



Hunter's Hill Trust Journal

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THE MOBIL REDEVELOPMENT

The following brief history of this project is provided to assist members to better understand this important development.

August 1985 — Mobil announced their intent to vacate their industrial site on Pulpit Point which they had occupied for 80 years where they had carried out blending of lubricants and the storage of fuel. The former had already been closed down and this operation centralised in an automated plant in Melbourne. It was proposed that fuel storage would be provided elsewhere in Sydney.

While Mobil had not then made a decision on how the redevelopment of the site would be handled, they said the key factor would be an economic one. They wished to recover the cost of reinstatement of the site and the financing of alternative facilities. Ken Stumbles, Mobil's General Manager Operations, said if a satisfactory solution could not be achieved, the maritime terminal would be recommissioned for strategic storage.

September 1985 — In the Trust's *Journal* of that month we congratulated Mobil on their decision to leave Hunters Hill and expressed the hope that their feasibility studies of alternative usage would respect the district's existing residential standards and environment.

May 1986 — An opportunity was taken at the A.G.M. to discuss Mobil's proposals which had just been presented to the Hunters Hill Council. They proposed the rezoning of the site to accommodate 400 medium density dwellings which would mean a population of 900 people, 850 more cars and 110 boats in a private marina. The proposal also provided for an estate type development with some multistoried buildings.

Vincent Serventy volunteered to head a small expert committee to examine Mobil's proposals in more detail with the object of compiling a report from the Trust to the Hunters Hill Council.

November 1986 — The Trust's *Journal* detailed the recommendations we made to Council. Briefly, we disagreed with the private estate concept; considered little consideration had been given to public access to the foreshores; that building height should be limited to two stories; our concern that such a large development would tend to create an institutional entity; and the need for more diversity architecturally with some provision for retirement needs with smaller dwellings.

29 September 1986 — At a special meeting of the Hunters Hill Council our recommendations were accepted and

passed to their planning consultants for their consideration.

28 January 1987 — The Council's Consultant cast serious doubt on Mobil's proposals and recommended only 130 town houses should be built on the site.

March 1987 — We pointed out in the *Journal* that it was unlikely that an early decision would be reached on a project of such importance and ramifications. Negotiations were then proceeding between the Council's Consultant and those of Mobil in an attempt to find common ground in meeting the Council's guidelines. Mobil's Consultants agreed to develop new proposals which, if approved by their client, would be presented to Council's Consultant for reporting to the Council.

2 April 1987 — It was reported in the press that the Minister for Planning and Environment was pressing the Hunters Hill Council for action because of the delay in progressing the Mobil development project.

April 1987 — At the beginning of the month a group of residents in the Wybalena Road area concerned with Mobil's plans, particularly the likely impact the additional vehicles would have on Hunters Hill roads, formed a committee to fight for a more rational development. They adopted the name CRUSHH (Concerned Residents Under Siege in Hunters Hill) and circularised all residents living in the vicinity of the Mobil site for their support.

1st May 1987 — Your committee met in the President's home at the request of Mobil's Consultants for a general discussion on their revised proposal (350 dwellings). They indicated this proposal was as far as their client was prepared to go to meet the Hunters Hill Council's guidelines set out in our *Journal* of March 1987.

May 1987 — Early in the month another letterbox drop was made in the same area, this time by Mobil. The large attractive leaflet printed in colour on art paper provided photographs and drawings of Mobil's site and their revised proposals with supporting arguments. It was in effect a strong appeal for resident support from a long time occupier and rate payer. A large colour photograph of the new General Manager Operations, Mr J. K. Plant, accompanied the argument.

The new offer reduced the number of dwellings from 400 to 350 but increased the height of some of the proposed buildings from 6 to 10 stories. Open space and waterfront access were improved and the marina proposal abandoned as was the concept for a private estate.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the 'glossy' was Mr. Plant's threat that if Mobil did not get what they wanted they would recommission the terminal as they had said in their original proposal. Detailed plans were placed in the Council Chambers for public viewing.

12 May 1987 — At the Annual General Meeting the retiring President, Roslyn Maguire, pointed out the difficulties faced by the Trust and the Hunters Hill Council in certain aspects of the Mobil proposal. While they both regarded the revised scheme completely out of sympathy with the current environmental guidelines and the Council's planning regulations, there were other important considerations which had a significant bearing on the redevelopment.

Firstly, the government is concerned to further their policy of urban consolidation to curb expansion of the outer suburban areas and so reduce the huge capital costs involved in the provision of services.

