

The Hunters Hill Trust  
Inc.  
Established 1968  
Preserving Australia's  
Oldest Garden Suburb

July, 1999



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for a family,  
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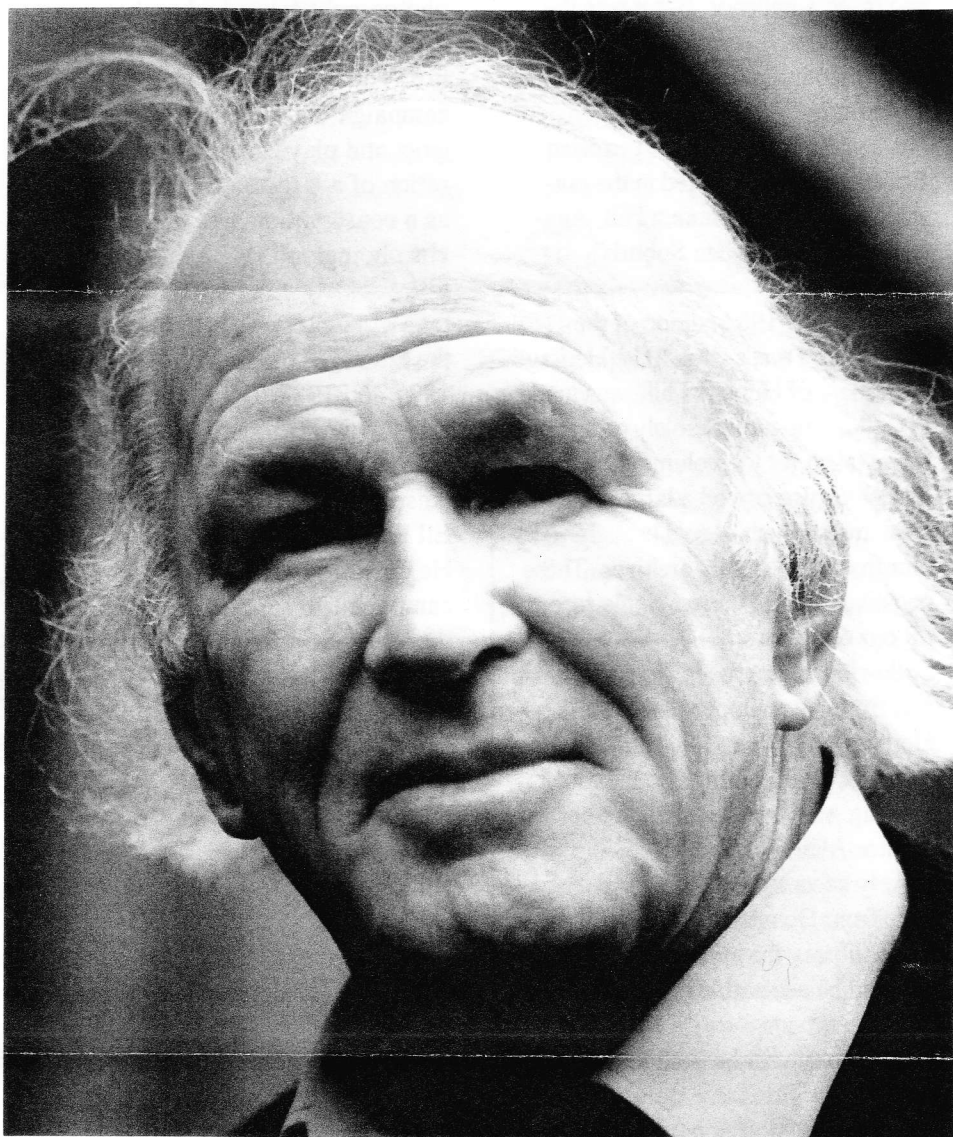
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**The Hunters Hill**

# Trust Journal

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## Douglass Baglin gives his Hunters Hill picture collection to the State Library

The photographs taken by  
Douglass Baglin have ap-  
peared many times in this  
journal and in the publica-

tions of the Hunters Hill  
Trust, but this is the first  
time we have printed a pic-  
ture of him. His position

has been behind the cam-  
era, not in front of it and his  
photography played a large

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part in the campaign to have the suburb declared a conservation area. Others who took photographs were David Saunders, John Delacour, Harry Millen, Christine Hoheneder, Gunther Rechberger, Christian Seruzier, Yvonne Austin, Conrad Oppen and R. V. Challenor. But it was the work of Douglass Baglin which more than any other defined the character of the suburb.

