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The Trust Journal

How the Trust saved Hunters Hill

The Hunters Hill Trust is 30 years old this year.

In the sixties life changed for Hunters Hill. A number of the district's finest old houses were demolished to put the expressway through over Parramatta and Lane Cove Rivers. More destruction followed in Church street, when a row of stone and timber houses went under the wrecker's hammer. News of a town plan, under way since 1966 and almost complete, was leaked. It proposed high rise development in large areas.

This was the breaking point. On three days notice a protest meeting was called for New Year's Day, 1968 at the Hunters Hill Town Hall. It was filled to standing with people waiting to hear the mayor answer questions about the Town Plan.

Two of the mayor's sayings, were "There is nothing historic in Hunters Hill. All we have is a few old stone houses", and "It will be a good plan - just leave it to the council".

The disquiet left by this meeting led to a second public meeting on February 7, 1968, at which the Trust was formed. This meeting was probably the largest ever held in Hunters Hill, newspaper estimates put the numbers at between 600 and 800.

Those present registered a strong protest at the spread of high-density housing in the municipality and addressed three resolutions to the Council. These sought:

The preservation of Hunters Hill's unique character.

Deferment of more home-unit building until the proposed Town Plan was ready.

A Town Planning Committee on which

the Trust and ratepayers could be represented.

Nearly 250 people became Trust members on the spot.

The rest, as they say, is history, able recorded by foundation members Reg Martin and Richard Temple in *The Vision and the Struggle*, from which these notes were taken.

Hunters Hill was saved from looking like Drummoyne, Abbotsford and Chiswick. The home unit developers turned away.

The suburb was preserved, but for whom?

The scarcity of prime harbor front real estate down the harbor has sent the money up the river and we are seeing Hunters Hill being changed by a new group - the builders of large, bulky houses conceived to reflect wealth. The builders of these megamansions may be dismayed to see that despite their efforts to attract attention, the Hunters Hill houses which bring the most money are the heritage items. Heritage is valued over ostentation. Despite this, the developers and modifiers press on, removing trees, demolishing houses, amending and removing the very items which gave Hunters Hill its character in the first place.

In 1998, the task is to defend the Development Control Plans and regulations which are in place to preserve the precinct. Despite this information being made available to house salesmen and architects and buyers by the Council, there are those who don't want to see their property as part of an harmonious streetscape. Today's Council knows that the future is in heritage and has the support of the Hunters Hill Trust.

The Council's arm needs to be strengthened, just as it did all those years ago when the present measures were put in place. *Continued page two*

The Trust's 30th year is the ideal time for citizens to get behind a re-examination of the heritage strategies to ensure that Hunters Hill's unique character endures at least for the next 30 years and longer.

"The Vision and the Struggle" an account of the Trust's first 20 years, is presented to every new member on joining. Copies may be purchased at the Hunters Hill Post office, Alexandra street and from the Trust secretary.

15 Dick Street beach needed for future residents

Revised plans submitted to Council by the developers of 15 Dick Street

Henley, provide for public access to the beach along a right of way on the north of the site.

The foreshore width is 10 metres. The Trust submits that this should be 20 metres wide to provide a reasonable parkland space.

Council has the responsibility to secure land for public use from subdividers, even though that public use might not be apparent at the time.

In this case, we know that the land is required.

A useful area secured now would be an amenity in 30, 40, and 50 years time when redevelopment of other sites in Dick street are likely. The foreshore alignment could be regained at that time. A boardwalk could link the beach at number 15 with the baths, providing an amenity for the larger numbers of residents likely to be living in the area

in 2030.

There are also resident concerns with the large footprint of the development and modifications are sought.

Anyone in the running?

The possibility of running a candidate for the electorate of Bennelong in the coming elections was discussed at the meeting of the Foreshores 2000 group at Hunters Hill Sailing Club on April 20 but no action was taken.

