



Hunter's Hill Trust Journal

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DEMOLISHED! (TOO BAD ABOUT THE STREETScape)

Prince Edward and Prince George Parades are unique in Hunter's Hill. A circle of houses ring a common, almost all built between 1883 and the late 1920s. Number 21 Prince George Parade, the youngest of these old houses, was the home of the late Emmy Espenhahn from soon after its completion. Shortly after it was built, the Depression called a halt to this type of "spec. building".

Number 21 was not a significant house in itself, but its place in this historic streetscape was important. Just before the introduction of the new LEP, which may have saved it, it was demolished, in the face of opposition by the Hunter's Hill Trust and a petition by residents of the Parade.

MICHAEL LEHANY, a former President of the Hunter's Hill Trust, spent his youth living next door. Here he recalls Emmy Espenhahn's house: the architecture, the personalities who lived there and its tragic loss.

THE CARPET RELIC

I pass it every day (well, at least twice a day), an irresistible relic, barely contained within the largest plastic garbage bag that we could find, and partially protected by a liberal sprinkling of naphthalene flakes. I say "we", but most of the relic rescue was carefully prepared by my co-bowerbird Meredith Walker, who carried out a "pre-cleaning" with carpet cleaner and vacuum cleaner. Removing the viable sections from the house proved to be more laborious than we had hoped,

for we soon encountered concentrated areas of tacked-down patching. Could these be the same patches laid down by the Roberts family some thirty or more years ago – having rented the house while Emmy and Walter "went back to Germany" on their first big German trip? The Roberts, with two growing children, were alarmed to find the floor covering moulting at its first "family use", and resorted to artfully tacking down patches culled from elsewhere.

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DEMOLISHED! (Continued from page 1)

I am irretrievably smitten by the rescue bug when the object of my mission is overlaid with the heavy irrational sentiment that has become a desperate attempt to catch a memory of people and places, now gone. All these relics flow from a kind of comfort zone of cosy memories. This relic was originally a rich maroon/russet colour, now a little less rich, but in remarkable order for a lambskin carpet some fifty years in use and with most of its deep pile intact. Walking barefoot through the luxurious pile of broadloom lambskin carpet is one of the most indelible childhood memories of Emmy's house. Somehow the deep lambswool, the dark house and Emmy's accent still with its German note, added up to an exotic experience. A sample of the lambskin carpet was recently on show at the Hyde Park Barracks (having been donated to the Historic Houses Trust Resource Collection at *Lyndhurst*, Glebe).

The house, a bungalow of uncompromising dark liver brick, dark brown tiles and small squarish bays of leadlight casement windows, stood between our house and Kelly's Bush. It was nothing grand, rather the opposite, its old weatherboard garage (they never had a car) with its shingle cut gable boards decently obscuring the original weatherboard outside privvy with its nightsoil pan).

Built in the late 1920's, the house had a modestly sophisticated plan – a large central, roofed porch, half set back between a pair of bedrooms; the front door, a pair of fully glazed french doors (with panels of dapple pattern glass) that led into a square hall. To the left and right, the same glazed doors, but single, leading into bedrooms. Straight ahead, beyond a small crosshall, a pair of glazed doors mirrored the front pair; these led into the dining room. Beyond the left-side bedroom (Emmy's) lay the large sitting room, open to the crosshall. The remainder of the house had conventional high-waisted plywood panelled doors with coppered door furniture.

A sunroom the size of the front porch led off the large sitting room to the south. all the architraves were simple dark polished prime grade oregon, tapered towards the top and with plain pedimented sections over openings. The skirtings and architraves were painted in the kitchen and bedrooms. The same timber formed a plate rail in all the living areas (none in the bedrooms and kitchen). Emmy's bedroom had a neo-Adam fibrous plaster ceiling and Walter's ceiling had tendrilly floral decoration.

In the large east side sitting room, an imposing but false fireplace of dark brick (set for gas?) was formed between a pair of wide but shallow window seats under the casement windows. These were furnished with Windsor green timber venetian blinds. Nothing was superfluous here: a three piece suite in floral linen loose covers and a very modest walnut veneer and leadlight display cabinet of treasures. The old German upright piano stood near the wall light, with its pleated and bobble-fringed shade. The wallpaper, originally a smart textured type, had now succumbed to acid decay and had gone an unattractive pulp-brown colour. The ceiling of mock beams in varnished oregon formed panels filled by kalsomined fibrous plaster (in white). A large gilt-framed reproduction of a greenish still life of fruit, with "twinkles" of light on each grape was hung on the inside wall. The glazed sunroom led off to the south, forming a square over the laundry, appropriately banished to the basement at the back of the house. There were timber wall brackets, an old painted pot cupboard, and barely there, on the wall, a slice of pine with a painted Tyrolean scene (a souvenir of one trip?). It was barely there

because the wood borers had made a complex "join-the-dot" pattern almost obliterating the painted scene.

