesting to record the reasons why the Council's Environment Heritage Committee recommended the subdivision proposal be refused. These recommendations were endorsed by the Council on 10 February, 1986.

1. That the subject land running down to the Lane Cove River is an integral part of the heritage significance of Milthorpe.
2. The subdivision as proposed would have a serious adverse effect on the heritage value of Milthorpe.
3. The subdivision would have a serious detrimental effect on the scenic quality of Alexandra Bay.
4. The significance of the locality arises from the fact that it is one of the very few open foreshore areas upon which there have been no substantial building or works.

The same proposal came before the Council again three months later, on 13 May, when the subdivision was approved by a 5-4 vote. The aldermen who had changed their minds and voted for the subdivision were John McCarthy, Bruce Edelman, Lyndon Jones, Joan Tait and Kerry Wherry. Those against its subdivision were Aldermen Geoff Grace, Philip Jenkyn, Joan Stilton and Sheila Swain.

Alderman Jenkyn lodged a motion to rescind the approval which meant that the subdivision proposal would be resubmitted for debate at the next council meeting. At this meeting, notable for some acrimony and much irrelevance, the rescission motion was lost so that the approval given at the previous meeting stood.

Members will have seen reports of these meetings in the press when the President of the Trust stated she was "absolutely disillusioned" by the Council's about-face. She considered "it was a terrible slight on the Heritage Council in this area where there are 500 historic sites."

Alderman Jenkyn considered the five aldermen who changed their minds "have no proper understanding of Section 90 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, in which Aldermen have to consider such matters as the impact on the environment, the amenity and public interest. They also don't have a proper understanding of Clause 19 of our Local Environment Plan which is supposed to help protect the heritage of this area. I am drafting documents at this stage to send to the Heritage Council" he said.

Apparently the five Councillors had considered Heritage significance to be subordinate to an owner's wishes. Yet away back in 1923 when such considerations were not even dreamt about, Judge White in the decision *TREVENA v WOOLLAHRA COUNCIL* stated "maintaining the public interest of the area was far more important than the expected profits of a speculator."

The Council must have been aware of the significance of Milthorpe as, apart from the Heritage Council's expressed concern, the National Trust had classified the Lane Cove River and its foreshores as a Conservation Area with the maintenance of strict controls by appropriate authorities to protect the "scenic, cultural and conservation values of these foreshores". The Hunters Hill Heritage study, jointly commissioned by the Hunters Hill Council and the Heritage Council, stressed the need to preserve the historic environment of Hunters Hill from further 'developer-deterioration' and called for stricter planning controls of subdivisions especially of foreshore estates and historic houses.

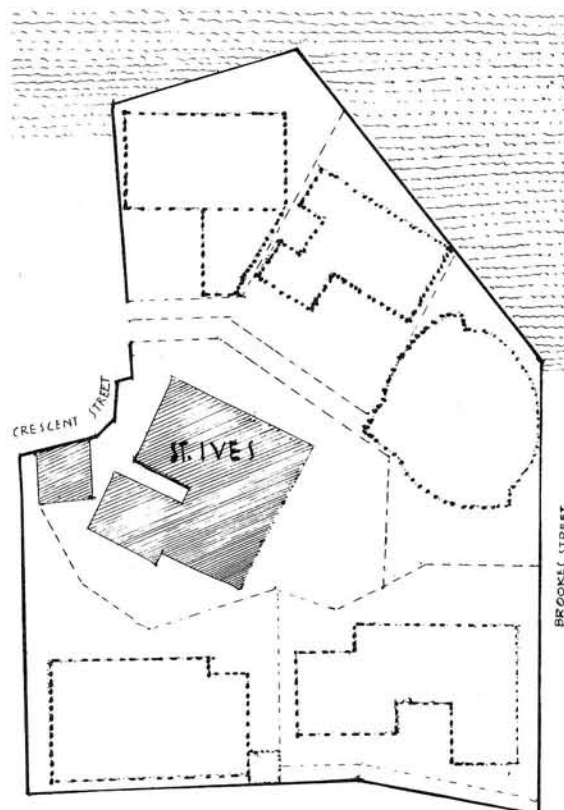
The Hunters Hill Trust believes that Milthorpe is one of the most distinguished historic properties on the Lane Cove River and subdivision of its foreshore area, as proposed, would diminish its heritage value and the scenic quality of Alexandra Bay, as had the subdivision of other properties that now surround Milthorpe, thus disguising several historic houses and degrading the amenity of that part of the river. Araluen and St Ives are sad examples. Both these houses are now hemmed in and totally isolated from the river which, until the early 1960's fronted their properties.

The Trust wrote to the Heritage Council on 3 June to ask that they do all in their power to ensure a proper reconsideration of the sub-division application and its effect on an item of State heritage/environmental significance. The letter pointed out the "blatant disregard on the part of the majority of Aldermen of the Council's own Heritage study (by Meredith Walker and associates 1984) and that the Hunters Hill Trust believed the second application failed to receive adequate heritage planning consideration."

