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Diary

Tuesday, 18 October—
Active Mind/Active Body
Day, Gladesville Community
Centre 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

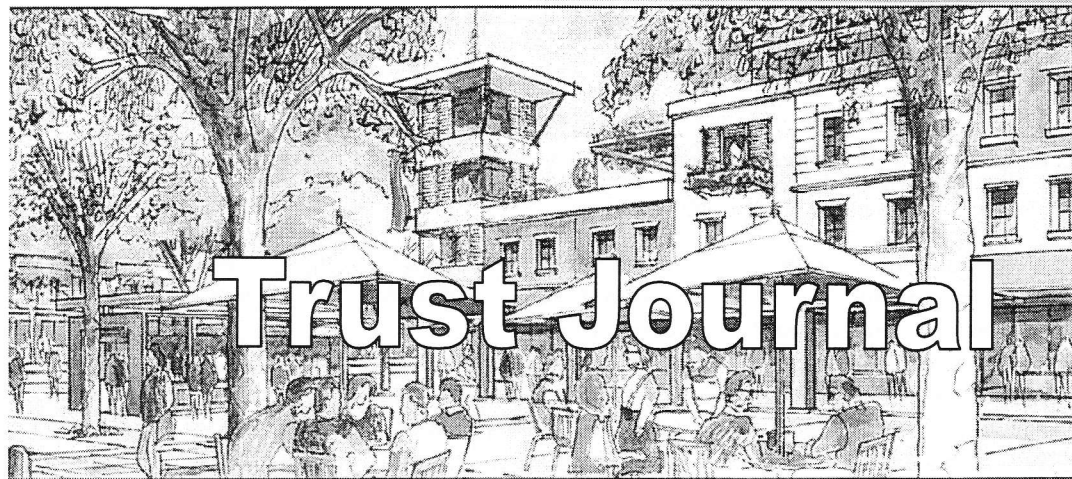
7 p.m.—Vienna Cottage
AGM dinner at RSL Hall,
Alexandra Street

Sunday 23 October—
Hunters Hill Public School
fete

Tuesday 25 October 8 p.m.
Hunters Hill Historical
Society at RSL Hall—Geoff
Swain—Battle of Trafalgar.

Saturday—Sunday 5-6 No-
vember— State History Con-
ference Royal Australian His-
torical Society, Bathurst

Thursday, 1 December—
Hunters Hill Trust Christmas
Party, 6 Mount Street from
6.30 p.m.



New Town Square at Trim Place, Victoria Road— from Councils' Master Plan to Revitalize Gladesville

President's News

Hello and welcome to the latest Trust Newsletter. Since our last issue in April, we have been busy with the usual concerns for heritage, conservation and public awareness in private, commercial and public developments in our area.

In this issue, Tony Coote brings us up to date on the progress of the Gladesville Master Plan, as well as the Hunters Hill Village Master Plan. Could I urge all members to keep abreast of developments in both of these significant and important sites?

The Gladesville Master Plan has ambitious long term ideas for the future of Victoria Rd between Monash Rd and Punt Rd including, obviously, the shopping precinct and its immediate surrounds. Perforce of the municipal boundaries, it's a Plan jointly managed by

Ryde and Hunters Hill Councils, and has both worthy and contentious features. Given the proven threat of Ryde Council's acquisitive tendency towards our municipality, it is important that our Council's vision for the future of Victoria Rd gets our full attention and input.

Similarly, the Hunters Hill Village Master Plan is back on the agenda, and, with proposed "amendments" submitted to Council as part of the Hunters Hill Hotel DA, it is again important that Trust members involve themselves in the future of the Figtree area.

Apart from a trip down memory lane "from the archives", we've also a report from Marian Ibrahim on another home-grown initiative: the "Discover Hunters Hill" website. Fusefarm, a Balmain based website de-

veloper, has constructed this site as a result of a wholehearted commitment to the idea from many local businesses, organisations, and individuals. Another initiative I'd like to commend to you is the "Hunters Hill Cultural Plan", still in embryonic stage, but something with a capacity to bring many of us together for the benefit of all. Of particular interest to the Trust, I think, would be an "audit" of all buildings of cultural significance in the area, and the possibility of adapting one of our "public" buildings (Woolwich Dock, Henley Bowling Club, the Priory??) to community use on a fulltime scale. Contact Council to find out more; at this stage a Working Party is to be established. Don't forget the Trust Christmas Party!!! (see back page for details)
- David Gaunt

The story of the Garibaldi

Probably the most historic building in Hunter's Hill and a notable landmark on the corner of Alexandra and Ferry Streets is The Garibaldi Inn. It was the suburb's first hotel and was built by John Cuneo from Genoa during the 1860s (the Council Rate Assessment Books indicate that it was unfinished in 1861, substantially completed by 1869, but that Cuneo continued to add rooms until 1881, when it was described as a '16 room stone hotel'). Although no longer used as a hotel, the building survives intact as a reminder of our past, a visible contact with the days when Italian stonemasons emigrated to Hunter's Hill, worked and lived in the area, and constructed fine buildings out of the local sandstone.

