

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

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The Hunters Hill

Trust Journal

Stone House saved by residents at Land and Environment Court

A Development Application was lodged last year for the demolition of a stone house at 20 Wyabalena Road and its replacement with a large McMansion of the highest order of density. The HH Trust, the National Trust and a number of local residents wrote submissions to Council opposing this development in the Conservation Area and a petition was also circulated.

Council had not finalised its decision on the DA when the house owners declared that it was a "deemed refusal" because the process had gone over the minimum time allowed (40 days) for assessing development applications.

Following an unsuccessful conciliation meeting at the Council Chambers, the matter went to

the Land and Environment Court. The Court convened on site on 24 June 2004, where the Trust and a number of people who had readied themselves to make submissions opposing the DA. The proceedings were adjourned to the court in Macquarie Street where The Court appointed heritage adviser, David Logan, made a powerful case for the retention of the house. Having a single Court-appointed heritage adviser is a new initiative of the Court, where previously competing heritage consultants slugged it out at twenty paces.

Phil Jenkyn and others addressed the Court as well and the assessment was made in favour of retaining the stone house. Congratulations to all those involved.

Take part in the road test of the Hunters Hill Walking Trails project

Phil Jenkyn and Peter van Sommers with support from the Hunters Hill Council have prepared a magnificent set of walks in Hunters Hill.

The walks are being road tested at the moment. The maps are available over the counter at the town hall or from the

Hunters Hill Council's web site at

www.huntershill.nsw.gov.au

2004 was a busy year for the Trust on many fronts

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year was another busy one for the trust and the committee has continued to try to keep Hunters Hill the way we want it to be. Thanks to:-

Office bearers

... *Perennial Secretary*, Len Condon

... *Peripatetic Treasurer* Nicola Jackman

... *Vice President* Robyn Christie

Committee members

... Sally Gaunt

... Brendon Stewart

... Louise Hunter and Wendy Dennis

Thanks also to Phil Jenkyn for his ongoing contribution to the work of the Trust.

Phil was very involved in the anti-amalgamation struggle, the preparation of our response to the Ryde Road SEPP 5 units and the drafting of the Charter that we put out for the Council elections.

Web site

Thanks also to Marlene Regimbal who has voluntarily maintained our website since its inception. For health reasons she couldn't continue this work, so we are now using a professional

web master.

We also have a new domain name huntershilltrust.org.au.

Doreen Saunders

This year, one of the original Trust members Doreen Saunders died. Doreen made a huge contribution to the Trust with her work on the DRAFT TOWN PLAN in the early seventies and in the research she did for the GREEN BOOK.

See the obituary on page eight written by Ros Maguire.

Connie Ewald

Just a couple of weeks ago another Trust Member, Connie Ewald died. Roaring around the local streets on her vintage bicycle, Connie was a Hunters Hill heritage item in her own right. As well as all the work she did for refugees and bush regeneration, Connie wrote "*The industrial Village of Woolwich*", which was published by the Trust. Gil Wahlquist, who put the book together gave a terrific eulogy for at Connie's memorial service in All Saint's Church - a place not much frequented by Connie.

Working with Hunters Hill Council

The Trust continues to work closely

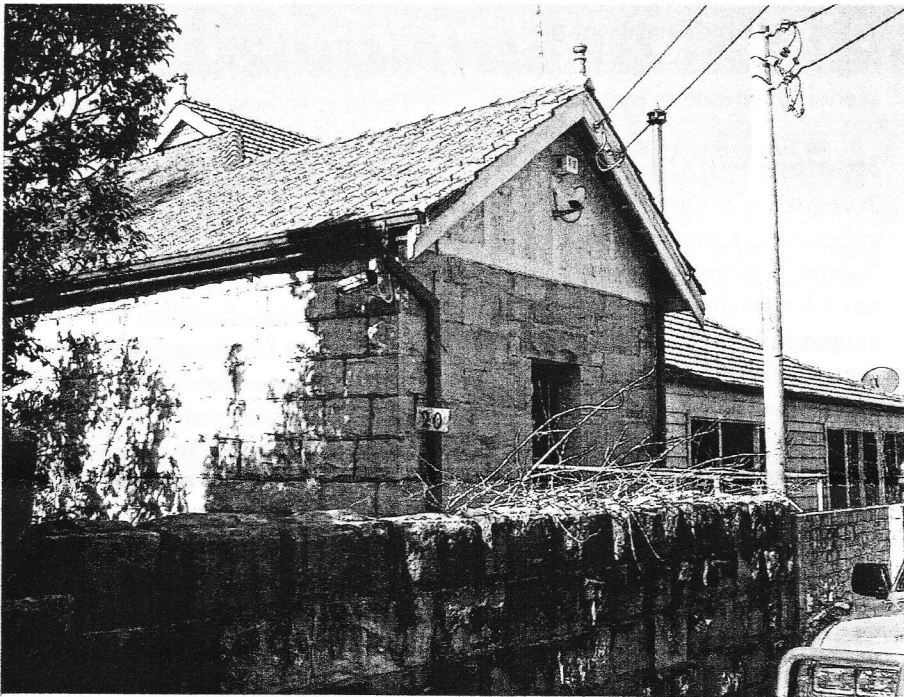
(Continued on page 3)