Candidature would cost \$250 and the group has the funds. One of the problems is that the running of a candidate could be seen as sacrificing the non-political stance of the group. On the other hand a candidate in the field would define the issue as one of importance to people in Bennelong.

If John Howard M. P. the local member and Prime Minister makes his overdue policy announcement on the foreshore land before the election, and if it is in the terms foreshadowed – that there will be no housing development – there will be no need for a candidate.

Centenary of Federation

The centenary of Federation is unlike the celebration of the bicentenary of white settlement. One hundred years of Federation is – really – one hundred years of politics. Unless you are a politician you might have difficulty in wanting to throw a party for such a thing. But I suppose we are all politicians in one way or another. John Howard M.P. has \$200,000 at his disposal to spend in the electorate on something to mark January 1, 2001.

A group of Hunters Hill citizens attended a meeting in the Town Hall on March 31 to talk about it. To make out a case for something significant – no public toilets, no matter how badly they were needed, but something reflecting the majesty of the occasion. Those at the meeting wanted postcards about Hunters Hill, an information centre, a swimming pool, memorial plaques in the footpaths.

It appears that this project needs more work.

Doggy Doings at Boronia Park

Local dog owners, unhappy at the announcement that the Council had shelved plans for an off-leash exercise area at Boronia Park for 12 months, made a barking sound that was heard all the way to the Town Hall.

The postponement was made at the request of the Friends of Boronia Park. Pollution of the bushland by doggy doo was the issue. Next thing, the council heard from another group, called the Best Friends of Boronia Park. Then there were individual dog owners on the phone to the Mayor, Bill Phipson, who presented a mayoral minute on April 27 asking that the matter be re-examined. This looks like a suitable subject for wide community consultation. The council has decided to letterbox the area, asking for views. It needs a meeting, say in the grandstand at the park, on a Sunday morning – but make it soon. Those dogs need their exercise.

Last September it was recommended that off lead exercise areas be established at Clarkes Point Reserve, Gladesville Reserve lower area, Tarban Creek Reserve eastern side of canal from Gladesville Reserve to Manning road and Boronia Park. Signs are yet to be erected.

It's time to review the Heritage Study for the next 30 years

Robyn Christie

The Hunters Hill Trust Inc is keen to take the opportunity provided by the vacant position of the Hunters Hill Heritage officer to make the following observations and recommendations in regard to the operation of heritage planning within the Municipality. The history of the Municipality of Hunters Hill as a suburb with a model set of heritage provisions includes the formation of the hunters Hill Trust in 1968, the formation of the Townscape Advisory committee (later the Conservation Advisory Panel) in 1972; passing of the first LEP in 1984; proclamation of two thirds of the municipality as a conservation area and the addition of Schedule 7, a list of contributory buildings, to the LEP in 1991. The discrepancy between this history and the recurrent appearance of totally inappropriate development within the conservation area suggests that the need to reassess the present operation of heritage provisions within the Municipality in order to obtain a more successful outcome is one of some urgency.

The Trust believes that the majority of inappropriate development may be attributed to two causes, weakness within the Council's own system of processing heritage applications, and local applicants challenging Council's refusal for development in the Land and Environment Court. The Trust has written to the Hunters Hill Council proposing the following two courses of action.

The first centres on a review of the 1984 Heritage Study.

The aim is to ensure that the Council can become proactive rather than reactionary in handling development applications, and to document more

carefully what constitutes the heritage in the Municipality. It is the experience of other local Councils that the Land and Environment Court is more receptive to a local Council's position if the status of buildings has been assessed prior to any development application being lodged.

We suggest four crucial components. 1. Hunters Hill Council should undertake a heritage study review. North Sydney Council commissioned Godden McKay in 1991 to review its first heritage study prepared in 1981 by Latona Masterman & Associates. Such a process is encouraged by the Heritage Office and should receive dollar for dollar funding.

