



Hunter's Hill Trust Journal

Volume XVII No. 2

JULY, 1988

ISSN 0310-0111

COUNCIL CHANGES ITS MIND ON MOBIL

Hunters Hill Council has voted to increase the number of dwellings on the Mobil site from 113 to 140 in an attempt to gain approval to place the plan on exhibition.

However, unlike previous decisions on Mobil, the Council was not unanimous. Aldermen Haldeman, Williams and Baird asked for their names to be recorded as voting against the increase. They cited unacceptable housing density, alienation of harbour foreshores and traffic problems on the peninsula as unresolved issues. Aldermen Edelman, Watkins, Daniels, Sheerin and Hoopmann supported the revision on the basis that no plan would go on exhibition otherwise, that the amount of open space on LEP 1 would have to be paid for from the public purse, and that the threat of a sale by Mobil to the successful tenderer under LEP 7 was very real unless it was quickly replaced.

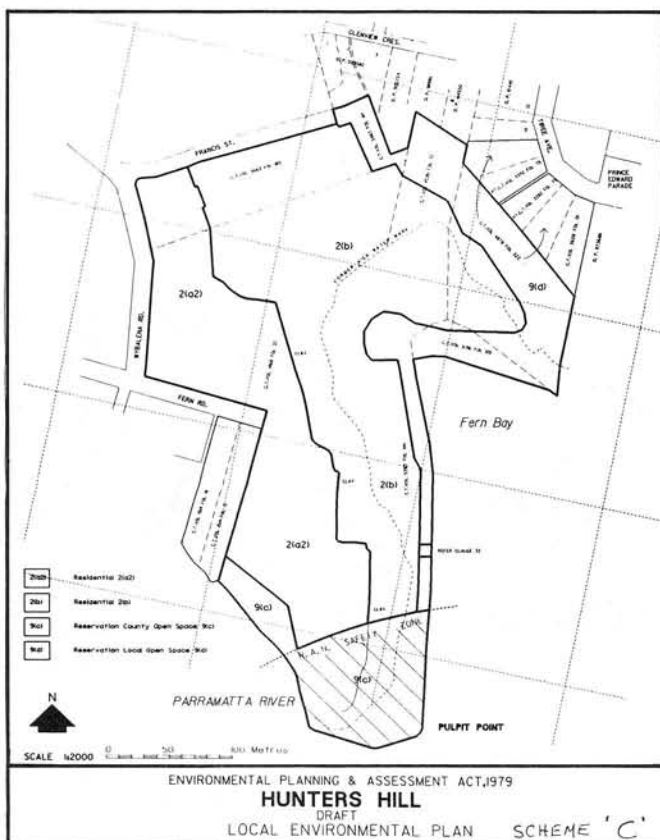
It is a sad fact that Councils are no longer the consent authority for such plans following a government decision last year that power is now the preserve of the Director of Planning, Gabrielle Kibble. According to the Mayor, Sheila Swain, it is vital that this consent be forthcoming so that the plan on exhibition supersedes LEP 7 which is the current legal plan. The Mayor believes that the Department will consider 119 townhouses and 21 single houses an acceptable starting point as the new Liberal Government is not so committed to the previous Labor Government's policy of urban consolidation.

The new plan 'C' was one of three considered by Council. Its features are Residential 2a2 zoning (single houses) on the top of the cliff and Residential 2b below (townhouses or single houses). The RAN blast area has been zoned County Open Space 9c and we hope the State Government will pay for that. The balance of open space is a thin strip 10m. wide along the waterfront and extending up into Francis Street. It is zoned Local Open Space 9d.

As soon as a Certificate 65 is issued by the Department of Planning for plan 'C', which may or may not have been amended by them, the Council will place it on public display. Submissions from interested groups and citizens will be called for then and we urge all Hunters Hill residents to take this opportunity of voicing their opinions.