Paradise Lost



Despite objections by the Trust a couple of years ago, the Council signed up for the placement of commercial bus shelters with advertising hoardings on our main transport routes.

Paradise Saved



A Development Application was lodged last year for the demolition of this stone house at 20 Wyabalena Road and its replacement with a large McMansion. The Land and Environment Court decided that the house was to stay.

with Council and we are hoping to work even more closely with the new Councillors. Our ongoing relationship involves

- ... Assisting Council with evidence in the Land and Environment Court,
- ... Providing representation on Council committees such as the Conservation Advisory Panel and The Parks And Trees committee
- ... Participating in the Hunters Hill Village and the Gladesville Master Plan working parties.

Trust representation on other committees

The Trust continues to be represented on a number of other committees including,

- ... The Defenders of Sydney Harbour and Foreshores 2000
- ... The National Trust's Historic Houses Committee and the Vienna Committee

- ... The Protectors of Public Land
- ... The Friends of Gladesville Hospital

Reactive role of the Trust

At our last AGM I noted that lot of our work is reactive and that we spend much of our time responding to the agendas set by others. Unfortunately this is still very much the case and the "others" remain the usual suspects including:-

- ... The state government and its plans for urban consolidation. Particularly the infamous SEPP 5, which is supposedly housing for older people. This allows developers to build units in areas zoned for single houses.
- ... The state government again, this time in its role as property speculator selling off public land.
- ... Ryde Council with its attempt to take over Hunters Hill.
- ... The Property Developers who continue to see Hunters Hill as a

place to make a motza and who see heritage as an impediment to their plans.

... The Property Owners who claim to love Hunters Hill so much that they want to pull down the little cottage they just bought and build an ostentatious megamansion in its place.

Success And Failure

This year we've had some successes and some failures,

Failures

... The construction of the Ad-shell bus shelters, which are already appearing in the Municipality,

... The approval by The Land and Environment Court of the demolition of 3 houses in Ryde Road

... Our failure to get Council to increase the hours paid to the part time heritage adviser.

... Our failure to get Council to properly maintain our public walkways, steps and parks.

Council may appeal the Land and Environment Court's decision to allow the demolition of the three houses in Ryde Road. Whether or not the appeal goes ahead, I think we can salvage a few positives from this particular struggle.

... That the community and Council were able to work together to fight the development

... We got a lot of people involved and concerned about the issue,

... The developer had to dramatically reduce the scale of the proposal.

... That he also had to acknowledge the heritage listed subdivision in the design.

(Postscript - Council decided against appealing the Court decision.)

Successes

... Stopping amalgamation with

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Ryde. And in particular our role in the Coalition which put on the September public meeting where over 600 residents packed the Town Hall

... The publication of the Municipal Charter.

... Our proposal to Council for a regular good design award in Hunters Hill, which we will be following up with the new Council.

... The inclusion of a Heritage Study in the Gladesville Master Plan.

... The annual Christmas Party, which again this year was held west of the expressway at Sally and David Gaunt's house and was a great success. Former Leichhardt mayor Maire Sheehan gave a very interesting talk.

Election Charter

The Charter for the Municipality and the candidates' responses was distributed to all households just before the election. This allowed people to see where the candidates stood on the issues that we thought vital to Hunters Hill and it has also helped raise the community's awareness of heritage and good governance issues. We will continue to work with the new Council to ensure that the councillors maintain their commitment to the charter, and that the heritage of Hunters Hill is given much more attention by them.