KELLY'S BUSH SURREPTITIOUSLY PRUNED TO ENHANCE THE VIEW

The outlook to the city and south over the Parramatta River to Cockatoo Island and beyond had in the past been maintained by Emmy's husband, Walter. This view over buffalo lawn, "country" clothes line, choko vines and orange trees was achieved by the liberal removal and pruning of the trees in Kelly's Bush.

Emmy had been an excellent "haus frau", but the sparse furnishings and ornaments gave a strangely camped-in feel. Even before the burglary, late in her life, when she lost her continental silver (a dowry, engraved with her maiden initials), there were few ornaments: a coffer-shaped inlaid tea caddy with shamrock leaves and a central gothic building always sat over the fake fireplace; two heavy Japanese cloisonné plates (part of a gift from the Japanese Emperor to Walter's grandfather?) and some Gouda plates; a framed 1937 sesqui-centenary edition of a map of Sydney, and a watercolour of a stained glass memorial window to the Espenhahns (probably in Germany) were the principal decorations that came to mind.

THE "OTHER EMMY"

After Emmy died in 1990, amongst her papers there was an old photograph of a handsome curly haired young woman, sitting in a chair, holding a hat, in a garden (probably in Germany). She was always well hatted and gloved with superior tailored suits and frocks and I wonder if at this age she knew she was to become an arranged bride for Walter Espenhahn in Australia. Was the photograph taken before WW1 when she and her family were virtually starved to death by the Allied blockade? This coloured her view for life of English royalty. These feelings were largely given vent via the medium of Emmy's other self – issued in long diatribes of abuse through the bathroom window. This "other Emmy", the result of a treatable chemical imbalance in the brain, she was well aware of. Tragically, it was a condition the Health Department was incapable of keeping track of, starting treatments of injections to restore her to normal (proud, intelligent, lucid and opinionated) and then losing the paperwork and abandoning her to long dark periods of instability (midnight ravings and dark speechless sittings).

WALTER'S FATAL HITCH WITH A TALLOW TRUCK

What made Emmy's house was the presence of Emmy (and earlier, Emmy and Walter). For years after Walter died (run over by a tallow truck, probably attempting to hitch a ride, a "lifelong" but deadly custom), Emmy had continued their habit of taking lunch or a post prandial nap on the deeply set front porch. The large striped canvas blind giving extra shade to the porch had long ago succumbed to the sun, but the fittings remained. Towards the end she remained a silent observer of the small portion of the passing parade at her end of the park – with failing eyesight, acknowledging a passer-by or sometimes being "the other Emmy" evidenced by the dark rings under her tormented eyes and distant stare.

Emmy maintained an interst in the local children and the children of the local children, but became increasingly a prisoner of old age and rarely ventured beyond the front

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A BLUE PRINT FOR PRESERVING AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST SURVIVING GARDEN SUBURB

There has been some considerable publicity concerning the new LEP, and the designation of large parts of the Hunter's Hill Municipality as a Conservation Area. It seems sensible for the Trust to attempt to explain the practical effects of this new plan on Hunter's Hill and on the residents.

The overall effect of the plan, now that it has been gazetted, is to enforce legally the concept of Hunter's Hill as an area worthy of preservation, and to set out the ways in which this preservation can be continued.

There are broadly four areas where this plan changes or introduces planning measures which are new to Hunter's Hill.

THE CONSERVATION AREAS

A great proportion of the Municipality is now designated as a Conservation Area. This means simply that, if your property is within this area, you require Council consent to any change to the external appearance or structure of your property and the buildings contained within its boundaries.

Council is required, upon receipt of an application, to consider the effect of any such change on the character of the Municipality, as well as the effect on the individual property.

This includes demolition.

There are three points worthy of note here.

The first is that, for the first time, Council Officers have a statutory right to refuse or question applications which are not in keeping with the character of the Municipality. They can now give clear directions and point to easily described limitations, i.e. they can say "no" rather than having to resort to persuasion and discussions of 'character' which is hard to define.