Secondly, a stalemate could result in the government taking the development out of the Council hands as has been provided for in the Act and has happened elsewhere.

Thirdly, current experience gives little encouragement to the well meaning efforts of protest groups.

Fourthly, Mobil has made it quite clear that they intend to obtain the maximum return from their Pulpit Point property as we have already indicated.

13 May 1987 — At 8 pm the CRUSHH group held a well attended meeting (some 300 people) in the Town Hall. It was addressed by several prominent residents on various aspects of Mobil's proposals. The meeting passed the following resolutions (with one dissenting voice): that Pulpit Point redevelopment should have the same population and dwelling densities as the rest of Hunters Hill; that there should be open space along the foreshore; that the proposed design should be in keeping with the Heritage status of Hunters Hill; that the Council should produce a Local Environment Plan.

18 May 1987 — At a special meeting of the Hunters Hill Council it was resolved to prepare a draft Local Environment Plan for the rezoning of the Pulpit Point oil terminal for residential use. The Plan to provide 39 single houses and 65 town houses making an estimated population increase of 200/250. Such a proposal the Council considered would have due regard to the special character of the district and the views expressed by residents as well as conforming to the requirements of regional planning.

The action of the Council was timely for on the day of the meeting the Mayor received a letter from the Minister which confirmed a radio interview in which he warned the Council of the possibility of alternative action.

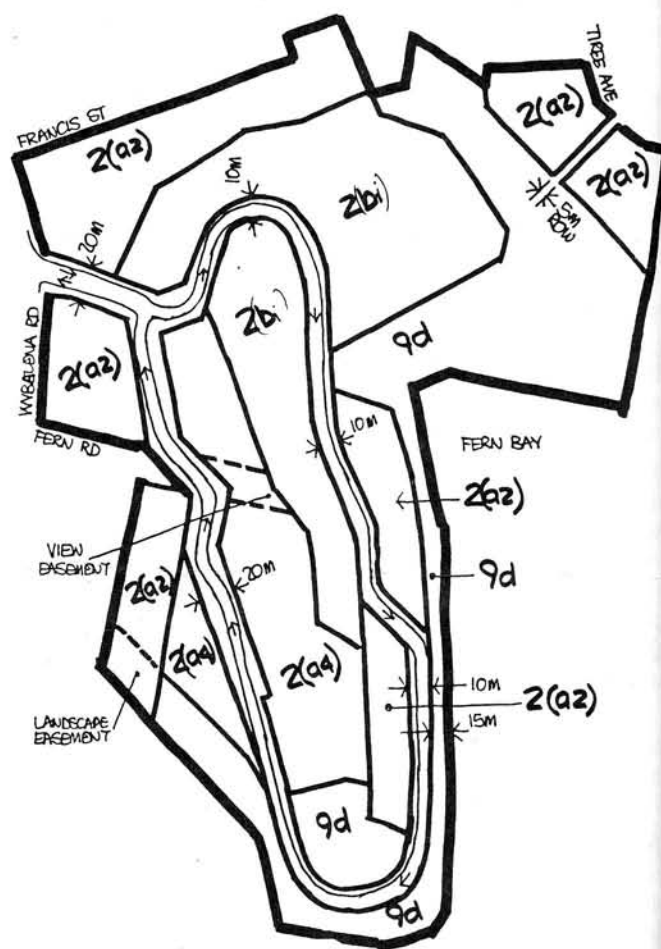
21 May 1987 — Following our letter to the Minister of 28 February 1987, we wrote again to endorse and support the Hunters Hill Council's intention of preparing a draft local environment plan to support a change of zoning of Pulpit Point industrial area to residential occupancy. Our letter pointed out that Mobil should be obliged to comply in any redevelopment scheme with the Council's planning regulations which apply equally to all property owners in the Municipality.

26 May 1987 — In a newspaper article Mobil's Mr. Plant said he was disappointed with the Council's proposal and would be very surprised if 100 dwellings would be commercially viable.

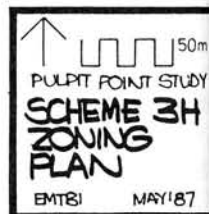
10 June 1987 — A newspaper report states that a private consultant has reported on pollution at the terminal and submitted an Environmental Impact Statement to the State Pollution Control Commission. Mobil's Mr. John Plant says that pollution at the site was mainly hydrocarbons rather than heavy metal with small amounts of lead in isolated areas. The Company was examining various methods of breaking down the hydrocarbons and have advised the S.P.C.C. that they will work closely with them to meet their requirements. A spokesman for the S.P.C.C. said the wastes at Pulpit Point were "fairly conventional".