Here is a brief summary of some ongoing matters, which we will be dealing with this year

HH Village Working Party

A draft DCP is being prepared based on the discussions to date. There will be further discussions with the working party before the draft is put on public display.

HH Hotel

The developer has submitted re-

vised plans, which I have only just seen. There has been no reduction in the scale and density of the development in the latest plans, so we will continue to oppose them.

Hunters Hill Club

A revised rezoning application is expected at Council for a 2 lot Subdivision (rather than the original 3 lot subdivision). There is a suggestion that everyone should join the club, drink more of their grog, play their pokies and turn the greens over to boules (which can tolerate a few weeds in the lawn). This would make the club financially viable so they would not need to sell off any more land.

The Priory Purchase

The Health Department has offered to sell the Priory to Council for \$6.25 million (which Council does not have). Council is still looking for alternatives to this particular option (eg. that the Lands Department purchase it instead). The site will not be put out to private sale until these issues have been resolved.

The Priory Curtilage DA

There is no further news on this development to date, though Council anticipate a revised scheme to be submitted. Council has commissioned Penny Pike to

prepare and independent heritage assessment.

Gladesville Hospital

There is no news on the anticipated Gladesville Hospital master plan.

Gladesville Shopping Centre Master Plan

Heritage consultant Paul Davies is preparing a Heritage Study, which is due for completion later in the year. This will inform the draft DCP which is due for completion towards the end of the year.

Hunters Hill High School

You will have noticed the rather unfriendly notices that have been put up around the High School declaring it "inclosed lands". We've just received a letter from the P and C, they say,

... The school doesn't wish to deter people who wish to use the grounds respectfully, but they don't want dogs or golfers, who leave poos and make holes.

... The P and C went on to say they are very appreciative of the support it received from the Trust. They invite members of the Trust "to feel a sense of ownership of the school grounds, by using them carefully, and even by asking people who are misusing them to leave".

This is my fourth consecutive term as President and so I'm not eligible to stand again this year.

I've enjoyed my time as president and I feel I've learned a lot about Hunters Hill as a result.

Tony Coote

Hospital Folly



The Bush House, known as The Folly, in the grounds of Gladesville Hospital.

You want to conserve it? Find someone to lease it

Julian Homer was the guest speaker at this year's AGM. Julian spent 15 years with the National Trust in the UK and is now working in Tasmania. He kindly agreed to present some thoughts based on his extensive experience in the UK, which included responsibility for the historic Studland Estate and work with various conservation bodies in both the UK and Europe. Julian was the winner of the 2001 UK Government Water Efficiency prize.

Julian drew on his extensive experience at the Studland Estate, which has over 5,000 tenants, an estate budget of over GBP 30 million, a priceless array of historic assets and takes up a vast proportion of the English County of Dorset.

Julian covered the pragmatic side of his work and emphasised the need for preservation to have a use. Most of the UK's national trust success in preserving historic assets is in aligning that which needs preserving with a use that generates an income. It is unavoidable that however good intentions or historically valuable a building may be, one needs money to conserve it.

Illustrated with a series of photographs ("Houses I have lived in.") Julian gave examples of end uses that worked.

Kingston Lacy

Home of a priceless art and furniture collection, this building has over 100,000 visitors each year. Despite entry charges, operating costs significantly outway the income and the constant debate is between allowing more access for more visitors, against the inevitable wear and tear on the building. Maintaining century old fabrics in complete darkness en-

sures greater longevity, but to what end if no-one can get to see them? In this instance there is cross-subsidisation from the commercial operations of the broader estate.

Pamphill Manor

A fifteen-bedroom house, with considerable maintenance costs. The challenge here is to conserve the building of the house as opposed to the all too obvious alternative of turning it into a hotel. The UK solution was essentially to find a wealthy American who was prepared to lease the building for 99 years. The lease stipulated the standard of repairs necessary and has proven a hugely successful means of looking after historic buildings without having to raise capital. Here the building has been preserved in both its original use and, in the long term, for the benefit of the nation.

Julian went on to describe the impact of National Trust investment on broad landscapes. The operating premise is to spend effort

controlling and influencing the whole landscape and urban surrounds, rather than just preserving a single aspect within it.