2. As part of this review process, Hunters Hill Council should require the preparation of a database of heritage items. Information on items listed in Schedule 6 can thereby be automatically recorded and updated as further research on individual properties comes to light.

The comprehensive listing process would ensure that any development proposals to heritage items can be assessed against a statement of significance which has already been prepared on the heritage item. A sample of North Sydney Council's listing was sent to Council.

3. As part of this review process, Hunters Hill Council would require the preparation of appropriate DCPs. In particular, four categories of buildings within the conservation area need to be identified

1. Heritage – Schedule 6 will need some revision. For example there is an argument for listing a wider category of dwellings such as twentieth century architecture, including Federation and Inter-war housing. Alternatively inappropriate development may have altered the heritage status of buildings originally listed.

2. Contributory – Schedule 7 will need some revision for similar reasons to those outlined above. Note this list might be expanded given that the category "neutral" will comprise buildings which might be considered for demolition.

3. Neutral – those buildings which are neither "heritage" nor "contributory" but which do not offend the character of the conservation area. They may be considered for demolition dependent



upon the circumstances of an application.

4. Intrusive – those buildings which actually intrude on the character of a conservation area and would be considered appropriate for demolition. The second set of actions is of a more general nature.

2.1 The policies and procedures for handling heritage and development within the conservation area need to be clarified and there must be some security that such policies and procedures are implemented. The heritage study review process could include a review of appropriate policies and strategies to ensure the success of heritage planning within the municipality.

2.2 The role of the Heritage Officer needs clarification. The Trust believes that a part-time, external adviser may be more successful than a full-time officer at handling this role. It is envisaged that the same salary would be spent on appointing a more experienced person who could advise on specific issues without bias.

2.3 The role of the Conservation Advisory Panel needs clarification. In theory this body should oversee any development application within the conservation area to any category of building. It should be concerned with any development which impinges upon the character of the conservation area – that is, landscapes, streetscapes, waterfrontages, and not just the architectural details of building extensions. Its role should be defined carefully so that the aim is achievable. New guidelines governing the role of the committee should make allowance for the regular review and update of committee members.

2.4 A significant part of the program for handling heritage must include provision for educating the community about the character which we wish to maintain and which gives the Municipality its prestige. The current literature produced by Council is wordy, lengthy and disparate. It needs reviewing and might be one task for a new heritage officer or consultant. A video was made a short time ago but this has not, unfortunately, been fully utilized and circulated. Visual images are much more persuasive of conservation messages than written guidelines.

The Trust is keen to assist further in the implementation of a consistent and effective policy for handling the precious heritage of this Municipality♣.

Court stops spread of bulky houses

A decision given in the Land and Environment Court on March 25, 1998, is an important one for the development of Hunters Hill.

It supported the council in its refusal to allow the Pulpit Point type of development, in terms of size, scale and character, into the established and traditional part of Hunters Hill.

Approval of the proposed development would, according to the Council, have had significant ramifications in setting an undesirable precedent.

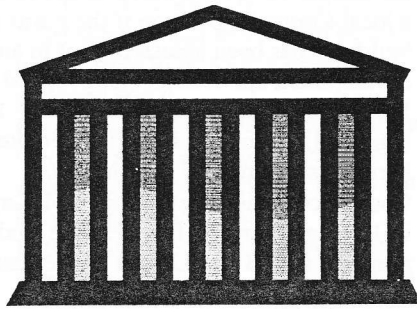
The assessor was Dr. J. Roseth and the statutes quoted were the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 and the Hunters Hill Local Environmental Plan No. 1.

An application had been made to erect a dwelling on lot 26 DP 9291, known as 15 Glen View Crescent, Hunters Hill. The finding in full is Appeal No 10690 of 1997. It is of nine pages.

Dr. Roseth in his summary said:

"The site is in an established narrow, winding and leafy street of Hunters Hill where the planning controls require that houses not exceed two storeys. The applicant proposes to erect a large house on three levels. The council's case is that the proposal is three storeys, large

and bulky and alien to the character of Hunters Hill. In addition a large fig tree in the rear garden may not survive.