The second is that hopefully considerable time will be saved in discussions of plans, as owners and architects will have much clearer guidelines within which to formulate plans.

The third important point is that the requirement for consent applies to any form of addition, and the plastering or painting of unpainted surfaces. Quite apart from the stone walls and early stone buildings which abound in Hunter's Hill, much of the character of the area comes from the brick houses built between 1890 and 1930. The face bricks used in these buildings – soft pinks and reds, dark manganese, and the use of different colours to create polychrome patterns, are perhaps just as important as stone in giving Hunter's Hill its unique visual character.

CONTRIBUTORY BUILDINGS

Outside the Conservation Areas are many buildings which contribute to the character and feel of the Municipality, and which were valued highly by their owners and the community in the Study carried out by Council in 1989, but which were not perhaps of sufficient historic value to justify listing as heritage items.

These buildings are listed in Schedule 7 of the LEP, and in principle are subject to the same regulations as apply in the Conservation Areas. Council is required to take into consideration when assessing any application how intact the house is, and its contribution to the character of the street, and to the history and growth of the area.

FORESHORE SCENIC PROTECTION AREA

Most of the Municipality has been placed in a Foreshore Scenic Protection Area, which has the effect of requiring Council to consider the effects of any new development or alteration on views from the water, and from public land across the water, and on public views from roads, reserves and public parks.

A practical illustration of this could be an example of views of the water, through the space between houses from a roadway or footpath, which would be lost if an extension or garage was built. This would not be permitted.

THE REPLACEMENT OF FLOOR SPACE RATIO WITH 'GARDEN AREA' CALCULATIONS

This development control measure replaces the previous calculation to determine the maximum permissible dwelling size on a given block of land. Under the new plan the size of new houses is restricted by the size of the garden area which each new block must have. 50% of the total space on the block must be set aside for garden, and 60% in the case of waterfront blocks. This designated garden area can not include driveways, garages, carports, swimming pools or tennis courts (with the exception of ground level grass courts).

The plan also imposes a new height limitation, in which height is measured vertically from any point on the ground level to the ceiling of the highest floor, and can be no more than 8 metres.

The effect of these measures will promote the development of all new buildings in scale with their surroundings, and in particular in scale with their block of land, and will encourage the use of pitched roofs, typical of roof forms throughout Hunter's Hill.

The Plans and the new LEP are on exhibition at the Town Hall, and will shortly be on display at *Vienna Cottage* in Alexandra Street.

IAN KELLEY

President, Hunter's Hill Trust

1991 TOWNSCAPE AWARDS

The next *Journal* will overview the 1991 Rotary Townscape Awards.

FROM THE COUNCIL'S NEW CONSERVATION PLANNER

Michael Stitt was recently appointed Hunter's Hill's full-time Conservation Planner. Here he reflects on the new LEP, and on his new role.

On 13th September, 1991, Hunter's Hill Local Environmental Plan No. 14 was finally gazetted, this establishes nearly two-thirds of the Municipality as a Conservation Area. The new LEP also includes the listing of a considerable number of dwellings, each of which contribute to the overall identity and character of Hunter's Hill.

The new LEP will provide a number of benefits to the Municipality. It will provide Council with a framework in which to consider proposals on the basis of the existing heritage and character of the locality. In future, Council will be required to be notified of any proposed demolition of a listed building, a contributory building, or any structure within the Conservation Area. Furthermore, Council is able to consider any new development when viewed from public reserves and waterways, where buildings are within the foreshore scenic protection area.

The formulation of LEP No. 14 has also been the catalyst for the creation of my position as full-time Conservation Planner. Up to this point Council administered the Municipality's heritage through the dedication of a heritage adviser, Ms. Penny Pike, who has devoted considerable time and effort to the consideration of the appropriateness of proposed development within the unique, physical environment of Hunter's Hill.

The Conservation Planner's role is to firstly assess all applications submitted to Council which affect items of heritage, contributory buildings or proposals within the Conservation Area. Secondly to provide additional back-up to assist the Principal Building Surveyor and Planning Officer, Mr. Ken Litting, on the planning issues affecting a proposal. Thirdly, to report recommendations made by Conservation Advisory Panel (C.A.P.) to Council for consideration. The heritage assessment of a building involves researching its history, examining its fabric and how it has been changed over the years. In assessing Development Applications, proposed changes are considered under the provisions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979. A statement of heritage significance is compiled to provide parameters for assessment of a design. Where an application requires

more specialist knowledge for assessment, it is referred to C.A.P. for comment. C.A.P.'s role is to advise the Conservation Planner on the heritage significance of a building or structure and the effect of the proposal on that significance. It is my duty to consider these recommendations, and to then prepare a report to Council incorporating both the C.A.P. recommendations and planning issues.