The Italians brought with them much of their own culture, so it was natural that the building should be adorned with a piece of sculpture in the classical style (moreover, John Cuneo imported statues from Italy through his city business until 1861). What better for a hotel than a statue of a cupbearer in the niche above the door? There she stands, offering her cup, although this statue is a copy of the original, which was stolen in 1973. It was likewise natural for the Italians to name the building in honour of a compatriot, the military leader and hero of the people who fought

for the liberation and unification of Italy,

Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882). John Cuneo's admiration for the republican movement extended even to naming his son Garibaldi; another son was Joseph Mazzini Cuneo, after the other great revolutionary, Giuseppe Mazzini (1805-1872), also from Genoa.

The Garibaldi was run as a hotel until 1911.

In the New South Wales State election of 1910, during an era of temperance fervour, a local option vote was taken on the question of reducing the number of hotels and Hunter's Hill (in the District of Lane Cove)

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voted for reduction.

This may relate to the fact that The Garibaldi ceased to be a hotel after 1911. By 1912 the building began to be rented as a shop by Mrs. Nelly Rehm (*confectioner*) and continued as such under various tenants.

In 1971 Amoco made a bid for the site with the intention of demolishing the building and putting up a service station. By this time, however, the conservation movement in Australia was well under way and Hunter's Hill people were in the forefront. They fought to save The Garibaldi and won the day.



John Cuneo—picture in
Hunters Hill Museum

Hunters Hill Now Launched In Cyberspace

www.DiscoverHuntersHill.com.au

Discover Hunters Hill is an exciting initiative which grew out of the motivation to strengthen local community and business links and in doing so to develop a strong sense of recognition of our special and unique suburb. The most obvious method of communication was to start by an interactive website which would enable us to grow and network.

We are now living as a new online community offering a one stop shop for both residents and visitors by

providing information about local businesses, community groups and events. The website was officially launched at the Moocoooola festival, many businesses and groups are now online and we hope that this non profit community initiative will grow and flourish for the benefit of all. The website will enjoy many links to the wider cyber world via tourism, the National Trust, foreshore walks and many other sites.

If you run a business or are

involved in an event or community group www.DiscoverHuntersHill.com.au can help you communicate to a wider audience or you may just wish to use it as a brochure style site to browse 'what's on' or where to find local services. May we recommend you 'click on' and get interactive with your community. Happy browsing.....

**Marian Ibrahim, Chair.
Discover Hunters Hill**

All enquiries please contact Deborah Anschau, secretary, ph 9816 2325. email: anschau@netspace.net.au

The World Wide Church of Modernism: A Heretic's View

According to the history books, Modernism in architecture dates from 1850 and Joseph Paxton's iron and glass Crystal Palace, but it didn't really get going until Walter Gropius established The Bauhaus in Weimar, Germany in 1919. And it really took off when its leading teachers left Germany for the architectural schools of the United States after Hitler closed the Bauhaus in 1933. Bauhaus Modernism was taught in architecture schools across America from where it flowed to the rest of the world becoming the basis of every architect's training in the second half of the 20th century.

The cultural desert of post-war Australia was a perfect place for a Modernist Architect to start from zero and in 1948 Harry Seidler came to Sydney to do just that. Having studied under Bauhaus teachers Walter Gropius and Joseph Albers and having been Marcel Breuer's chief assistant for a couple of years, Harry Seidler had the best Modernist credentials of any architect in Australia. He was also a Modernist evangelist. Speaking of his first Australian commission (his mother Rose's house at Wahroonga), he said, "I wouldn't allow my poor mother to have anything in the house not consistent with the religion: Modernism".

The World Wide Church of Modernism became the established architectural religion in Australia when The Rose Seidler house won the Sulman Prize in 1952. Its creed includes the following articles of faith,

Starting from zero

According to Tom Wolfe, in his book *From Bauhaus To Our House*, the young architects and artists who came to the Bauhaus in the 1920s were zealous idealists. They talked about starting from zero, which referred to nothing less than re-creating the world.

Thinking big

Inspired by Le Corbusier's Radiant City, the big Modernist ideas for starting from zero often involve detonating everything in the vicinity and building a whole new neighbourhood of multi storey towers in a garden setting (for example Harry Seidler's schemes for The Rocks and McMahons Point).

Old things are bad.

For Modernists, old stuff like heritage gets in the way of starting from zero. Heritage is not functional. Tom Wolfe wrote that functional was one of several Bauhaus euphemisms for 'non-bourgeois' and noted that flat roofs, sheer unadorned facades and no overhanging cornices were preferred Bauhaus forms because 'pitched roofs and cornices represented the "crowns" of the old nobility, which the bourgeoisie spent most of its time imitating'.

Neat and clean is beautiful

Modernists tend to-

wards anal retentiveness and Modernist spaces are spotlessly clean, neat, tidy and ruthlessly ordered. Historically this comes from the Bauhaus ideal to replace the unhygienic slums of early 20th century Europe with new, healthy and high-rise worker housing and finds expression in floor-to-ceiling glass walls to let in the healthy sunlight and in stainless steel kitchens inspired by the antiseptic operating theatres in hospitals.