"The applicant's case is that the proposal complies with the height requirements because the three levels of the proposal do not contain three habitable rooms above each other at any point. The applicant contends that there are other large houses in the area and that the proposal fits into its surroundings.

- "The findings of this judgement are that
- The proposal complies technically with the two storey limit, but it will be perceived as a three storey building.
- The Court cannot feel confident that the significant fig tree will survive.
- The proposal's bulk and scale is so significantly above that of surrounding development that it will not blend into the established character of Hunters Hill

For these reasons the appeal is dismissed."

Dr. Roseth noted that there is a single storey house on the site at present.

There are two Port Jackson figs and other vegetation. The block runs from Glenview Crescent to Francis street which is adjacent to "the new residential development at Pulpit Point... characterized by large houses and no vegetation."

Dr. Roseth quoted extensively from the Hunters Hill Local Environment Plan 1 and Development Control Plan 15 – Residential Development (Dwelling House).

Dr. Roseth acknowledged that although the applicant's proposal largely met the numerical requirements, the council's submission on blending in with the

character of Hunters Hill was the major issue in the case.

The council was represented by the Acting Manager, Development and Environment, Joe Vescio.

The Hunters Hill Trust Inc

Annual General Meeting

will be held at the RSL Hall, corner Ady and Alexandra streets, Hunters Hill at 8 p. m. on Thursday, May 21, 1998.

Business

President's Report

Treasurer's Report

Election of committee – nine members required

Guest speaker :

David Logan

Heritage Consultant,

who will talk on

Heritage Management

This will be followed by a seminar.

It is hoped this meeting will define the agenda for the future protection of Hunters Hill heritage.

Hon Secretary, Len Condon

About the Trust

Meeting dates: AGM Thursday, May 21
General meetings: Thursday, June 16,
Thursday, September 17. Christmas
Party, Thursday, November 26 (to be confirmed). Committee meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at Vienna Cottage at 8 p.m. and members are invited to attend.
President – Gil Wahlquist; Vice president – Sally Gaunt; Treasurer – Andrew Yew; secretary – Len Condon; Minute secretary – Moya Crane; Committee – Samantha Biggs, Robyn Christie, Tony Coote.

Urban Design to give a New Look to the Hunters Hill Village Centre

Samantha Biggs

Following last year's report on the status of proposed plans for the Hunters Hill Hotel, it has been confirmed that the property has been purchased by a consortium who won't demolish. Speaking as the Hunters Hill Trust's representative on Council's Conservation Advisory Panel (CAP), discussion took place at the time of the previous proposal, which highlighted the need for renewed urban design strategies in this area.

As stated in the Trust Journal last November, the site is "located at one of the major entry points to the Municipality and on a busy traffic corridor, [it is] visually prominent and serves as a landmark for Hunters Hill." Nigel Dickson (Dickson Rothschild Architects & Urban Designers) who were initially acting on behalf of a development client for the Hunters Hill Hotel, presented a concept to CAP which has been supported by Council's Senior Development Officer Joe Vescio. Preliminary discussions have also taken place with other business operators in the area.

The proposed Urban Design Strategy would encompass traffic management, streetscape and built forms, street landscaping and paving, street furniture, aesthetics, amenity and urban structure, identity and future vision. The study would include workshops and involve the participation of major stakeholders such as Council, business owners, the RTA and the local community.

The upgrading is proposed for the area around Gladesville Road, Burns Bay Road and Ryde Road.

Dickson Rothschild has been involved in urban design projects for a broad range of contexts and clients including: Dee Why Urban Design Study for Warringah Council; Hunter Street Mall revitalization for



Newcastle Shire Council; and The Entrance Precinct Study for Wyong Shire Council.