13 June 1987 — Members of your Committee inspected the Mobil installation from the river through the kindness of Bruce and Jenny Harris who had made their launch available. This was the next best thing to an on-site inspection which we had been unable to arrange. Since then Mobil has agreed to allow six of our committee members to make an on-site inspection which was held on Friday 19 June.

A plan of the Council's proposed zoning is included in this Journal and is also on view in the Council chambers. Mobil and the public will have an opportunity to object to the Council's draft scheme when it too goes on exhibition in the near future.



CODE
 2(a2) Single Dwellings
 2(a4) Single storey single dwellings
 2(b1) Town houses
 9d Open Space



ROBERT D. FITZGERALD

22 February, 1902 — 25 May, 1987

With the death of Robert D. FitzGerald, O.B.E., A.M., D. Litt., Australia has lost a major poet, Hunter's Hill a distinguished citizen, and the Trust an old and valued friend who was always ready to support the cause of the environment and to give generously of his knowledge of Hunter's Hill.

He had a keen sense of place and of history. Born at Hunter's Hill in 1902, he lived here most of his life, except for five years (1931-36) in Fiji in his profession as a surveyor. As a child he lived at Corio (15 Ferdinand Street) and in adult life at 4 Prince Edward Parade. He was descended from two families associated with the Gladesville/Hunter's Hill area since the 1860s (on his mother's side the Le Gay Breretons). He knew this place and its past and he had a talent for bringing the past to life for anyone who cared to listen. Those seeking historical information were invariably directed to him and benefited doubly because of his wife Marjorie — no more delightful history lesson than an hour spent with those two.

On his sense of place, he once observed that the greatest change he had seen was the car — before that, people lived close to their terrain, as a boy he knew every inch of the peninsula. Still, in old age he walked around Hunter's Hill and was a familiar figure in the late afternoons along Woolwich Road.

Our conversations with him are over, but the man — his wit, his courtesy, his twinkling smile and marvellous laughter — will be remembered.

And his poems will live. Considering his demanding work as a surveyor, his literary output was remarkable and included **Forty Years' Poems** (1965), **Product** (1977), and the Portable Australian Authors **R. D. FitzGerald** (1987). This last was launched a few days before his death and includes a poem (not published before) written in 1968 for his fellow bowlers at the Hunter's Hill Bowling Club. As in most of his poems, he turns the subject to a meditative purpose, connecting the game of bowls to life and eternity, and concluding:

the game's the thing; its lovers choose
gladly to win or gladly lose. ('Epilogue')

Madeline Street is also the location of two other 'Hunter's Hill' poems (in **Product**), 'Height: Pinetree, Madeline Street' and 'The Stick', which recreates an Irish household (the O'Donnells') about eighty years ago. It begins:

That kitchen, much as Irish as if it were
of the green sod itself, comes back to mind:
the long black stove, the family round its fire,
welcoming, and their old man who was blind.

— 'their old man', simply called O'Donnell in the poem, used a stick to find his way; the house, an early stone cottage, is still there at 19 Madeline Street.

Calling up an even earlier Hunter's Hill is 'One Such Morning' (also in **Product**). Set around Tarban Creek and based on an anecdote in his father's journal, this narrative poem of 252 lines has great zest and, as Mr FitzGerald liked to point out, is in Chaucer's metre, rhyme royal. It brings back many of the nineteenth-century personalities of Hunter's Hill and evokes a community living in close contact with the harbour, river, and ferries. Jeanneret is there, a Joubert too, Captain Mance, the lithographer A. J. Stopps, Lawrence Kelly who rowed people out to the steam ferry, Stanner who rang a bell at the top of Ferry Street to warn that the ferry was on its way. Even Adraville is there, the house in Ferry Street, now demolished, where Mr FitzGerald's father lived as a child:

"Great days!" my father wrote. All days are good
that open and are doors, and doors were wide
in the old Irish-careless home that stood
above a fringing cliff and riverside
put there for youth and nature to divide
between them as their province, and extending,
surely, past any hour or mile of ending.

The sense of place and of the past is here, a celebration of freedom, and also a philosophical intelligence that gives depth to all his poetry.

In his sense of the past, he understood that little people matter in the fabric of history. His poem 'On Shared Ground' (in **Product**) reminds us of this, calling up our convict past and a certain pickpocket 'who made good/transported from poverty grimed with London fog.' The poem concludes:

Time names the great whose achievements blaze,
renowned.
I observe unknowns among them on shared
ground.