His collaboration with the historian Beverley Sherry resulted in the outstanding history "Hunters Hill, Australia's Oldest Garden Suburb".

**T**he 1982 edition of the Trust's book "The Heritage of Hunters Hill" was made up almost solely of his pictures, taken for the volume.

Douglass also copied a large number of pictures which people brought to him from their family archives. These negatives are the largest single record of our early days.

Following an approach from the Trust and from Alice Oppen, editor of "The Heritage of Hunters Hill" and a director of the State Library Foundation, a meeting was arranged with the library curator Alan Davies and the library eagerly accepted the offer of the negatives from Douglass.

At the library they will be catalogued and will be accessible to this and future generations.

A ceremony will be held at the State Library on Thursday, July 29. The library is seeking donations to assist in the conservation of the photographic collection.

Douglass Baglin moved to Villa Floridiana in Sea street, Hunters Hill, in 1957. With his wife Elaine (nee Brodie) he lived there for 37 years until 1988 when he retired, purchasing Merrendee Station 40 km west

of Mudgee in 1989.

Villa Floridiana had been built in 1847 by Joulès Joubert, the first mayor of Hunters Hill. Douglass began taking photographs of the French, Italian and English houses of the suburb which were threatened by development. The thousands of photographs taken by him became the central visual record of the suburb. The pictures were used in the campaign to protect the historic precinct and played a part in the declaration of a large part of Hunters Hill as a conservation area.

His photographs were the main pictorial record in the book "The Heritage of Hunters Hill" published by the Hunters Hill Trust in 1969, 1977 and 1982. Douglass collaborated with the historian Beverley Sherry in the book "Hunters Hill, Australia's Oldest Suburb" (David Ell Press, 1989).

He documented the campaigns to save the house St. Malo, demolished to make way for a highway and to save Kellys' Bush.

His collection of priceless historic photographs, going back to the last century, provides a

priceless archive of life in the district. The collection has been kept intact by his wife Elaine and assistant Yvonne Austin.

**D**ouglass Baglin was born at Bondi in 1926. He attended Sydney Technical High School and began the study of civil engineering, a career cut short when he enlisted in the RAAF in 1944, training as a pilot.

After the war he became a commercial photographer and opened a studio at Pacific Highway, St. Leonards in 1951. In 1959 he was a member of Sir Edward Hallstrom's expedition to New Guinea, recording the first European contact with the people of the Jimmi River Valley in the film "Papuans and Pygmies". Two books were published from this expedition.

**T**he book "Island of Australia" produced with Barbara Mullins, won a medal in 1970.

He contributed to travel magazines and made the award-winning documentary "What have You Done With My Country" depicting the effect of European society on Australia's aborigines. Another film "Pacific Pacific" showed the effects

of the British atomic tests on Malden Island. This was made in 1974 when Douglass was hired by geologist John Barry to cover a geological expedition to the Pacific Islands.

In 1976 he was assigned to produce a series of photographs of India to the world.

His pictures in "Healers of Arnhem Land" were described as priceless images by the book's author Dr. John Cawte, Emeritus professor at the University of New South Wales. He was Australia's official photographer at the 1967 America's Cup challenge at Rhode Island, U.S., the Dame Pattie challenge.

He produced more than 20 books on aspects of Australian nature and life, many in collaboration with Barbara Mullins and Yvonne Austin.

**The Baglin pictures  
will be on show at  
Vienna Cottage  
during the  
Moocooboola  
Festival on Saturday,  
14 August**

## \$50,000 Grant for Federation Walk at Hunters Hill High School

**T**he Minister for the Arts and the Centenary of Federation, Mr. Peter McGauran has approved a grant of \$50,000 for the Trust's "Three Patriots" walk project under the Federal Government's \$30 million Federation Community projects program.

The approval follows recommendations from a Selection Committee established in the federal electorate of Benelong.

The Trust will shortly sign a Deed of Agreement with the Commonwealth to secure the grant.

The Trust proposal will establish a walk along the Lane Cove River frontage of the Hunters Hill High School. This will be added to the Great North Walk. At present people taking the walk are directed along The Avenue, the street to the south of the School.