The Hunters Hill Trust fully supports Hunters Hill Council's initiative in this Urban Design Strategy and the rejuvenation of the precinct. In fact, this strategy may redress the dislocation of the suburb created by the construction of the Gladesville Bridge. Few may realize that the peninsula represents roughly only 37% of the Municipality of Hunters Hill, with the other 63% beginning on the other side of the overpass. This 63% represents the contemporary Hunters Hill and contains significant examples of 20th century design and town planning such as the largely intact Sunnyside Estate and notable examples of the 'Sydney School'. An Urban Design Strategy promises to represent 'the rest' of Hunters Hill, befitting its prominence and realizing its potential as the gateway to the suburb. ♣

Cowell Street buildings under threat

As the years roll on, buildings in the municipality listed as contributing to heritage while not actually being heritage items, are becoming more important.

To qualify as a contributory building, the house had to be built before 1928. This covered a huge area of the municipality. When the study of these buildings was made in 1989 it was found that whole streets had a character which was pristine 1920s and earlier. Many of these streets had been spared

the ravages inflicted on older parts of the municipality.

But now, bulldozers are rolling in to these areas, and alarm bells are sounding. In November 1996 the Trust supported a proposal by the Council to the N.S.W. Heritage Commission that the conservation area be extended to the boundaries of the Municipality. The commission declined.

Almost all of the contributory buildings are within this area. They were listed by the Council in Schedule 7, LEP No. 14 published in March, 1991.

During Heritage Week, April 26 to May 3, the council had a display of Contributory buildings, featuring Hillcrest Avenue, Sunnyside Street, and Isler Street. The document distributed at the exhibition said that the contributory buildings "provide the historical setting for the listed heritage items and they fill out the picture of Hunters Hill as a whole as an historic place".

Council has before it an application for the demolition of three contributory buildings, numbers 3, 5 and 7 Cowell street.

Cowell street adjoins the shopping development on the Flagstaff street car park site and has a business zoning - but does this mean that the street must sacrifice its character?

The trust believes that business interests can be met within the constraints of heritage values and the cottages should be retained. Restoration of one of the cottage frontages to its original fabric would enhance the charm of this precinct which will in the future be a soothing relief from the commercialism of the nearby shopping complex. ♣

Join the Trust.

Membership of the Trust is \$25 a year for a family. \$15 single and \$5 for pensioners and students. On joining you receive-

- a copy of The Vision and the Struggle
- a car sticker
- a badge
- copies of the Trust journal as printed

Please send your application with cheque or money order to The Hunters Hill Trust, Box 85, P.O. Hunters Hill, 2110

Youth Seek Skateboard ramp, cycle path, BMX track

One of the most important social documents to come before Hunters Hill Council in recent time was the Youth Survey, commissioned in November 1997 and tabled in February this year.

370 young people from the municipality completed the survey. In 1996, there were 1055 young people aged from 10 to 17 years living in Hunters Hill, reasonably spread across the municipality. This doesn't include boarders at St. Joseph's College. A one page questionnaire asked young people their views on issues of importance to them. They were invited to rate a list of possible recreational facilities and to nominate others. They were also asked for comments on how Council could improve the municipality for young people.

From a list of seven recreational facilities, this is how the "most needed" were rated:

Skateboard ramp

Cycle Path

BMX track

Basketball court

Other

Tennis practice wall

Netball courts

Cricket nets

When the report was presented to council it was pointed out that a number of these facilities could be combined for multi-uses. Among the "other" suggestions were a swimming pool, youth centre and skateboarding/rollerblading facilities.

The preferred location for most facilities was the Boronia Park and Gladesville area. The population figures show young people spread fairly evenly over all parts of the municipality.

The cycle path routes covered most of the municipality, including Boronia Park, Tarban Creek Reserve, joining current cycle paths to provide a path from Buffalo Creek Reserve to Gladesville Ferry, Riverglade area and



Gladesville Hospital site.