A number of property developers are thought to be interested in Pulpit Point. One of them is Dr. Robert Hampshire who outlined his plan to the public gallery at the conclusion of the last Council meeting. This plan develops the land fronting Fern Bay as waterfrontage in private ownership. This has an attraction to those who believe that low density development is the only way to preserve Hunters Hill, as about 60 single houses only are proposed. However, future spot re-zoning to higher densities or large-scale private marina operations would not be precluded and benefits may only be short term. Another aspect of lower scale development is that with fewer houses less open space will be available to the public.

The Trust believes strongly that a policy must be maintained which places Harbour foreshores in public ownership. In this way there is far more opportunity to influence the long-term character of Hunters Hill than can be achieved with individual zonings which are always subject to political whim.



TWO NEW OLD ASSETS FOR HUNTERS HILL

(The opening of Vienna and Hillman's Orchard)



On Sunday, 29th May, *Vienna* was officially opened to the public by the Minister for Local Government and Planning, the Hon. David Hay. *Vienna* was part of the Bicentennial 'Gift to the Nation' project sponsored jointly by the National Trust and Amatil. A large crowd gathered in Alexandra Street – which was closed for the occasion – to witness the ceremony.

Speakers included Mr. Richard d'Apice, Vice-President of the National Trust, Mr. Peter James, Executive Director of the Trust, and Mr. Max Turner of Amatil.

As part of the ceremony, the Mayor of Hunters Hill, Alderman Sheila Swain, dedicated the land alongside *Vienna* as a new park to be known as Hillman Orchard. In recent weeks this land has undergone an amazing transformation, organized by Mr. John Prentice, Council's Deputy Engineer, with advice from consultants. This

work was the first stage in developing an historic park and consultants have recently been asked to prepare detailed plans for landscaping. The Hunters Hill Trust has pledged \$4,000 towards furniture and other fixtures which will tell the story of the Hillman's use of the land. The present furniture is only temporary.

Unfortunately, the archaeological excavations undertaken by the National Trust for the Council revealed little information about the orchard or other early uses. Most of the excavated area was heavily disturbed and showed no evidence of the position of trees or other features. However, Mr. Fred Stamp – whose property in Ady Street adjoins the site – has been able to provide information about the species and their location.

As part of the opening celebrations the Vienna Appeal Committee of the National Trust arranged for other properties to be on display. Thousands of people came to Hunters Hill. The owners of *Redleaf* and *Alroy*, both of which were once owned by the Hillmans, kindly allowed a constant stream of people to inspect their houses. Also open were the *Garibaldi*, All Saints Church, the Masonic Hall and the Hunters Hill Public School, including *Eulbertie*, and at each there was a display especially prepared for the occasion. A special feature of the day was the display in the Congregational Church Hall of photographs from Douglass Baglin's collection, including many old photographs of Hunters Hill.

Many people contributed to the success of the day and their efforts were well rewarded by the appreciative crowd and by the Vienna Appeal Committee who raised more than \$9,000.

The Vienna Committee requests the assistance of Hunters Hill residents and friends as guides during inspection times for *Vienna* -- Saturday afternoon and Sunday. If you can give 2 hours every 4 months, please ring:

Doreen Carter – 817 3410; Jenny Lockyer – 816 4922; Alysoun Ryves – 816 1741.

FROM THE HUNTERS HILL QUILTERS

The presentation of the Hunters Hill Bicentennial Quilt to the people of Hunters Hill was one of the events leading up to the recent Heritage Weekend. The Hunters Hill Quilters who made the Quilt hope that it will become a part of the heritage of this area.

The Quilt is now hanging in its permanent position in the foyer of the Hunters Hill Town Hall. The wall has been treated with insecticides and fungicides and regular cleaning and checking of the Quilt will be carried out by the Quilters.

A photograph of the Quilt and its makers will also be hung in the foyer and an explanatory booklet is being prepared.

The most difficult operation in the making of the Quilt was in the sewing of the buildings, especially as they needed to represent existing well-known buildings. We would like to acknowledge the ideas we received from the photographs in the publications of the Hunters Hill Trust. They made our drawings look more 'life-like'!