The total cost of the walk was estimated at \$70,500.

Establishing the walk has the

wider purpose of celebrating the centenary of the Federation of Australia.

It draws attention to local history, in particular three Hunters Hill Residents who played a part in the debate which resulted in the Federation. The historian Beverley Sherry identified the following:

Angelo Tornaghi (1834-1906) a leader of the Italian community in Hunters Hill. In Italy he had supported Garibaldi the political reformer. In Australia

he was a spokesman for the Italian community. Tornaghi was Mayor of Hunters Hill in

1879 and from 1882-83. Charles Jeanneret (1834-98) was a steamboat operator, magistrate and politician. He was Mayor in 1870-71 and 1890. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1887-94 as a free trader. He supported Henry Parkes and federation but unfortunately did not live to see his dream realised.

Sir George Richard Dibbs (1834-1904) was a merchant and adventurer who was elected to the Legislative Assembly representing West Sydney. Dibbs was sent to the Federal Convention of 1891 against the wishes of Parkes. In 1894 Dibbs appealed to the Premier of Victoria to begin unification with New South Wales. He died at Passy, Hunters Hill, in 1904.

A biographer of Dibbs in Canberra has offered to help with research information. So too has an archivist of the Jeanneret family, in Tasmania. The Trust would like to hear



Angelo Tornaghi



Sir George Dibbs (State Library)



Charles Jeanneret and family

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# Council says "no" to demolition of 1915 house at 12 Viret street

## Court supported council stand

**H**ouses cannot be demolished within the conservation area of Hunters Hill Municipality without the permission of Hunters Hill Council.

In September 1998 a landowner submitted a Development Application to demolish a house on the Lane Cover River frontage at 12 Viret street (pictured) and construct a dual occupancy residential development on the site. The existing house has been described as "late" Federa-

*(Continued from page 3)*

from a biographer of Tornaghi. The project will provide local schools with an opportunity to show pupils a local link with Federation. The walk involves dismantling the existing riverside fence at the high school and erecting a new fence a couple of metres back into the grounds.

The Education Department, which is providing the land, has asked for a planting program on their side of the fence.

The Hunters Hill Council Bushland Management Co-ordinator Diana Ku-reen has identified a saltmarsh community in the estuarine vegetation and has applied for a Coastcare grant to assist in regenerating the community and further protect and enhance the area with the planting of indigenous species. The Project is expected to be completed late next year. The deadline for Federation projects is December, 2001.



tion. On 27 January, 1999 a meeting of council refused the application and listed the following 14 reasons for its action:

1. The existing building is considered to be of environment heritage significance and is a positive contributor to the history, character and identity of the Hunters Hill Conservation Area and should not be demolished.
2. The proposal does not comply with the maximum height limit of Clause 15 (2)(b) of the Hunters hill Local Environment Plan as amended.

3. The proposal does not comply with the maximum number of habitable stories under Clause 15(2)(a) of the Hunters hill Local Environmental Plan No. 1 as amended.

4. The proposal exceeds the maximum 0.5:1 floor space ratio controls under SEPP53.

5. The proposal does not comply with the minimum requirements of Clause 16(a) (Garden Area) of the Hunters Hill LEP.

6. The proposal does not comply with the requirements of DCP No 12 and 15 including Building Height Plane and eaves height.

7. The proposal is unsatisfactory in terms of

bulk, scale, height, siting and design.

8. There will be loss of significant vegetation and the proposed landscaping is inadequate.
9. The proposal fails to respect the natural topography and features of the site.
10. The proposal represents an unacceptable over development of the site.
11. The information provided is inadequate including geotechnical stormwater drainage details, swimming pool fencing, site analysis under SEPP53 and

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compliance with relevant provisions of the BCA.

12. The ornate detailed proposed front fencing does not comply with the Council's Fences Policy.
13. There will be an adverse impact on the amenity of the adjoining and surrounding properties having regard to overshadowing, loss of privacy, visual impact and loss of views.
14. The proposal is contrary to the public interest.

The applicant appealed to the Land and Environment Court of New South Wales.

The hearing was held in March, 1999 by Senior Commissioner P. R. Jensen. The Commissioner's decision which occupied 26 A4 pages was given on 11 May, 1999 (Appeal No 10739 of 1998).