Julian reminded us that the largest owner of land in the UK and

with over 4 million members all started less than a hundred years ago with one woman buying a field in order to conserve it in Wales.

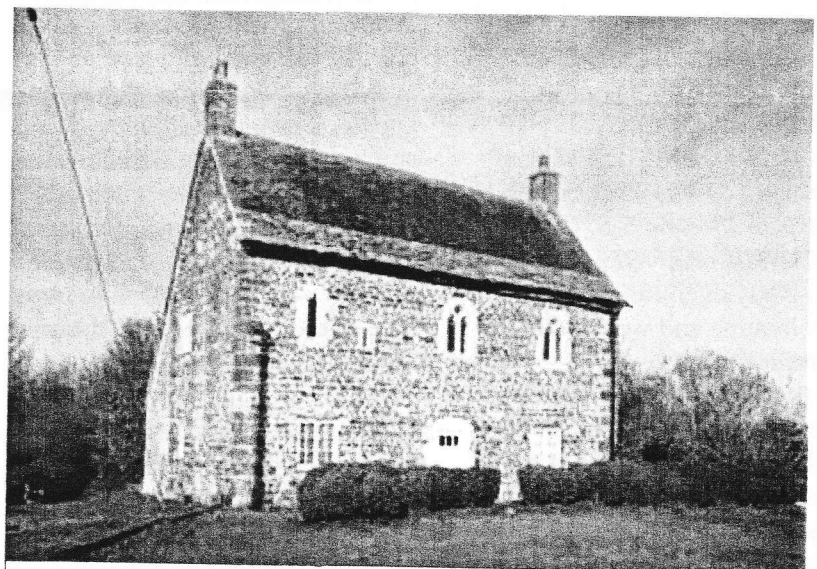
Corfe Castle

Not all sites involve high maintenance costs. Ruins appear to be just as attractive to visitors without any of the costs associated with the likes of Kingston Lacy.

Cromwell

Julian ended his presentation with a carved gatepost. Modelled as a likeness of Oliver Cromwell, Julian commissioned this from a local artist, who had to be reminded of the dour tastes of Cromwell. You may dimly recall the history book tales of him banning Christmas celebrations - and if you look carefully at the photograph you'll see the local artist has the point of his sword resting in the centre of a small mince pie. An amusing modern commission, now itself listed. And so, history continues.

Chris Hartley



*Historically fascinating Lodge Farmhouse is only one of many buildings restored on the Kingston Lacy Estate—
National Trust picture.*

Connie Ewald—for peace and the bush

Constance Mary (Connie) Ewald, activist and bush regenerator, who died in Sydney on 16 May, 2004, aged 78, spent two years writing a syllabus on Peace Education for NSW schools under the auspices of Community Aid Abroad only to see it pulped by the bureaucracy when the Government changed in 1988 from Labor to Liberal. Connie was working as a supply teacher in the NSW Education Department. She worked in peace groups concerned with the 1990-1991 Gulf War and told friends later: "When all that collapsed I decided peace was too hard for me. I put my hands in the soil and decided to do something locally so the result would be visible under my hands."

Connie was born in Melbourne on 3 September, 1925. When she was three years old her father died. Her mother supported Connie and her younger brother David by working as a clerk at Mobil Oil. Connie won a scholarship to attend Melbourne Church of England Girls Grammar School. She was the scholarship girl in patched clothes who became dux of the school. She went on to gain a science degree at Melbourne University. While working at CSIRO she met Arnold Ewald, who had come to Australia in 1940 on S.S. Dunera. When Arnold received a fellowship to study overseas the couple left Melbourne and were wed in England in 1950.

They worked in Canada for a year before returning to Sydney in 1954 when they bought a wooden house in Woolwich.

Connie wrote later: "The paint was peeling, and except for the track to the dunny almost the whole of the front garden was planted with

potatoes.

"One of our neighbors, Nan O'Byrne, soon discovered that by misadventure we had no furniture, so she brought us her camping table and chairs and gave us instructions on how to make a laundry copper from a kerosene tin. Between the O'Byrne's house and ours was a vacant block on which Nan's grandsons played football and built boats. The vacant land is now covered with home units and we do not even know the names of our rapidly changing neighbors." Woolwich was not the silvertail haven it is today.