This photograph shows, amongst other things, the Post Office, Vienna Cottage and Hillman Orchard, Passy, the tennis courts, Carey Cottage and the Garibaldi.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our President, Sam Sheffer, reported on the past year at the Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 4th May, in the Town Hall. Ms. Penny Pike, Heritage Consultant to Hunters Hill Council, spoke of her philosophy, role and plans and we warmly appreciate her contribution. (See page 4). Supper was served after the meeting.

1. Acknowledgment goes firstly to Richard Temple and Reg Martin for their hard work in the research and preparation of their **History of the Trust**. It makes very interesting reading, particularly in its account of the Trust's early days.

I wish to pay tribute to an early President, Dr. Alan Bradfield, who sadly passed away recently and who, along with the late David Saunders, Richard Temple and Tom Farrell, conceived the Trust's original planning submissions. Recognition must be made also of the great contributions of Alice Oppen, Ann McNally and Roslyn Maguire in more recent times.

2. After many years of enthusiastic work by Phillip Jenkyn and the Vienna Committee, **Vienna Cottage** is to be opened on 29th May by the new Minister for Local Government and Planning, Mr. David Hay. The Trust will maintain a display of its archives.
3. Residents adjacent to the **Bowling Club** are concerned about possible developments. We have been approached and will maintain our interest.
4. The Trust was informed in late January by the Department of Environment and Planning that \$120,000 had been allocated for Stage I of the regeneration of **Kelly's Bush**.
5. Representations have been made to both Government and Opposition members of Federal Parliament concerning the **Horse Paddock**. The attitude of the Government and in particular the Defence Department concerning the planned sale of magnificent waterfront land at Balmoral Beach is also condemned.
6. The Trust thought they had achieved a victory for all time when plans for the **Lane Cove Valley Expressway** were scrapped. Concern is expressed at the statement by the new Minister for Transport, Mr. Bruce Baird, about a road along the Lane Cove valley.
7. The question of **backyard burning** has been raised by the Trust and is under review by the Council. As 30% of Sydney's air pollution is caused in this way and many Councils have initiated bans, we eagerly await similar action.
8. We have received a copy of a letter to the Hon. John Howard, from the Minister for Transport and Communications Support, Mr. Peter Morris, concerning the possible closure of **Hunters Hill Post Office**. Presently, postal facilities are under a general review, apparently on purely economic grounds, a cause for considerable concern. We alerted the Council on this matter.
9. No firm statement has been made by the new Government on **Urban Consolidation**. It is expected that the new Minister, Mr. Hay, will allow Councils more latitude in planning decisions. However concern is expressed at the statement of the Housing Minister, Mr. Schipp, for the need for homes for a further 1,000,000 people in Sydney by 2008!

10. The Council has invited the Trust to forward names for representation on the **Environmental Heritage Advisory Committee**, a goal we have striven for for many years.
11. We extend our warmest thanks to Yvonne and Trevor Wadland for providing their lovely home and garden for the **Trust's 20th Anniversary Party**. Our particular thanks go to the Activities Group for their splendid planning and preparation.
12. The visit to Hunters Hill by the Mayor of **Le Vésinet**, Paris, with his wife and two aldermen was a very historic one for our Municipality. Now that we have a special relationship, it is hoped that there will be many exchanges of visits and ideas between the two heritage suburbs.
13. The **Mobil** fight continues. The Public Meeting on February 18th, organised by the Trust and CRUSHH in response to the former State Government grasping Pulpit Pt. planning controls from our Council, was attended by nearly 500 residents who voiced strong condemnation and set up a fighting fund. Representation has continued to both the former and new Government on this issue.

The challenge by Council against the overturning of their plan by the former Minister, Mr. Carr, is still down for hearing by the Land and Environment Court.

New Committee – As nominations were within the number laid down by the Constitution, no election was necessary at the A.G.M. At the first meeting of the new committee the following office bearers were elected.