Innovation is a virtue.

Because the old is considered dirty, unhygienic and bourgeois, Modernists worship innovation, which became a virtue in the 20th century with the rise of the growth economy and its handmaiden, built-in obsolescence.

Simplicity is good

Modernists like simple shapes and simple geometry. The most influential and most copied 20th century building is a simple flat roofed rectangle with floor-to-ceiling glass on all four walls (Mies Van Der Rohe's holiday shack for Dr Edith Farnsworth). This, despite the fact that it fails to provide any privacy, any place to hang your pictures, is the opposite of energy efficient and cost a bomb (exemplifying Mies' dictum, "less is more expensive").

Building as Art

Modernists believe

their buildings can stand alone like pieces of sculpture. Photos of them in the style magazines are framed to avoid the unfortunate juxtaposition of the buildings and their surrounds and messy things like people, pets and personal affects are excluded.

Control every aspect of the building.

"The Design of all Buildings, large or small, aims to become a "gesamtkunstwerk", a totally integrated work of art, with interior design, furnishings, equipment and selected artworks receiving equally dedicated attention to become a cohesive whole" (from Harry Seidler's website).

It is a bitter truth that so much of what has been built in the Modernist era is truly bad. As well, most people do not share the Modernist articles of faith adhered to by architects and have turned to draftsmen and builders for the Non-Modernist houses they prefer. These account for around 90% of houses built, which are mostly badly designed, show little understanding of the architectural styles they attempt to emulate and lack any sympathy for their surrounds.

For the sake of our cities, to get a better share of the housing market (possibly) and to conform to Basix (the new sustainability index for buildings), I believe ar-

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The Hunter Hill Trust Inc.

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Notice to unfinancial members

Please send us a cheque for this years subscription :

\$25.00 family, \$15.00 single, \$5.00 concession

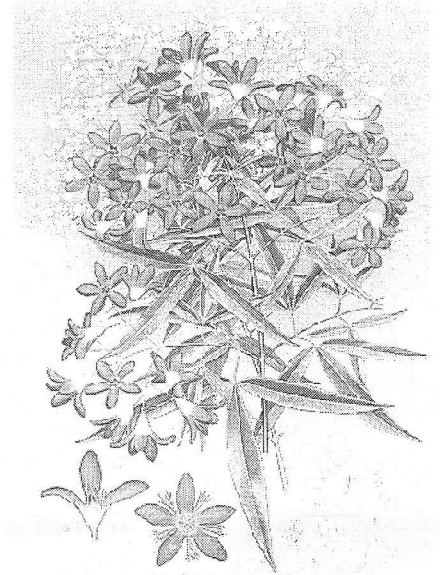
Send to The Treasurer, Hunters Hill Trust,
PO Box 85, Hunters Hill, 2110.

*"Old buildings do not belong to us only;
they belonged to our forefathers and they
will belong to our descendants unless we
play them false. They are not in any sense
our property to do as we like with them.
We are only trustees for those who come
after us."*

-William Morris (1834-1896)

Trust Christmas Party

Always a great
event with a
stimulating
speaker and
yummy food
and drink.
Make sure you
don't miss this
year's.



Ceratopetalum gummiferum
NSW Christmas Bush
artist: Edward Minchen (1862-1913)

It's at the home of Ian and Nicola Jackman,
6 Mount Street, Hunters Hill on

Thursday, 1st December, from 6.30.

Cost \$30.00 – send cheque or pay at the door.

RSVP – The Secretary, PO Box 85, Hunters Hill, 2110,

or phone Len Condon on 9816 2796

or email Len@pacific.net.au

Modernism is just another style of architecture

(Continued from page 3)

chitects need to abandon the cult of Modernism. But first they need to de-program the mind-control that enslaves them to it. They could start by considering that:

Modernism is just another style of architecture, like Romanesque or Art Deco.

Eclectic and *pastiche* are not dirty words. *Pastiche* means "any work of art consisting of motifs bor-

rowed from one or more masters or works of art". Much of today's so-called "contemporary" architecture is really "Modernist pastiche".

People actually live in the houses. They want to be able to express themselves in them and to make them their own. Architects need to facilitate this desire rather than imposing values and forms that make it impossible.

Not everyone shares the Modernist zeal for hygiene,

neatness and simplicity. Many people are untidy, messy, love complexity and enjoy a framed view.

All buildings need to respect their context. The building designed to stand alone as a piece of sculpture often ends up being a piece of unsympathetic "look-at-me" featurism, which is completely out of character with its surroundings.

In his book, A Pattern Language, Christopher Alexander takes up some of these themes in criticising Modernism for its failure to accommodate basic human needs. He also attempts to identify those elements in buildings and towns that appeal at a visceral, emotional and archetypal level, a welcome antidote to the dry, intellectual and esoteric appeal of Modernism.

- Tony Coote