Respondents were told that the council was preparing a bike plan. They were asked if they would use a cycle way. 83% of respondents said they would. They would use it for fun and recreation rather than as a means of getting to and from school. There was a strong preference for "off road" cycle paths in parks and bush areas away from parks and cars.

When it came to issues concerning the young, bushland and the environment topped the list. Next came "nothing to do in the area", then "things to do in the school holidays" and "graffiti" in a field of 12 issues.

It is understood that the council is obtaining quotes for skateboarding and other facilities and it is hoped that they will be built as soon as possible.

Information from the report Hunters Hill Council Youth Survey, Summary of Findings February 1998, obtainable from the council. ♣

Tin Cans on display at Vienna Cottage until May 21

The Tin Can Exhibition will be open at Vienna Cottage, Alexandra street at weekends until May 31.

Gary Crockett who staged the exhibition, said in a brochure that there are now more than 600 sizes, shapes and styles of tin cans being manufactured.

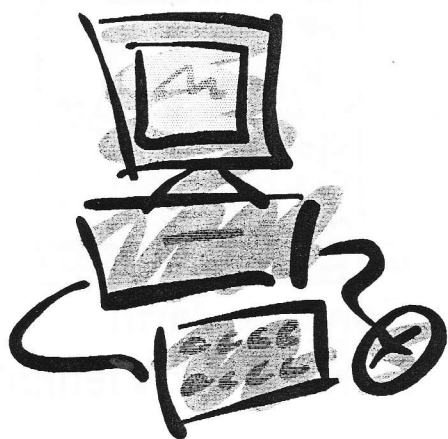
Australians use millions of cans a day.

For almost 100 years they were handmade. A good workman could make 60 a day. From 1900 mechanisation took over and by the 1920s new methods increased production to 250 cans a minute. A number of collectors loaned toys and artifacts made from tin cans for the exhibition. These ranged from the classic chest of drawers made from kerosene tins and the boxes they came in to contemporary works of art. There is a bus, made in Zimbabwe from an oil can. A toy truck, made in Sydney's Redfern, took shape from food cans, aluminium, wire and paint. There is a child's string phone, using food cans and string, and a toy train. A scuttle for kindling wood came from Peel, near Bathurst. When Meredith Walker opened the exhibition she wanted to know why there wasn't a sanitary can represented. ♣

Arthur's Story

Arthur Spring is 80 years old. He and his wife have lived in Henley for 56 years. They began with a 96-year-old weatherboard cottage on two blocks of land. I don't know if Arthur's land is on the water as I forgot to ask him. It's not really important. When Arthur and his wife started out, the river at Henley was so smelly, real estate agents advertised their properties as "NOT a waterfront". What I didn't forget in Arthur's story were the numbers. Good solid numbers like fifty six, eighty, ninety. A lifetime of numbers adding up, counting for something ...

Painting his weatherboard house was like painting the Harbor Bridge, Arthur decided, so he spent two years digging a hole next to it for another house. He moved 200 tons of rock in those two years to make way for his house. Building materials were under Government control at that time so Arthur decided he had no option but to use secondhand timber and to make his own bricks. It was wartime and Arthur, an electrical engineer, made mine detectors for the army. Suitable work for a man who only ever wanted peace.



Arthur's house took ten years to complete but as soon as it was habitable he and his wife moved in 'next door'. The old weatherboard was demolished and his brother eventually built his own home on the site.

Arthur was working at Jackson Industries, Annandale, as chief engineer designing televisions. At the time there were no links with overseas companies and Jacksons employed hundreds of people at their factory, turning out a million TVs.

However the good times couldn't last and as tariffs were reduced, imported TVs became cheaper and cheaper. The company was auctioned off and Arthur reluctantly moved to a machine shop churning out transformers. In 1992 Arthur was taking his transformers to Dick Smith's at Ryde for his 'peppercorn' wage.