In his writings on Hunter's Hill, this is nowhere better demonstrated than in the prose piece, 'A Garibaldi Veteran' (in **Of Places and Poetry**, 1976). This is about an old Irishman Con Kennedy who lived in Hunter's Hill in the 1870s and, though not a drinker himself, joined in the general fun that revolved around the Garibaldi Hotel in those days. It is a delightful story, full of wit and humour, and a window onto the past which reflects the writer's humanity in understanding history.

Beverley Sherry

ANNUAL DINNER AND GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. was held on Tuesday 12th May in the Hunters Hill Town Hall. The evening began with drinks at 6.30 pm followed by an excellent meal prepared by the Activities Committee.

After dinner the President Roslyn Maguire, summarised the year's events:-

1. We saw an end to the controversial subdivision application of Milthorpe. Rather than a victory for the Lane Cove foreshore, the position is one of the by-now familiar compromise. The tennis court allotment was approved for a separate development conditional upon the Department's approval of the building design. The Trust was and is deeply concerned at the loss of space around historic houses, believing it to be an essential ingredient of a heritage area. The present position is that the house has changed ownership and the issue is closed.
2. The Committee has been worried about a demolition approval granted to the owner of a listed weatherboard cottage in Dick Street, Henley, the first since the Heritage Study listing.
3. We have been concerned about a new house to be built by St. Joseph's College on the corner of Mary Street and John Street on land significantly smaller than the required subdivision standard.
4. The continued deterioration of bushland areas due to lack of Council maintenance is also worrying, as is the removal of trees by individuals intent on improving their own scenic views.
5. The Boronia Avenue proposal involving a much contested zoning change is being fought vigorously by a group of residents. The Trust supports them in their determination.
6. The Department of Environment and Planning has recently announced its Dual Occupancy Policy against which the Trust protested last year. This is another of the Department's desperate attempts to enforce its Urban Consolidation Policy and is likely to cause a decline in housing standards and the amenity of areas like Hunters Hill.

Councils are now responsible for all environmental safeguards and it will be part of the Trust's job in the coming year to watch carefully for any breach of local standards. It will also be interesting to have statistics this time next year of how many property owners take advantage of this new freedom to construct a separate dwelling on their land. The Environmental Heritage Advisory Committee plays a vital role in checking alterations and additions to Clause 19 buildings. Yet there are occasional decisions which have us scratching our heads, like the second storey addition to a stone cottage in Herberton Avenue which completely alters its original character.

Two storey additions to the rear of small cottages and two storey garages also seem to be increasing in number.

7. On a more positive side is the Department of Environment and Planning's release of its Parramatta River Study and Draft Regional Plan. It is full of most admirable conservation theories and guidelines. It is however a sad fact that such a document seems to meet with so little regard within the Department itself as they go single mindedly on a path of pro-development. The Trust has a copy of this Study available for members to read.

We seem to be continually querying just where the Heritage portfolio fits in with a Department bent on approving developments.

A discussion on the proposed development of Pulpit Point by Mobil then followed. (This is reported elsewhere in the Journal.)

The President then mentioned that 1988 would see the 20th Anniversary of the formation of the Hunters Hill Trust. She suggested that a Committee be formed to help plan some form of celebration.

NEW COMMITTEE — Nominations were within the number laid down by the Constitution so that no election was necessary. At the first meeting of the new committee the following office bearers were elected:

President:	Sam Sheffer
Past President:	Roslyn Maguire
Treasurer:	Jenny Harris
Joint Secretaries:	Greg Larkin; Malcolm Lane-Brown
Members:	Hudson Shaw Pattie Mackenzie Jennifer Sansom Robert Baird
Co-opted:	Richard Temple

Ann McNally, Doreen Carter and Jenny Lockyer all retired from the Committee — their work for the Trust is greatly appreciated.

CONGRATULATIONS to Sheila Swain
on being awarded the Australia Medal for services to local government and women's groups.

N.S.W. REGISTER OF MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS

The Royal Australian Historical Society has received confirmation of a grant from the N.S.W. Bicentennial Council to produce a central register of monuments and memorials in N.S.W. and the Hunters Hill Trust, being an Affiliated Society of the R.A.H.S. has undertaken to help in this project in the Hunters Hill Municipality. The register will be computerised, enabling a printing of a comprehensive listing of all N.S.W. monuments and memorials. Microfiche copies of the register will be available allowing libraries or any other interested parties to have their own record. As well, there will be a pictorial publication.