Finally, I should like to add that my appointment to Council does not make this my first introduction to the Municipality. I was a resident of the area during my childhood where I attended Hunter's Hill Primary School, furthermore as a child I was a campaigner for the retention and restoration of "Eulbertie", and attended the Kelly's Bush demonstration during the turbulent 1970s. It is with this background along with formal education in the fields of environmental design and urban and regional planning, that I hope will enable me to successfully administer and protect Hunter's Hill's unique heritage environment.

This is Michael Stitt's first *Journal* article as Council Conservation Planner. However he was mentioned in the *Journal*, as a schoolboy, as far back as December 1972. In that year, oil tankers were still rumbling through Hunter's Hill "around the clock" to the oil depot at Pulpit Point which was being described by residents as a "time bomb in the community".

Also in December 1972, *Marshall House/Eulbertie* was at risk of being demolished by the Education Department. In desperation, the *Journal* was hoping that someone might buy the rapidly disintegrating building and re-erect it in some other part of Hunter's Hill. The *Journal* recorded Michael Stitt's contribution to the fight to save *Marshall House/Eulbertie*:

MARSHALL HOUSE STILL THERE

A number of school children from Hunter's Hill Primary School have come to the Trust with a desperate plea to "Save *Marshall House - Eulbertie*". Young 11 years old Michael Stitt is the spokesman for these ardent preservationists, and we do congratulate the children on their ideals and enthusiasm ...

(*Hunter's Hill Trust Journal*, Vol. 1 No. 3, December 1972)

FUTURE OF LARGE HOSPITAL SITE HANGS IN THE BALANCE

Plans to rezone and redevelop the Riverglade Hospital site overlooking Tarban Creek were outlined to a community meeting on December 3.

At the meeting, Trust member and former Alderman Phillip Jenkyn proposed two motions which were passed unanimously. The first, broadly, approved the proposed public and private open spaces on the lower slopes of the site, except in relation to the area around the Priory, described as the Priory Precinct. The whole area should be re-examined closely because of the Priory.

The second resolved that the development on the site should respect the built form, density and height requirements of the municipality of Hunter's Hill.

The present proposal requires density and height levels WELL ABOVE the existing requirements of the Hunter's Hill LEP. The proposal will go on display at the Hunter's Hill Town Hall. All members of the public and the Trust are urged to see the display and record their views.

DEMOLISHED! (Continued from page 2)

porch. No longer were there the ritual mid-day broadcasts of *The Country Hour*, with the readings of produce prices and reports from country stock sales and the daily Share Readings from the Sydney Stock Exchange, so familiar when I came home to lunch from Woolwich Public School, a block away. These ceased after Walter died. They must have been important indicators of both their earlier life, farming at Leeton, and their now only modest income from shares.

Emmy and Walter came up to Sydney when Walter's mother had foreclosed on the resident mortgagees on this house during the Great Depression. Walter had retained his rural ambience in both his backyard pursuits and slower-than-city manners.

For these luncheon broadcasts (Emmy always had "luncheon", never lunch), the radio must have been brought out close to the front door for it to have been so

audible from our back verandah. The awfully correct and well spoken A.B.C. read out in a kind of superior monologue: "B.H.P. – five and sixpence; Burns Philp – three shillings; David Jones – three and eightpence". Emmy had given up David Jones' "Laundry Service" a long time ago; the driver would trundle in a large wicker basket (of hamper shape) of new laundry and take out the old. She had been, when mobile, a faithful D.J.'s shopper.

All now are memories and "relics" – the bricks gone to make foundations for the new house but the old house was photographed for the record by the new future resident. Of the garden there was never much. Emmy was a notorious "break-off-in-lieu-of-pruning" gardener. Only two camphor laurels, seeding weeds, remain and the view is less able to be retained by chopping down trees in Kelly's Bush (although someone has done it not long ago further down the hill).

VIENNA EVENTS 1992

Vienna Cottage, at 38 Alexandra Street, Hunter's Hill, is presenting the following events on the last weekend of each month.