President	Sam Sheffer	817 1712
Vice-President	Robert Baird	816 1654
Treasurer	Theresa Manalang	816 1293
Secretary	Greg Larkin	817 3410
Minute Secretary	Jenny Harris	816 4150
Members	Patti Mackenzie	816 2728
	Kim Murray	817 5641
	Peter Pinson	817 2235
	Ewan Cheyne-Macpherson	817 1959

Roslyn Maguire, Malcolm Lane-Brown and Richard Temple all retired from the Committee and their work for the Trust and Hunters Hill is greatly appreciated. After the first meeting, Jenny Harris tendered her resignation, which is accepted with regret and sincere thanks for her contribution.

Activities Group – Alysoun Ryves, Diana Bryant, Judy Adamo, Jenny Lockyer, Prue Plowman, Marianne Goodes and Jane Poed.

Journal Sub-committee – Diana Drake, Patti Mackenzie and Peter Pinson.

TRUST MEMBERSHIP

Our thanks to those who have renewed for 1988-89. A reminder notice is enclosed for those who have overlooked their renewal at this stage. New members are very welcome, P.O. Box 85, Hunters Hill, 2110.

PRECIS OF ADDRESS

by Ms. Penelope Pike, Heritage Adviser to
Hunters Hill Council, to the A.G.M.

Our environmental heritage comprises items which have survived from our past, and which, because of the part they have played in our history, or in our social or cultural development or because they have architectural, archaeological or scientific value, give us a better understanding of our past, and therefore of our present identity. In Hunters Hill our heritage can be as old as 40,000 years, and as young as yesterday. Hence, a heritage item is not necessarily just something "old", nor is it something which is "pretty", for example the Opera House is a heritage item, and so are the brick sewerage vents in Marrickville, and the Walter Burley Griffin incinerator in Pyrmont.

Most of us, as householders, are involved in conservation – the unobtrusive care and maintenance of our own property – cleaning gutters, replacing broken tiles, painting, pruning is conservation practice at its best. It is when we wish to make changes to the fabric of our property that conservation may be at risk. When changes are proposed to a heritage item, Council is required under Hunters Hill Local Environmental Plan No. 1 to assess the heritage significance of that item, and assess the impact of those changes on its significance. The Council has engaged a heritage adviser for 20 hours each week to advise on these aspects of its day to day planning responsibilities. The heritage adviser has also been engaged to promote an increased understanding of heritage issues within the Municipality, to provide advice to residents and to Council on conservation works, and to implement the Heritage Study (1984) through an amended local environmental plan.

On the recommendations of the Heritage Study, Council adopted the **Burra Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance** and its guidelines as its principles governing conservation. This Charter was compiled by Australia ICOMOS (the Australian Committee of the International Council on Monuments and Sites), and is a UNESCO affiliated association of professional conservation practitioners throughout the world. The Burra Charter is accepted in Australia by government agencies, conservation architects and archaeologists and building owners as a guide to proper standards of work. A copy of the Guidelines to the Burra Charter may be obtained from Australia ICOMOS, P.O. Box 77, Grosvenor Street, Sydney, for \$3.50.

ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mrs. Roslyn Maguire has been appointed as the Trust's representative to the Environmental Heritage Advisory Committee (previously known as the Townscape Advisory Committee). Mrs. Maguire served on the Trust Committee for 5 years, being President between 1985 and 1987. The Council will be fortunate to have the benefit of her knowledge of and interest in Hunters Hill.

HENLEY COTTAGE

It is believed that the house now known as Henley Cottage was built around 1905 as 'offices' for the Gladesville Hospital, although it is clearly in the style used initially for residences by doctors attached to the Hospital.

By 1931, its use had changed to a "Sisters' Residence" and remained as such until about 1960, when it was converted to an outpatients' referral centre. However, it fell vacant and despite attempts during the early '70's to have it refurbished as a child care centre, it began to deteriorate and was badly vandalised, including the loss of four marble fireplaces.