The Commissioner dismissed the appeal and upheld the council's action.

In his conclusion, Commissioner Jensen said there were two major issues, the first involved the building proposed for the site, the second involved the proposed demolition of an existing building seen in the context of the conservation area in Hunters Hill.

The linking of the dual occupancy buildings, which appeared to be an unwritten policy of council had resulted in a proposal for a

"monolithic block of development".

"This is seen as likely to give rise to a perception of excessive bulk from both the adjoining neighbors' vantage points" he said.

"In terms of the topography of the site and the relationship to adjoining building and open space, it is apparent that the proposed building straddles an elongated band of open space lying between the uppermost

terrace building abutting Viret street and the existing building platform lying at a lower level.

"Set in such a position on this site, the inevitable consequence of the proposed building would create a major visual obstruction and would be physically out of context with its adjoining neighbors, their gardens and the landform in general."

Two heritage consultants gave evidence to the Court.

Under the Local Environment Plan No 1 for Hunters Hill the existing building is not listed as a heritage item in Schedule 6. Under a Draft Local Environment Plan it has been nominated for inclusion. This was noted by Commissioner Jensen.

"Quite apart from the question of heritage listing, it is apparent that the location of the house within a conservation area should involve careful consideration from a heritage point of view", he said.

".... It is now quite clear that (the) heritage worth of this particular house has emerged as a matter that cannot be overlooked.

"More importantly, it now appears quite clear that both the heritage consultants are in general agreement that No. 12 Viret Street is worthy of listing for heritage purposes" he said.

Both consultants had agreed that the house was in fair condition, given its year of construction – 1915.

Commissioner Jensen said that in reaching a coherent conclusion as to the appropriate step to take, the Court had considered that the condition of the existing building must be seen as a highly relevant factor.

The architect and his sub-consultants had considered the condition of the building as not sufficiently good to justify its retention. This conclusion had been repudiated by one of the consultants.

Commissioner Jensen said that after looking at the land and building internally and externally that restoration was a possible path to creating an acceptable dwelling.

"There appeared to be sufficient space on the Viret Street side of the site to allow the introduction of a further dwelling in a form which would not totally jeopardise the heritage qualities of the existing house" he said. This would need to be approached with considerable care but was within the skill of the applicant's architect.

*The above is a precis of points from the finding which can be seen in full either at the offices of the Hunters Hill Council, Alexandra Street, Hunters Hill or at the N.S.W. Land and Environment Court.*

## Our Christmas Party

**The Hunters Hill Trust Christmas Party will be held on Thursday, November 25 in the grounds of 5 Ady street from 6.30 to 8 p.m.**

**The house, which occupies a commanding position on the corner of Brown's Lane, is the home of Trust member Mary Keller. Place this date in your diary.**

# How new building can fit the old

*"The special character of Hunters Hill and the value of its historic buildings have long been recognised by its residents.*

*"Indeed many people have chosen to live in the municipality because they like old buildings and they like the townscape - the stone walls, the views, the presence of the Lane Cove and Parramatta Rivers and the tree-lined streets."*

**S**o begins the Guidelines for the Conservation of the Environmental Heritage drafted by Hunters Hill Council in September 1988.

So why, after 30 years since the establishment of the Hunters Hill Trust, a community group which precipitated so much of the early local government initiative, do we still have inappropriate development within the municipality?

In spite of these clear statements which define the unique character of the municipality, true understanding by the community and an effective planning process still seem a distant reality.

People move to Hunters Hill because they like the suburb, but once they are ensconced in the area many develop the belief that they should be able to do precisely what they want to their property.

On the one hand they appreciate the unique character of the suburb but on the other they fail to comprehend their individual obligation towards maintaining it.

What the individual does to his or her property has an inevitable and glaring effect on the neighboring

streetscape.

To erode one element, then another, in the overall pattern that has gradually built up over the years destroys the quality and value of the surrounding streetscape, together with the remaining old buildings.

So why do residents have this need to alter, extend, overhaul and demolish?

It's because these quaint little 19<sup>th</sup> century sandstone cottages, and in fact the grand two-storey mansions as well, don't accommodate many of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century urgencies in the way that we would like them to do.

Life styles change and, at the end of the day, an old building only survives if it can be adapted and reused when it is no longer relevant to the way we live now.