When the transformer company did a 'midnight flit' overseas, Arthur's working days were finally over. He believed he had balanced his finances carefully enough to be comfortable. Now, in 1998, Arthur has just received a bill for \$3,060 which he will have to pay every year.

The home he lovingly built by hand is now valued for just over a million dollars. Arthur is eighty, remember. His wife is in her late seventies. They are on a part pension. His finely balanced retirement savings now seem to Arthur like a 'snake eating its own tail for sustenance'.

He somehow manages to laugh when telling his personal story about how the tax will hurt him and worry his wife. He feels he should not be treated this way by a Government who seem to be

ignoring him and telling him he is a "silvertail" and a millionaire property owner.

Most importantly, Arthur doesn't want to move from the home he built, every hand-made brick holding a memory. Why should he? And how would people find him with their old electronic rubbish which Arthur transforms into computers for the elderly, free of charge...?

If you won't fight land tax for your own benefit, help the Residents Against Land Tax fight for the benefit of the Arthurs in our community.

Contact Alysoun & Carl Ryves, 5 Werambie street, Woolwich, 2110, phone 9816 1741.♣

Proposal to place the Trust archives with Ryde Library Local Studies section

Gil Wahlquist

Talks have been held with the Local Studies librarian at Ryde Library, Jennifer McDonald, on the library taking over the storage and indexing of the Trust archives. The Trust would hand the archives over to the library. Hunters Hill Council shares the financial responsibility for library services in Ryde/Gladesville and this extends to the Local Studies area. The library has a large amount of information on Hunters Hill in its archive section. For instance it has a complete set of the journals of the Trust, bound in hard covers, for perusal by the public. The archives at present are safe and dry in a storeroom which the Trust rents at Vienna Cottage. However for practical purposes they are inaccessible to the public and members. The task of indexing them has proved too great for members. A cursory guide has been prepared but it falls short of what is required. It is doubtful if the Trust with its own resources can improve on this.

Vienna Cottage, undergoing some sort of a re-birth, is steadily filling our room and wants it back. We have tried without success to get larger premises – Henley Cottage, the Mortimer Lewis building (part only) at Gladesville Hospital and the old Woolwich Schoolhouse are some of the venues considered – without success. There is the possibility of indexing the archives by purchasing a computer and software program and employing student archivists. We would be looked at about \$6,000 capital cost, some could probably be secured by grant if we are lucky. The administration of this is a daunting responsibility and then there is the overriding responsibility which we have to make the archives accessible to researchers and the public on a regular basis in the future.♣

Health Dept wants to gouge council for pre-school rent

It is extraordinary that a long-established suburb like Hunters Hill is in need of school and pre-school facilities. There has been a baby boom which is stretching facilities. Parents requiring pre-school facilities are getting nowhere, despite the existence of empty buildings on the Gladesville Hospital site. Cr. Marie O'Gorman told the tale in a recent edition of The Weekly Times. The council's first choice was land in Crown Close, owned by the Department of Health. Then early last year the council was told it couldn't have the land. It is to be rezoned for residential purposes.

The next pick was Paterson House and surrounds, on the western edge of the hospital site in Punt road. Negotiations took place over the past year.

"Having considered the proposed pre-school to be of 'highest and best use' of the site, the Valuer /General's Department assessed the land on a commercial basis without taking into account any community service obligations" Cr. O'Gorman wrote. "The valuation requires a rental of

\$40,000 per annum for the proposed site on a ten-year option and with all improvements to revert to the State Government at the end of the lease. "The terms and conditions proposed by the State Valuer's office are totally unacceptable for numerous reasons. "On the rental component alone it simply would not be financially viable to operate a community based pre-school. "Additionally, the lease conditions specifying that all improvements should revert to the State Government at the end of a ten year lease is not the outcome one would expect for the very significant expenditure of community funds that would be required to develop the site and restore a heritage cottage that has been allowed to fall into a state of total disrepair.