After expressions of concern from local residents, especially when its demolition seemed a possibility, the **Government Gazette** of 25th March, 1983, formally appointed Hunter's Hill Council as trustee of Henley Cottage and surrounding land for use as "Community Purposes". The Heritage Council had previously provided guidelines to Council as to its restoration and refurbishment and after seeking public expressions of interest in its use, Council appointed Karl Romandi and Helen De Luis Pty. Ltd. of Hunters Hill to prepare plans and specifications. The contract for the building was awarded to A. C. H. Clifford Pty. Ltd. of Mortlake, a firm with considerable experience in this type of work. The cost of the restoration was around \$200,000 of which \$4,000 was provided by the Bicentennial Committee. The remainder was provided from Council Loan Funds.



HENLEY COTTAGE

At first, little interest was expressed in the use of the Cottage by community groups, but eventually Ryde Regional Radio (2 RRR-FM) requested portion of the cottage for use as their studio and office. They have subsequently fitted out two small rooms as studios and are now broadcasting from that location.

The remainder of the Cottage (one meeting room seating 40-50 people, a kitchen and toilets) is now being used by several community groups. Enquiries should be made through the Town Clerk.

There has been a good deal of interest expressed in the cottage since its restoration probably due to its high profile location, and the pleasant gardens which were designed by Mrs. Nan Barbour.

"VILLA FLORIDIANA" – SEA STREET



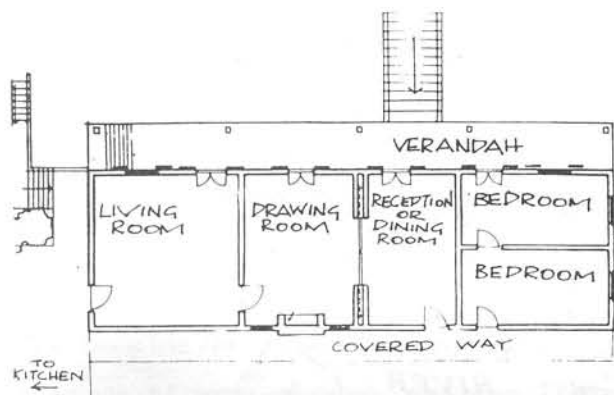
Photograph by Douglass Baglin

"Villa Floridiana" is generally credited to Jules Joubert, and dated 1855. Alternatively, it is possible that it was built by his older brother, Didier, who bought the land in 1854. It is even conceivable that it began as a tiny structure built for John Blackman, the prior owner of the property, and was added to by one of the Jouberts.

In 1854, Jules Joubert travelled to Madagascar, visiting New Guinea, Borneo and the Malay Archipelago. On his return, he married Adelaide Levi in North Adelaide in February 1855 and brought her back to Sydney. "Villa Floridiana" would be their first Hunters Hill house.

The house's north-east/south-west orientation gave sweeping views across the Lane Cove River. Indeed, it was the river which provided the main access to the house. At the foot of the stairs, an Italian Welcome stone was lapped by water (although reclamation about 1906 has distanced the house from the river's edge).

It was a simple, modest house. In her Sydney University B.Sc. (Architecture) thesis "*The Jouberts of Hunters Hill: An Example of 19th Century Suburban Development*", Virginia Freeman considered it "unambitious". She described its construction:



Plan of "Villa Floridiana" by Virginia Freeman

"Lapped siding covers the external envelope and wide hardwood boards panelled the walls, ceilings and floors inside. The roof could have been shingles, (although) by about 1867 the house was roofed with iron sheets, common for buildings of low status."

The verandah was restricted to the face of the house which had windows exposed to direct sunlight. The kitchen (in accordance with contemporary safety conventions) and the wash-room/laundry were contained in two outhouses, placed to the south-west of the house.

The two most important rooms of the house, the Drawing Room and the Reception or Dining Room, were divided by tall, sliding panelled doors. This feature, which Didier Joubert would employ in "*St. Malo*" (destroyed 1960), was uncommon in houses of this scale.

Another imposing feature of the property was its garden. This incorporated terraces, stone steps, hand-stacked retaining walls and paths which meandered between trees and bamboo. It may be surprising that a modest timber cottage should have been endowed with such a well-considered garden. Yet this was a Joubert trademark; the grounds would figure as important elements in their later houses.