But to give meaning to the past, we also need to respect the need for some sort of continuity. The crucial questions that should concern us are how the buildings are changed and the process by which that change is managed by ourselves and our council.

A mutual and real respect for the history of a building and the patina of its age is an important start.

Then how do we design and alter what there is in a reasonable manner for our modern needs?

Reasonable manner looks at the form, materials, massing of the building we are altering and respects them in the new design.

Some heritage experts tell us that the extension should reflect the old building, some say that the extension should be distinct; all heritage experts say the new extension should not vie with the old building. These are not complex notions, so why do some additions and alterations in Hunters Hill only speak of their ostentation and new materials, and overwhelm, belie and negate the original building?

In addition to the original building, we must respect and look closely at the surrounding streetscape. This usually reads as "Will it affect my neighbor's view of the harbor?"

Views within, however, are as important as views without. Closed-in views are communal, external "rooms" and their "furnishings" contribute as much to their

character as private interior.

All elements in the neighboring townscape need to be taken into consideration - neighboring houses and gardens, stone walls, and tree-lined streets.

Where new work intrudes on neighboring space and elements, alternative designs should be sought.

We are not bereft of statements which identify the unique character of Hunters Hill, but we lack clarity in the present process for handling heritage.

Our strategies for achieving the desired end result need tightening up

(Continued on page 7)

**Why do some additions and alterations in Hunters Hill only speak of their ostentation and new materials?**

# Most here are not mega-rich

The majority of residents of Hunters Hill appreciate that the acceptance of strictures concerning building styles has the greater benefit of providing a quality of living rarely matched elsewhere, said the President, Gil Wahlquist, in his annual report.

The report was presented at the Annual General meeting, held at the RSL Hall, Alexandra street, on May 20, 1999.

The standards continue to be threatened by individuals who mostly are dissatisfied with the scale of the

suburb and want to add bulky, unfriendly houses to the streetscape. The Trust supports the retention of the so-called modest houses. They provide lower cost housing opportunities to offset the mega-rich materialism of some Hunters Hill residents portrayed by real estate writers like Jonathon Chancellor in the Sydney Morning Herald.

**The majority of Hunters Hill residents and certainly of Trust members, are not mega-rich.**

This is the 32<sup>nd</sup> year of the Trust. The year has seen a renewal of inter-

*(Continued from page 6)*

and need to be comprehensible.

Residents wanting to alter, extend, overhaul or demolish are baffled by what appears to be a cumbersome and inconsistent decision-making process.

We have a Heritage officer, a Conservation Advisory Panel and Councilors, and applicants are asked to prepare heritage impact statements which hopefully consider the history of the property in some depth and how the development will impact upon the present streetscape in some detail. Don't be put off by history. It is the minute layering of information which contributes to our understanding of the physical evidence that remains.

We need to extend and reconsider our lists of heritage buildings and of contributory buildings.

The list of contributory buildings refers only to items outside the conservation area.

So we can demolish a 1920s house in an established streetscape within the conservation area, but not out-

side its boundaries. This doesn't make sense.

If we aim to regain our townscape, however, and not just individual houses, a whole morphology of structures, elements and details needs to be devised.

It is the sum of the parts that make up the whole. All the elements contribute to the picture. Historically Hunters Hill is a small local government area, with very few commercial developments funding its coffers.

You can only spread the limited monies so far, but perhaps we need to reorientate our priorities. Heritage should be a priority for everyone, our elected councilors and residents.

After all, why have we bothered to come and live in the area?

We need to develop a commitment towards maintaining it before the very thing that drew residents to the suburb is destroyed by them.

**-Robyn Christie**

*This article appeared in To the Point in The Weekly Times on May 26, 1999.*

est in the natural environment of Hunters Hill.. Trust members have participated in the development of bushland management plans for Tarban Creek, Ferdinand Street, and Boronia Park . historical material.

## Rugby Photos

The aftermath of the National Trust's Heritage Week activities at Vienna Cottage saw the donation of 98 photographs to Ryde Library's Local Studies Collection.

Bruce Lycett, historian of the Hunters Hill Rugby Union Club kindly donated and allowed prints to be made of the Club's team photographs. The oldest photograph dates from 1904 with the most recent being 1997. These images are a valuable addition to the Local Studies Collection as they present an archive of one sporting club and a record of individuals in the Hunters Hill area.