Commencing SATURDAY 29 FEBRUARY 2-4 p.m.:
Douglass Baglin's Photographs of Old Hunter's Hill.

SUNDAY 1 MARCH: Exhibition continues.

Meet with two great Australians. Douglass Baglin, distinguished photographer, and Dr. Beverley Sherry, author and historian, have collaborated on two magnificent books: *Hunter's Hill: Australia's Oldest Suburb* and *Australia's Historic Stained Glass*. Doug and Beverley will be at *Vienna* to share with you their interests from conservation, literature, history, stained glass, photography to their love and knowledge of Hunter's Hill. Both books will be for sale and, if desired, autographed. This is a rare opportunity to meet with two of Hunter's Hill's most loved citizens. Tea and scones will be provided.

SAT. 28 (2-4 p.m.) & SUN. 29 MARCH (11 a.m. - 4 p.m.):
"Four Artists of Hunter's Hill"

Exhibition and sale of work of four established painters and sculptors.

SATURDAY 25 APRIL TO SUNDAY 5 MAY:

"Heritage Week in Hunter's Hill"

"Discover your Hidden Heritage"

Commencing SAT. 26 APRIL (Opening at 2 p.m.):

Exhibition of Hunter's Hill's New Heritage Plan.

Exhibition continues three weeks.

HERITAGE DISCOVERY WALKS

Vienna is presenting a number of conducted walks to help one discover the different aspects that make up the heritage of Hunter's Hill. They commence at *Vienna* on:

SUNDAY 26th APRIL – 2 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 29th APRIL – 2 p.m.

SUNDAY 3 MAY – 2 p.m.

YOUR POLITICIANS AND THE THIRD RUNWAY WHO'S FOR, WHO'S AGAINST

According to *The Sydney Morning Herald* account of Cabinet debate (November 15), PRIME MINISTER BOB HAWKE and ENVIRONMENT (!) MINISTER ROS KELLY were FOR the 3rd Runway, although SENATOR GRAHAM RICHARDSON raised concerns about the Runway's noise, benefits, safety and economics.

Local Federal MHR for Bennelong, JOHN HOWARD, is unequivocally FOR the 3rd Runway, as he told a meeting in the Hunter's Hill Town Hall.

Local State MLA for Lane Cove KERRY CHIKAROVSKI is equally FOR the 3rd Runway, as he told a pre-election meeting in All Saints Church Hall.

Local State MLA for Gladesville, IVAN PETCH, supports efforts to minimize the environmental effects of the 3rd Runway on local residents. He calls for two initiatives: (1) a lengthening of the existing North-South Runway into Botany Bay to increase air traffic over the Bay, and (2) an early implementation of a microwave