In order to ensure the environmental Conservation of Milthorpe, in its traditional and rare landscape setting, we would urge the Heritage council to advise the Minister to either:

1. Disallow the subdivision on environmental/heritage grounds;
2. Place an Interim Conservation order on the whole of the estate (in its pre-subdivision form);
3. Place a Permanent Conservation Order on the whole of the estate (in its pre-subdivision form).

Similar approaches were also made by others, including the Resident Action Group, with the result that the Heritage Council recommended to the Minister that an Interim Conservation Order be placed on the house and grounds. "The order which is now in effect, means that the property cannot be altered for two years during which time the Minister will consider a Permanent Conservation Order.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our President, Roslyn Maguire reported on the past year at the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 28 May, in the Town Hall. The meeting was well attended and for the success of the preliminary social gathering, Jenny Lockyer and her helpers must be thanked.

1. The highlight of the year was the Trust arranged visit of the **Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr Bob Carr**. While it was unpublicised and informal, it was a highly beneficial opportunity for us to familiarise Mr Carr with our environment and its potential conservation.
2. The visit arose from a public meeting called by the Trust, because of community concern about the likely effect of **proposed changes in the Planning and Environmental Assessment Act**. The well attended meeting produced several worthwhile proposed amendments, which were passed on to the Minister.
3. Towards the end of the year, a submission was prepared for the **Commonwealth Government's assessment and review of the Heritage Act**. Roslyn Maguire was invited to attend a seminar in Canberra where a number of topical environmental issues were debated, including significant conservation areas which have been granted special protection in Victoria. They could well serve as a model for Hunters Hill as they are a logical progression in heritage thinking beyond individual buildings, towards a concern for the wider fabric of historical areas. Mr Carr has since announced that Gulgong has been given a special Historic and Conservation Area Zoning.
4. In March an **Urban Bushland Policy** was drafted by the State Government, intended to preserve the few remaining bushland areas in the Sydney region. The Trust's submission (available to members) contains two important recommendations.
 - (i) To preserve the prominent western side of **Pulpit Point** bushland because of its regional and Parramatta River significance.
 - (ii) The natural bushland on the northern side of **Tarban Creek** be given a protective permanent open space zoning.
5. In November the Trust combined with the **Vienna Appeal Committee** for a **House Inspection** with a difference. It was well supported. Thanks largely to a beautiful day and the efforts of Janet Macdonald and her willing band of helpers, the occasion left little to be desired. Vienna benefited with a cheque for \$1,700.00.
6. The **Christmas Function** too struck a new note. Held in the ancient stables and courtyard at the rear of the Woolwich Pier Hotel, it provided drinks and stand-up buffet.
7. The other major involvement of the Trust, the protection of **'Milthorpe'**, one of the last remaining major waterfront properties, is described in a separate article.

The St. Ives estate as it was until the late 1950's, with the original and still existing stone house.

The dotted lines show the approximate size and location of the houses which have been built since then on the five subdivisions.

8. During the meeting concern was expressed by several members about **Mobil Oil's** proposals for the redevelopment of their industrial area on Pulpit Point. It was decided that the Trust should be involved, and that a committee should be set up to consider the many possible options and thus be in a better position to influence the outcome.

Vincent Serventy kindly agreed to form a Trust Sub-Committee to give special consideration to the variety of issues which will arise when plans and proposals are put forward.

A request has been made to Mobil to permit a Trust Committee to inspect their Pulpit Point installation before it is cleared for redevelopment.

The initial aims and objectives of the Sub-Committee will be –

to take a special interest, for the mutual benefit of Hunters Hill residents and Mobil Oil, in the plans for the redevelopment of Pulpit Point.

to help ensure an appropriate re-use of the Pulpit Point site compatible with existing heritage, scenic and residential restraints and standards and transportation problems.

9. **New Committee** – As nominations were within the number laid down in the Constitution, no election was necessary at the AGM. At the first meeting of the new committee the following office bearers were elected.

President	Roslyn Maguire	816 4614
Vice-Presidents	Sam Sheffer	817 1712
	Ann McNally	817 2035
Treasurer	Jenny Harris	816 4150
Joint Secretaries	Doreen Carter	817 3410
	Greg Larkin	817 3245
Minute Secretary	Jenny Lockyer	816 4922
Members	Malcolm Lane-Brown	816 2553
	Hudson Shaw	817 2311

10. **Editorial Sub-Committee** is responsible for the production of our journal and other Trust publications. Hudson Shaw has agreed to head this small group assisted by Diana Drake and Patti Mackenzie.

11. **Activities Group** – Resignations throughout the year had so depleted this important committee, responsible for all social activity, that volunteers were called for a reconstituted group.

Jenny Lockyer – Convenor – 816 4922

Judy Adamo; Judith Burgess; Elizabeth Shaw

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

★ The Trust's magnificent and unique publication **"Heritage of Hunters Hill"** should be in every home as it is an essential book of reference. It is also an excellent Christmas present, especially for friends overseas, as it is relatively cheap to post. For those not familiar with our 'bible', it contains several hundred photographs of the many significant buildings in Hunters Hill, a brief history of each, and a history of the suburb. Price only \$17.50 plus postage, order by telephone on 817 3410.