The photographs are being catalogued and will be available for viewing and research at the Ryde Branch Library. The Library welcomes donations to the collection. Please contact Jennifer MacDonald, Local Studies Collection.

## Editor Sought

The book "The Heritage of Hunters Hill", published by the Trust in 1982, is out of print. The Trust will issue a new book if an editor can be found. This could either be a reprint or be a new approach to the recording of conservation values. The committee would like to hear from a person prepared to undertake this work. This may suit a post-graduate student of history or architecture. The committee would attempt to gain funding for a new approach to this task. Apply to The Secretary, Hunters Hill Trust Inc., P. O. Box 85, Hunters Hill, 2110.



## THE HUNTERS HILL TRUST INCORPORATED

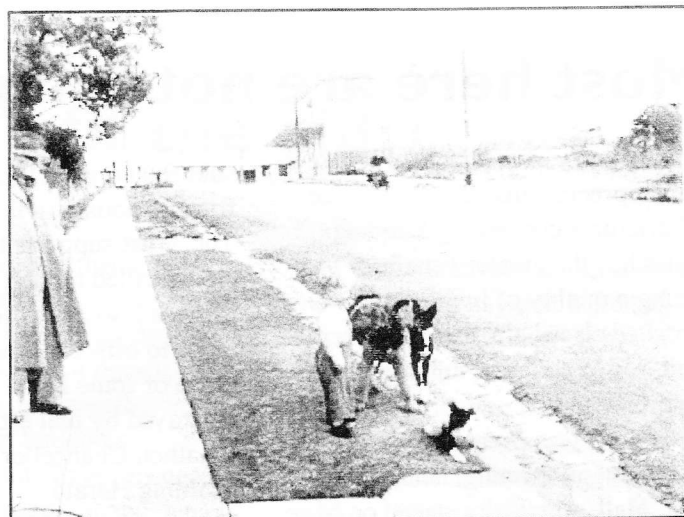
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### Officers for 1999-2000.

President – Gil Wahlquist phone 9816 2627  
Vice-president – Tony Coote;  
Secretary – Len Condon, 9816 2796.  
Treasurer – Andrew Yew.  
Journal editor – Gil Wahlquist.  
Committee – Sally Gaunt, Robyn Christie, Chris  
Rumble, Celia Roberts, Jennifer MacDonald.  
Committee meetings are held on the second  
Thursday of each month at Vienna Cottage,  
Alexandra Street, Hunters Hill.

*We're on the web  
[interweb.com.au/hhti/](http://interweb.com.au/hhti/)*



**Gale Street, Woolwich in 1957**

Do you remember Woolwich when it was an industrial suburb?

Connie Ewald ( phone 9816 2073) is compiling a social record of the times and would like to hear from people with memories or family and company records from those days.

## We want action on the idle Army land

**O**n 18 June, 1999, a letter was written to the Member for Bennelong, Mr. John Howard on behalf of Hunters Hill Trust Inc., Foreshores 2000 - Woolwich, and the Hunters Hill Defence Lands Community Reference Group: Please accept our congratulations on completing 25 years as a Member of Parliament representing the electorate of Bennelong.

The members of the Hunters Hill Trust and those in the groups which have engaged the issue of the Woolwich Defence lands are fully supportive of your objective to preserve significant Sydney Harbour foreshore areas, including Woolwich, for future public use.

We think that the time has come to

bring about some real outcomes for the site to indicate that public use of the lands is on the way.

We request a meeting with you to plan a course of action.

Our last meeting was two years ago ( 21 May, 1997). We suggest that those present at that time be reconvened.

The outside broadcast conducted from the Woolwich lookout by Philip Clarke of 2BL on 1 June brought the subject of the defence lands to the fore. We would like to see what opportunities exist at present for the lands to be used.

The use of the Morts Dock area in



the public interest during the Olympics would be a positive move and with an appropriate level of community consultation will show that the Government is

not leaving the land on the shelf. Opening of the horse paddock to passive recreation could be accomplished once the present handling of ballast for Cockatoo Island is complete. While the Army was in occupation, the paddock was a de facto public area.

We look forward to meeting you. End.

*At the time of going to Press, no reply had been received.*