"Needless to say the council could not accept this proposal and at the Council meeting on March 23, 1998 I proposed a motion that Council request the Health Department to review its decision on a number of grounds.

"These included the following:

- *The lease figures were assessed on a commercial basis but the property within the Gladesville campus, in the trusteeship of the Health Department, is not zoned for commercial use but is a community site and, therefore, the rental is excessive for a community based non profit facility.

- *The local community cannot be expected to fund the cost of restoration of Paterson House and the development costs of the site without acquiring any form of ownership of the site.

- *There is already a demonstrated need for additional pre-school places in the Hunters Hill Municipality.

- *The development of 341 residential dwellings on land previously owned by the Health Department (namely the northern campus of Gladesville Hospital) now called Huntley's Cove, will create an even greater need for the provision of more pre-school places.

- *Finally, in the Health Department's own Conservation Analysis and Guidelines for the Gladesville Hospital Campus, Paterson House is assessed as a building that should be conserved. This is very unlikely to happen with the current state of the State Government's finances, unless a project such as the

one proposed by Council goes ahead". Council accepted the motion and resolved to pursue the matter with John Watkins, M.P. Member for Gladesville and the Minister for Health, Dr. Andrew Refshauge. ♣

Ryde Pool is our swimming spot, too

Ryde Council proposes to rezone one third of its swimming centre site for home units. The idea is to raise some of the \$13 million to turn the pool into a water sports venue for the Olympics. SOCOG and the N.S.W. Government have offered \$5.75 million towards the cost, with Ryde raising the rest. The first step in the residents' fight against the proposal was opposition to rezoning the land.

The Hunters Hill Trust secretary, Len Condon, wrote a letter to the general manager of Ryde Council. This is what he said:

As a regular swimmer with a season pass I use the pool 5 times per week and regard it as one of the best facilities available in Sydney. My wife, son and daughter are also regular users. The proposed reclassification of the Pool land from *Recreation* to *Operational* raises some very serious concerns and I hope that this will not happen.

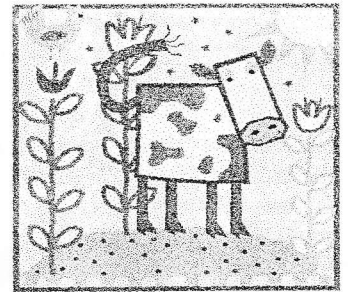
This will have the potential to alienate all public land, including land that was donated to the council

This is the thin edge of the wedge which will set a precedent that could lead to the selling off all public land.

This raises other questions such as: Why demolish the best swimming facility in Australia/

Why disadvantage lower income families by increasing the entry fee?

As an architect with experience of concrete cancer in buildings I would seriously question the claim that the concrete cancer is of the magnitude claimed. ♣



Concrete farm animals for Vienna?

In 1991 the National Trust prepared a landscape plan for the orchard site adjoining Vienna Cottage, Alexandra street, Hunters Hill.

The plan has not been implemented, except for a couple of signs. The result is that the block looks like another empty piece of land awaiting a developer.

Why was the plan ignored?

The sticking point appears to have been the farm concept embodied in the plan. In telling the story of the farm in a theatrical sense the planners had the council running for cover.

It is proposed that "cows and chickens in the form of durable life size models or play sculpture are a crucial components of the conservation interpretation of the Vienna complex – these are the planner's words – they are not gilding the lily; they should be viewed as the most important design contribution to the Hillman Orchard. They will be an immediate attraction to child and adult visitor alike, providing the vehicle for an imaginative experience of the former function of the site "

The plan explains that "similar animals have recently been made for the Sir Joseph Banks Park at Botany where they have proven to be enormously successful and visually stimulating and safe and durable play structures." The model animals are self-colored and wax coated for safety and durability.

This land is owned by the municipality. The plan was brought to the recent meeting of the council's Parks and Trees committee. It is to be re-examined at a meeting with the committee of Vienna Cottage. ♣