The monuments and memorials for which data are required cover a wide range and include war memorials, statues, plaques, stained glass windows, obelisks, tablets, cairns, engraved stones and historical objects such as cannons and anchors.

The information for each monument and memorial requires much detail, some of which is: Name of memorial or monument, its location, details of inscription, date of construction, condition, name of sculptor/builder, the body responsible for maintenance and a summary or description of the monument. If possible, a photograph should accompany the questionnaire. The Trust has again enlisted Mr. F. Stamp to help in this very important aspect of the register. Three other Trust members have offered to help in the gathering of information and the Trust would be grateful if any of our members and readers could offer any information which will assist in this project.

Volunteers are: Mrs. A. McNally, 817 2035
Mrs. D. Carter, 817 3410 Mrs. R. Maguire, 816 4614

VILLA MARIA CEMETERY

The National Trust and the Hunters Hill Trust have recently written to the Provincial of the Marist Fathers concerning changes which have been made to the historic cemetery in the grounds of Villa Maria.

The iron fence surrounding the old graves has been removed and replaced with a low red brick wall and the old headstones and monuments have been taken down and stacked.

The Marist Fathers' Cemetery was classified by the National Trust as part of the Villa Maria Group in 1976 and the cemetery was inspected during the survey of Sydney Burial Grounds undertaken in 1980.

A number of sandstone celtic crosses, considered to be fine examples of the stonemasons' art have also been stacked face upwards which must encourage further deterioration. The National Trust has referred the matter to the Heritage Council.

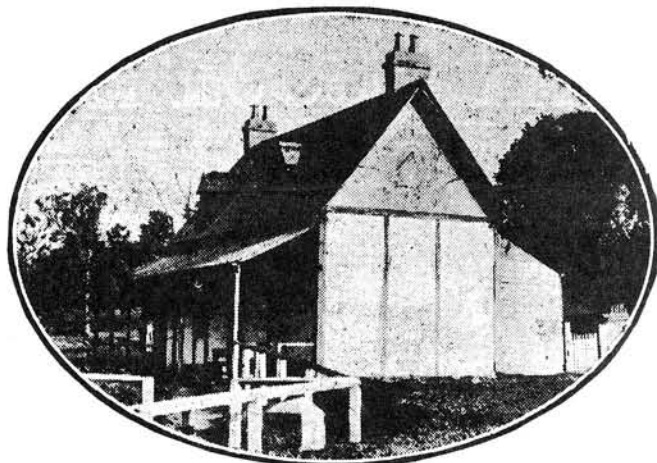
The Hunters Hill Trust has expressed its concern to the Provincial over these regrettable changes to their cemetery and stressed the significance of the graveyard in relation to the history of the Marist Fathers in Hunters Hill which dates back to 1847 with their purchase of the Priory in Salter Street (now owned by Gladesville Hospital). The Hunters Hill Trust has asked the Provincial to consider restoring and re-erecting the gravestones and iron railings.

MORE ABOUT THE GOLF CLUB

The article in the last Journal about the long defunct Hunters Hill Golf Club brought more information to light. Peg Grave writes that her parents were active members and her mother was the Hon. Secretary of the Associates during the 1920's. Peg believes the club was established in 1901 in grounds belonging to the Gladesville Asylum, then occupied by a dairy farm. As the cows wandered freely on the fairways, the greens had to be fenced, with a narrow access gap which kept the cows out but was an added handicap for larger members.

Amongst some old newspapers, donated to a charity fete, was found a copy of the Evening News of 1st August, 1926 which contained a full page spread of photos of the Associates clubhouse, with its unique to Australia wall mounted sundial, and many of the well known members.

When the Club was at the peak of its popularity it received a notice to quit as the government wanted to build the Nurses quarters now fronting Victoria Road. The Club's most valued asset was a liquor licence, a rare commodity in those days. Top grade clubs such as Pymble and Pennant Hills did not have one. It was decided to transfer the licence to the Pymble Golf Club and as it could not be sold, the older members of Hunters Hill Club were made Life Members of Pymble. The remainder were admitted at a very reduced fee — that for Associates was set at £5 per annum. Unfortunately the outbreak of World War II and petrol rationing made it almost impossible for Hunters Hill members to enjoy the advantage.



THE LADIES' GOLF HOUSE.