Keeping Hunters Hill Alive – another Trust publication designed as a guide to House Restoration and extensions, car and pool accommodation, gardens, walls and new buildings. It contains a directory of advisory services available and a list of informative books. Price \$1.00 plus postage – order by telephone 817 3410.

Is Hunters Hill Worth Preserving? – a leaflet providing a brief history of the Hunters Hill Trust and why it is important it should be supported. Phone 817 3410 and a copy will be posted to you.

Two walks around Hunters Hill – with maps and description of homes on the route. Price \$1.00 each.

WINTER LECTURES

A fascinating and informative series of four lectures by acknowledged authorities in their subjects, begins at the RSL Hall, Alexandra Street, commencing at 8 p.m.

Wednesday, July 16

James Broadbent will discuss "*Gardens for Historic Areas*". Members will recall that James spoke to us at the AGM in 1983 when his subject was "*Good Manners*". He pointed out that residents have a responsibility to their community to exercise good manners in the design of houses, gardens, fences and walls and these should bear some relationship to the total streetscape. It is certain that what he has to say on gardens will provide more food for the mind.

Tuesday, July 22

Maisy Stapleton will discuss "*Historic Interiors and Colour Schemes*". Maisy is well known as the author of "*Historic Interiors*" and the delightful book '*Christmas in the Colonies*'.

Wednesday, August 6

Kevin Fahy will discuss "*19th Century Australian Furniture*", which was also the title of his recently published book. For those who cannot afford this superb and unique publication and are interested in Australian furniture, this lecture is a 'must'.

Tuesday, August 12

Helen Temple will discuss "*Historical Archaeology*". Helen, who was awarded a Churchill Fellowship in 1985 is well qualified to introduce us to this comparatively new and fascinating subject.

Admission for the series - \$8.00 or \$2.50 for each lecture. Supper provided. Enquiries and bookings - Jenny Lockyer 816-4922.

TRUST ACTIVITIES

★ A member of your executive has attended all meetings of Hunters Hill Council.

★ We participated in the Gladesville 150th Birthday Celebrations on 5th April by manning a special stall where Trust publications were available.

★ In Heritage Week we conducted walking tours on 16th and 19th April as our contribution to this important festival. The tours were well attended by a wide range of people, mostly from outside our area.

★ On 18th March, an inspection was made of St John's Church and Hall at Woolwich with an architect of the Heritage Council, to determine its historical and architectural worth and whether it should be preserved in the event it was no longer required by the Anglican Church. We were advised to make an application to the Heritage Council, as the association of the two buildings, their state of preservation and the service they had provided and in the case of the Hall, is providing still, to the district for nearly 100 years, made them worthy of preservation. In the event of the Heritage Council agreeing with our application, a 130 section order would be placed on the buildings which would mean that if and when demolition was contemplated, the Council could step in to prevent it.

★ At the beginning of the year, the Committee vested by the Government with the preparation of a management plan for Kelly's Bush, produced their proposals for public viewing and comment. An unfortunate feature of the otherwise excellent plan, was that the radioactive waste should be covered with earth instead of being removed. Car parking was inadequate.

★ A letter was sent to Mobil asking that consideration be given to the retention of the important bushland on Pulpit Point in planning the re-use of their area.

★ Doreen Carter and Diana Drake set up a photographic exhibition in the National Bank as part of the Gladesville Sesquicentenary Celebrations.

David Macdonald reports that Vienna has been transformed externally into one of the municipality's prettiest cottages. Its roof has been restored with the original slates used on the front and new slates at the rear. The stone walls have had a dampcourse installed. Faulty timber in the detached kitchen building has been replaced. New gutters and downpipes are in place. External painting is complete and rewiring of the electrical installation carried out.

The Vienna Committee are still considering how the property should be presented and towards this end have familiarised themselves with what has been done in similar properties elsewhere. Present expectations are that only \$75,000 will be needed to finish and furnish the project.

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National Trust "Vienna" Appeal Committee

in association with

The Hunters Hill Quilters

have pleasure in presenting

## "An Exhibition of Quilts"

at the Hunters Hill Town Hall,  
Alexandra Street, Hunters Hill,

September 12-14, 1986

## Gala Opening Night

Friday, September 12, 1986 at 7.30 p.m.

GUEST OF HONOUR: MR. JOHN COBURN

~~~~~  
Donation: \$15 per person
Refreshments will be served

Enquiries:
Mrs. P. Chippindall - Tel.: 816 5870
Doreen Carter - Tel. 817 3410

HORBURY HUNT'S ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Our magnificent Church of All Saints will be 100 years young on 22 April, 1988. The Church authorities are keen to make this important anniversary widely known. They are also anxious to obtain photographs, written material and relevant reminiscences of the Church and Parish.

Please contact Margaret Spinks (817 1429).

MEMBERS -

This is your journal. It welcomes your contributions whether they are articles on some aspect or historical happening on the 'Hill' or agreement or disagreement with the Trust, Council or the state of the Nation. Please write -

Hunters Hill Trust, Box 85, Hunters Hill 2110.

CONGRATULATIONS...

to the owner of No. 3 Alexandra Street for beautifully cut stone and simple design of their recently built stone wall.

FEES

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