The popular published histories of Hunters Hill focus on stone walls and gracious establishments," wrote Connie, "but only fifty years ago the laborers from Cockatoo, Mort's Dock, and the Sydney Smelting Company were the basis of the social network in the waist of the peninsula, roughly below Gladstone Avenue and west of Gale Street, 'the industrial village of Woolwich'.

"Bowls of soup could have been passed between side windows in Woolwich Road. Bathrooms might consist, like ours, of a pipe above and a hole below. The night soil man took care of the human waste and much of the rest was thrown over the cliff. Only termites lived in luxury".

The Woolwich Baths, an area enclosed by a shark-proof fence on the Lane Cove River, was the social center for the young.

Connie was one of the mothers who talked by the baths while their children played. Mr. Mooney, a taxi-driver in the winter, lived in a dilapidated tent at the baths in summer, supported by the takings - sixpence for adults, a

penny for children and threepence for the hire of an old tyre, for floating.

"When a high tide was coming in the water was almost clear, the fence was almost shark-proof and the mud almost covered" Connie recalled.

"Eye and ear infections from Mooney's Mud Hole contributed nicely to the summer income of the local doctor but the families kept coming".

Once settled, Connie and Arnold had three sons and Connie decided to go teaching - a job which gave her time to raise her children. She taught first at the Marist Sisters College nearby. Some days she would take her youngest child to school to be fussed over by the nuns who were on the teaching staff in those days.

She moved to Hunters Hill High School as a science teacher where she became a much loved figure, demonstrating practical conservation by riding to school every day on her old bicycle, wearing her yellow helmet. It was a jape for the students to hoist Connie's bicycle up the school flagpole.

She completed a degree in Biology at Macquarie University and a Diploma in Environmental Science and taught the subjects at Meadowbank T.A.F.E. She became a supply teacher working at a range of schools, many in the inner west, including Redfern, where she was exposed to the problems encountered by migrant children and aboriginal children. She was a member of the group Scientists Against Nuclear Arms, the Secure Australia project and also of the economists' Reform Australia cause.

She joined a group of young people in a long trip to blockade



development of the Roxby Downs uranium mine in 1983.

Connie first became aware of the role played by nearby Kelly's Bush when she took a group of her students on a visit to the Sydney Smelting Works on the Parramatta River when it was in operation. The bush was used as a buffer between the smelting works and Woolwich houses. Later, when the smelter closed, the 6-hectare bush site was approved for a housing development. Local citizens protested. Unions refused to bulldoze the site. This was the world's first Green Ban, imposed on Kelly's Bush in 1971.

There was no building development, but in the next twenty years or so, the bush was submerged in weeds.

Connie started bush regeneration in Kelly's Bush and later on the Woolwich foreshore reserve in 1993, (established in 1988 by the efforts of the students of Woolwich Primary School) which at that time was threatened with being taken over by a developer. Connie said: "We wanted to establish that there was a citizen presence watching and that this

was citizen land. We used the bush regeneration of a little piece of the foreshore as our excuse for being there. There was not much worth regenerating - a hillside covered with weeds. There was a little bit down the bottom we worked on and there I learned the techniques. Other people wanted to work on Kelly's Bush and I joined in. It was a long while getting the group going, so one young woman and myself began and others joined in after that."

She drew on her experience as an active member of Community Aid Abroad and the groups working for peace to help the bush regenerators in their negotiations with Hunters Hill Council. With others, she inaugurated the Friends of Kelly's Bush, a supportive group of sympathetic people from the wider local community. She wrote the constitution, ran the meetings and wrote and published a regular newsletter that was distributed to members, often by Connie on her bicycle. It was largely due to her efforts that Council appointed a Bush Regeneration Officer, first in a part-time capacity and now full-time. She was a foundation member of the Council's Bushland Advisory Committee and has regularly attended its meetings.

Alan Hunt, the former manager of the smelting works, told Connie how the smelter would fire the bush every few years, burning the under-storey to minimize the fire risk to surrounding houses. This also led to re-growth of native trees. She got in touch with the scientific community in Western Australia, who had experience with smoke and smoke-water testing for seed germination, and made equipment to produce smoke water for Kelly's Bush.

From this, Connie set up a series of experiments to demonstrate the

value or otherwise of fire, smoke water and smoke for regeneration. Connie wrote up this work, which she shared with other regeneration groups and practitioners initially at a public forum held at Hunters Hill Town Hall.