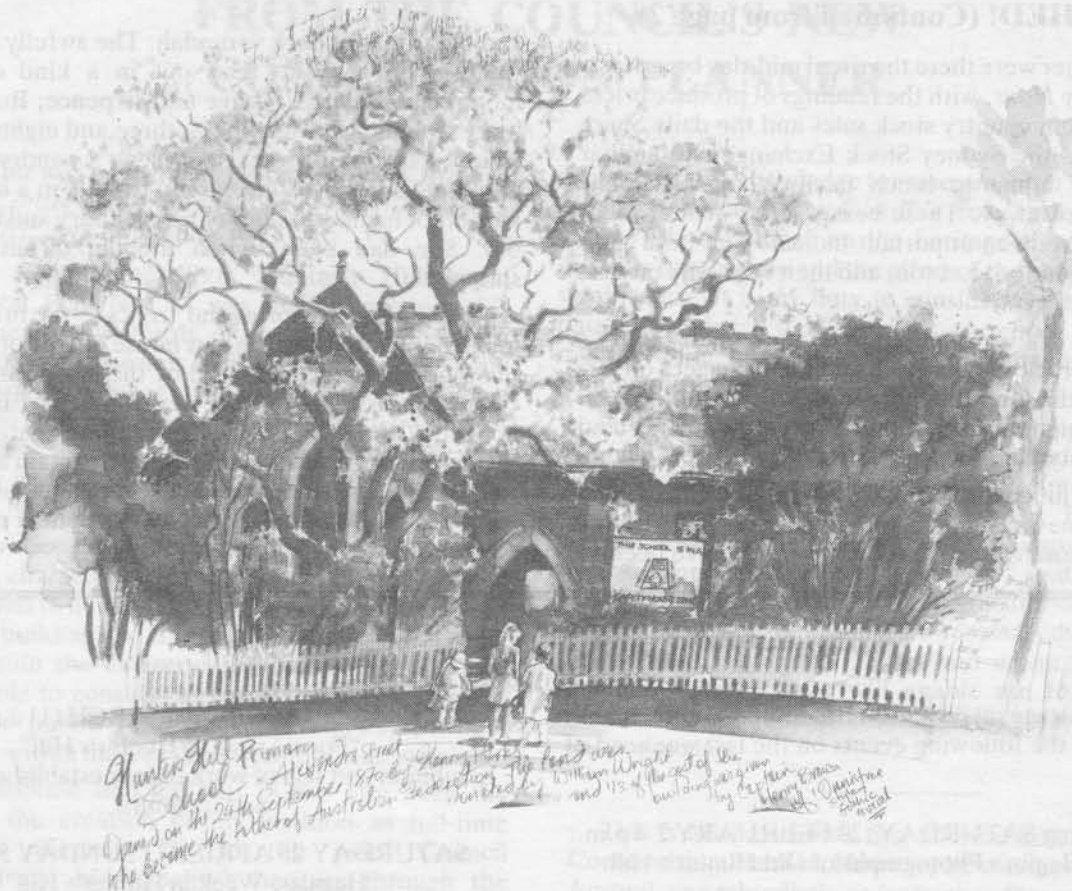
flight control system which would allow air traffic to be dispersed over a wider cone of northern suburbs, and diminish the concentration over Hunter's Hill and adjacent suburbs. (This may spread a greater share of the traffic load over Mr. Howard's suburb of Wollstonecraft.)

ARE YOU ALREADY ANNOYED BY THE NOISE OF INDIVIDUAL PLANES?

You can register your complaint about the noise of an individual aeroplane by calling the official complaints number

211 4570.

A recording system will record your complaint if you call following an evening incident.



HUNTER'S HILL PUBLIC SCHOOL

This is one of a set of vibrant paintings of Hunter's Hill historic buildings by local resident and former *Bulletin* artist Ulf Kaiser, reproduced on a high quality poster. The poster was originally published at \$50, but is now available for \$15 at David Macdonald's real estate agency. They are signed by the artist. All proceeds go to Vienna.

In the grounds of Hunter's Hill Public School (above), stands the splendid *Eulbertie*, mentioned in the previous *Journal*. Meg Marshall, who lived in *Eulbertie* has written to clarify the building's changes of name. The Department of Education became so confused about *Eulbertie*/Marshall House that they wrote to the Hunter's Hill Trust in the 1970s that *Eulbertie* had been demolished, but *Marshall House* would be preserved.

Dear Sir,

I read with interest in the article entitled "19th C Punishment Book on Display in *Eulbertie*" in the *Hunter's Hill Trust Journal* Volume XXI No. 1 and write to correct a couple of inaccuracies.

Watercolour by ULF KAISEI

The date that my family sold *Eulbertie* to the Department of Education was not July, 1968 as stated in the article. The Department purchased the whole property in May, 1965 and my father and I moved to No. 11 Stanley Road, Hunter's Hill in May, 1966.

My grandfather, Edward Marsden Betts, purchased and moved to *Eulbertie* in 1901 and gave the house the name *Eulbertie* in that year. While my family owned the property, it was never known as *Marshall House*. Margaret Short, the Headmistress of the school in 1966, changed the name to *Marshall House* as a tribute to my family. The name *Eulbertie* reverted to the house when I sold No. 11 Stanley Road.

Yours faithfully,
 MARGARET A. MARSHALL
 Matthew Street,
 Hunter's Hill.

HUGE LAND SALE IN THE VILLAGE OF WOOLWICH

The next issue of the *Hunter's Hill Trust Journal* will include an advertisement for a major sale of land in "The Village of Woolwich", from a newspaper of 1841. It will also present new research by Diana Drake about the man who was selling the land: the little known Thomas Dyer Edwards.

TRUST MEMBERSHIP 1991-92

MEMBERSHIP fees are due on March 1 each year
 Types of membership:-

Single \$10.00; Family \$15.00;
 Pensioner \$2.00; Student \$2.00;
 Individual and Institutional Life Member \$100.00

Please post to:
 Hunter's Hill Trust, Box 85, Hunter's Hill, 2111