Virginia Freeman suggested that the design decisions of this simple, well-crafted house were based on "practicalities":

"the timber from the local area which ensured a short time for its completion, a linear plan with the house running parallel to the cliff, and conscious designing for the climate."

Following "*Villa Floridiana*", Jules and Didier moved to more ambitious projects, including "*Passy*", "*The Haven*", "*Innisfree*", "*Moocooboolah*" and "*St. Malo*".

In 1857 the house was sold to Archibald Campbell who in turn sold it to an Italian nobleman, Chevalier Charles d'Apice, in 1861. D'Apice was a musician, reputedly taught by either Chopin or Liszt. He was knighted by Pope Pius IX. After his death in 1888, his widow conducted a small French school in the house. It was Madame d'Apice, too, who named the house in about 1893, after "*Villa Floridiana*" of Naples. This was the villa of the Duchess Floridiana, mistress of Ferdinand 1st of the Two Sicilies.

Douglass and Elaine Baglin have lived in the house since 1957. Douglass Baglin has collaborated on a number of books which combine his skill as a photographer with his interest in heritage subjects. His "*Sandstone Sydney*" (Rigby, 1976) features a number of Hunters Hill buildings and sites.

MOOCOBOOLA

The Trust will again have a stall at the Moocooboola Carnivale which will be held in the grounds of the Hunters Hill High School on Saturday, 17th September, 1988. The Activities Group is organising the stall. We intend to have items on the stall which will commemorate 20 years of the Trust in Hunters Hill and which will also be suitable for small gifts. We will be seeking helpers both on the day and in the planning of the stall. Offers of help will be gratefully received. Telephone Alysoun Ryves 816 1741 or Jenny Lockyer 816 4922.

GLADESVILLE HOSPITAL

In the November 1987 issue of the Hunters Hill Trust Journal we reported that Gladesville Hospital might become a College of the Arts following a government decision to close the Hospital. With the change of Government, this may not now eventuate.

A spokesman from the Department of Health recently told us that *"A Ministerial Review Committee has been appointed, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Bill Barclay, which will advise on the delivery of mental health services to ensure that an appropriate balance is achieved between institutional care and community placement. No decision on the future of Gladesville Hospital will be made before this Committee reports in December 1988."*

TWENTIETH BIRTHDAY PARTY

Over 180 people attended a party on Saturday, 27th February, to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Hunters Hill Trust. We were fortunate indeed to be able to hold the party in the grounds of *Vailele*, the home of Yvonne and Trevor Wadland. Our thanks once again to them.

The Activities Group, which organised the party would also like to take this opportunity to thank those superb Trust cooks who provided desserts, and David Macdonald who has given us a wonderful photographic reminder of the function.

KELLY'S BUSH

The contract for the first stage of Kelly's Bush regeneration was announced in early May by the Minister for Local Government & Planning, Mr. Hay. The work will include making radio-active areas safe, including the existing road access to the waterfront, regeneration of vegetation and drainage works. An entry area at Alfred Street will also be constructed.

THE GREAT NORTH WALK

On 24th September, 1988, the Great North Walk between Sydney and Newcastle will be opened at Buffalo Creek Reserve by the Premier, the Hon. Nicholas Greiner.

This major Bicentennial Project is designed to link up and extend existing walks within park areas. Hunters Hill will be the effective start (or finish) of the walking track. Late last year members of the Hunters Hill Trust assisted those responsible for the Project, from the Dept. of Lands, in routing the walk through Hunters Hill. The walk starts at Valentia Street wharf (with an alternative from Gladesville wharf) and proceeds through Boronia Park to Buffalo Creek Reserve and onwards.

The Project has the support of the Hunters Hill Council, which will be responsible for the erection of appropriate signs.

Heritage Walk brochures will be prepared by the Dept. of Lands for both the Hunters Hill and Newcastle sections of the walk, with areas between covered by appropriate track maps. The Trust will be assisting with this brochure.