FENCES AND WALLS

Fences and walls should be keyed to the streetscape rather than the house. The streetscape of Hunter's Hill makes our suburb special, and it is characterized by dark colours — dark tree trunks, deep green foliage. Take a look at your fence or wall from across the the street and ask, does it blend with the streetscape?

ACTIVITIES

MOOCOOBOLA 1987 AND 1988

Moocooboola festival for 1987 will be held on Saturday 12th September in the Hunters Hill Town Hall and D'Aram Street between 9am and 3pm. The Trust will have a stall as usual.

The Bi-Centennial Moocooboola will be held on Saturday 17th September 1988.

BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS

The Weekend of 27-28-29th May, 1988 (put it in your diary) will certainly be a very busy, interesting and enjoyable one for Hunters Hill, its residents and visitors. This special Heritage weekend will see the long awaited opening of Vienna Cottage and Orchard on Sunday 29th May. The previous evening Saturday 28th May, the Town Hall will be the venue for the Bicentennial Ball.

Children have not been forgotten — on Friday 27th the Schools' Bicentennial Games will be held at St. Joseph's College, Hunters Hill, when all schools of the municipality will compete in a full day's programme of varied games and activities. Other events are planned during the weekend involving the Churches, restaurants and other bodies — particularly in the precinct of Alexandra Street from the Congregational Church to All Saints.

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

We have made a tentative booking of Hunters Hill Town Hall for a Cocktail Reception on Saturday evening, February 28, 1988 to celebrate our twentieth year in fine style. The booking must be confirmed within eight weeks or so. In the meantime the Committee is open to other suggestions. Some help will be needed with invitation lists to be sure to include all past members. Enquiries — Anne McNally, 817 2035 or Roslyn Maguire, 816 4614.

Richard Temple and Reg Martin would welcome old material regarding the headier days of local conservation for the Trust history they are going to compile. Ring Richard Temple, 817 4941.

A CLIMB TO THE TOP OF ST. JOSEPH'S TOWER

With a little gentle persuasion Br. Michael Naughtin, the St. Joseph's College historian, has kindly agreed to take a group of **members** up to the top of the tower for an elevated view of Hunters Hill. Sunday afternoon 19th July at 3pm, meet at the bottom of the stairs of the main building. Booking essential — Ring Anne McNally 817 2035.

The Second Hunters Hill Quilt Show

will be held at the Hunters Hill Town Hall
from Friday 18 September to Sunday 20 September
1987

Admission \$5 includes Catalogue and Devonshire tea
Official opening on Thursday evening 17 September
by artist Ken Done

Donation \$15

Over 50 quilts by top local and interstate quilters
Antique quilts Quilts for sale

The Hunters Hill Bicentennial Quilt will be on display
Enquiries: Jenny Lockyer 816 4922 Alysoun Ryves 816 1741

HERITAGE ARTS FAIR

The second Heritage Arts Fair of the Hunters Hill Trust was held on the first weekend of Heritage Week in April this year. It was opened by Andrew Ollie from the A.B.C.

The items shown at the Fair were outstanding — top quality, interesting, varied. It was a wonderful opportunity to purchase unique objects at less than retail prices.

Over 1000 attended the Fair with 200 present at the opening cocktail party. Many returned two or three times, often bringing friends on their return visits.

Over \$5200 profit was made at the Fair with Hunters Hill and Woolwich Public Schools making an additional \$300 each on lunches. The Trust has pledged \$4000 of this profit to the Hunters Hill Council to provide furniture and seating in the "Vienna" orchard. This magnificent "gift to the Municipality" will commemorate the first twenty years of the Hunters Hill Trust as well as the Bicentenary. It is a gesture of which all Trust members can be proud.

The success of the Fair was due to the untiring efforts of the Activities Group whose members for this occasion were Diana Bryant (Convenor), Billie Jacobsen (Secretary), Judy Adamo, Jenny Scotford, Carolyn Davis, Judy Burgess, Margaret Driscoll and Kathy Ctercteko. Many thanks, too, to those other members who helped by selling raffle tickets and admissions, supervising stalls and helping with catering.

Our Heritage Arts Fair is gaining a reputation for being one of the best arts and crafts fairs in Sydney. Should the Activities Group be persuaded to conduct another fair, it will be an occasion not to be missed.

JENNY LOCKYER.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name Phone

Address Postcode

Type of Membership: 1987-1988

Single \$ 5.00 Student \$ 1.00

Family \$10.00 Life Member \$100.00

Pensioner \$ 1.00

Please post to The Hunters Hill Trust, P.O. Box 85, Hunters Hill 2110.