With a drive to share her knowledge with others Connie took a creative writing course at the local Evening College. At first she published articles on Kelly's bush and the people of Woolwich in the community newspaper *Kooraequlla*. Then she wrote *The Industrial Village of Woolwich*. This told the story of her community and its relationship with the bush land areas that were what remained of the smelter, and ship-building activity that had taken place at Mort's Dock on Clarke's Point. The book was published by the Hunters Hill Trust and went into a second printing.

The dock area that had been a Department of Defence site has now been saved for the public as part of the lands of the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust. Connie's health was fragile in recent years. It is sad and ironic that her love of the bush contributed to her death. She barely recovered from paralysis caused by a tick bite. A lingering cancer restricted her bush work but it did not silence her. Two weeks before her death she published an article in *The Weekly Times* on the crisis faced by communities like Woolwich.

Connie received the Premier's Seniors Achievement Award, in 2003.

She is survived by her husband Arnold, sons Nicolas, Benjamin and Daniel, their wives and six grandchildren and by her brother David Emery.

Gil Wahlquist

THE HUNTERS HILL TRUST INCORPORATED

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Officers for 2004-2005

President – David Gaunt
Vice-president—Tony Coote.
Secretary – Len Condon,
9816 2796.
Treasurer – Nicola Jackman
9816 2627.
Committee – Robyn Christie,
Sally Gaunt, Chris Hartley,
Louise Hunter, Wendy Denniss

Committee meetings are held at
7.30 p.m. on the second
Thursday of each month

Join the Trust

Membership of the Trust is
\$25 a year for a family,
\$15 single and
\$5 for pensioners
and students.
Life member \$200

GREEN BOOK

The third edition of *The Heritage of Hunters Hill*—The Green Book—is available over the counter from the Hunters Hill Post office and the Hunters Hill Council office for \$29.95.

You can order a copy from the Trust at P. O. Box 85 Hunters Hill, 2110, but please add \$8 for post and handling

Doreen Saunders' research the foundation for our original conservation document

Doreen Saunders, (b.1928) died in Adelaide on 28th March 2004. With four young daughters she came to Hunter's Hill in 1967 when husband David took up his appointment as Senior Lecturer in Architecture in the Department of Fine Arts at Sydney University. David and Doreen joined the recently formed Hunter's Hill Trust and applied their professional, practical and intellectual skills to the production of what was to be our original document of conservation. It was Doreen who tackled the formidable task of researching the Hunters Hill rate books in 1968, many of which were later either destroyed or damaged by a fire in the Council Chambers. Her meticulous, handwritten notes survive.

The Trust's 1969 publication was a two volume submission aimed at conserving our suburb's special character based on its 'national importance'. A representative group of buildings of historic significance appeared in *The Old Buildings of Hunter's Hill*, while Part I contained accompanying maps showing proposed divisions of historic precincts prepared by David Saunders, M.Arch., Dip. T. & R.P.. An acknowledgement reads 'Documentation of individual buildings was done by Doreen Saunders, B.Arch'.

Until moving to Adelaide in 1976, Doreen and David formed firm friendships with many of the Trust's early supporters like Richard and Diana Temple, Eleanor and King Watson, architect David Abotomty and heritage consultant Meredith Walker. Doreen's sound research led her, in her own quiet yet wise way, to warn fellow researchers to treat the only published personal text of the 19th century with caution; she referred to Jules Joubert's *Shavings and Scrapes* an entertaining, nostalgic yet factually unreliable interpretation of local life covering the period 1850-1880.

Doreen's own special interest was pottery and when Carol Serventy introduced her to fellow Hunter's Hill potter Julie Ingles they became kindred spirits, 'soaking up the pleasure of a clay packed nine year friendship'. Together they helped build Doreen's kiln in the garden of number 10 Toocooya Road, a Queen Anne styled house in which the family lived.

Soon after David's death Doreen, also an architect, set about designing a house for herself, by herself, at Norwood in Adelaide; it would display all the sound design principles - low in scale, economical in space and detail - and won an excellence award from Norwood council in 1993 for 'Best energy efficient conscious development of a single storey dwelling'.

Doreen Saunders' considerable contribution to the first Hunter's Hill Trust publications is remembered with gratitude.
(*Obituary of David Saunders written by Richard Temple appeared in Hunter's Hill Trust Journal, November 1986.*)

Roslyn Maguire