

- A SHORT WALK -

passing Passy, Wybalena and other historic houses



Photo by Douglass Baglin

"Wybalena"

THE HUNTER'S HILL TRUST

 $Duration\ of\ walk\ approximately\ 1\ 1/2\ hours$



The Hunter's Hill Trust thanks Jo Rees for the original preparation of this pamphlet and Roslyn Maguire and Diana Drake for the revised version, December 1992.

BRIEF HISTORY OF HUNTER'S HILL

Located on a peninsula between the Parramatta River to the south and Lane Cove River to the north, Hunter's Hill is a tranquil suburb of leafy streets, gracious old homes, simple stone cottages, stone garden walls, natural sandstone outcrops, walking paths and public bushland reserves.

Although there is debate over the origin of the name, **Hunter's Hill**, it is generally accepted that it was given to the area in honour of Lieutenant John Hunter (later Governor Hunter, of New South Wales).

During the 1830s, Hunter's Hill was defined as a Parish and most of the land on the peninsula was either granted or sold between 1835 and 1844. Some of the early landholders were William Morgan, Samuel Onions, John Tawell, John Clarke and Mary Reibey.

In 1846-7 Didier Numa Joubert, from Angouleme in France, came to the area and purchased land at Figtree from Mary Reibey. In 1855, his younger brother Jules acquired land adjoining Didier's and by the mid 1850s these two enterprising brothers, using their own resources and those of two other Frenchmen Vial d'Aram and Count Gabriel de Milhau, set about the business of building many large and small stone homes. These are a unique feature of Hunters Hill today.

The excellence of those stone homes and garden walls is a testament to the skill of the stonemasons and labourers including many from Italy, Switzerland and France. Some descendants of those workmen continue to live in the suburb today.

An outstanding builder at about the same time as the Joubert brothers was Charles Edward Jeanneret. He was born in Sydney, the son of an English doctor, Henry Jeanneret. Charles Jeanneret began investing in land in the area in 1857 and continued to increase his property particularly in the area bounded by Wybalena Road and Woolwich Road.

Whilst living at Wybalena (see cover photograph) which he built for his family, Charles Jeanneret supervised the building in 1878-9 of Waiwera and St. Claire in Wybalena Road, two beautiful conjoined stone homes similar in style to Wybalena. He also built, in 1895, as his last home a smaller Wybalena, also of sandstone, in Woolwich Road.

Compared to the unusual flair of Jules Joubert and the more conservative style of Didier Joubert, most of the homes built for Charles Jeanneret demonstrated more flamboyance in their later Victorian architecture.

Didier Joubert, Jules Joubert, Count de Milhau and Charles Jeanneret all held the office of Chairman/Mayor of Hunter's Hill at various times between the years 1861 to 1890. Jules Joubert had the distinction of being the first Chairman (Mayor) when Hunter's Hill was proclaimed a Municipality on 5th January, 1861. Charles Edward Jeanneret also became an alderman on the Sydney City Council and in 1887 was elected to the Legislative Assembly.

This walk commences at Vienna Cottage, 38 Alexandra Street and you will see a small area of the village of Hunter's Hill. It is hoped that by strolling through the narrow tree-lined streets you will discover many more of the unique features of the suburb.

For those who would like to explore the suburb further, a publication A Glimpse of Hunter's Hill — A short walk through history (also published by the Hunters Hill Trust) covers other historic buildings and quaint stone cottages in the area bounded by Mount, Madeline and Ady Streets.

1. 38 ALEXANDRA STREET – VIENNA

A typical tradesman's cottage of the 19th century, Vienna was built by John and Ann Hellman in 1871. It remained in the family until purchased by The National Trust in 1984. Its acquisition was funded initially by the efforts of dedicated local residents and is now used for exhibitions, meetings and community events.

A booklet about the cottage, published by The National Trust, gives an expanded history and description of its conservation.

Vienna is one of many small cottages of the 1860s and 1870s, built near the centre of what was the original village of Hunter's Hill. A number of nearby sandstone cottages in Alexandra Street, 34 and 36 (of timber), number 23 on the corner opposite once the Post Office, and number 29 are all examples of close early settlement. On the corner of Ady Street, number 54 a stone and timber building, was a store from 1872.

2. 35 AND 37 ALEXANDRA STREET – GARIBALDI HOTEL AND CUNEO

The suburb's first hotel was built for John Cuneo in 1861 with later extensions in 1869 and 1881. It was described in local rate books as 'a 16 room stone hotel' until 1911. When demolition was threatened in the 1970s, local conservation efforts were used to retain the neglected building. This resulted in a Heritage Council Conservation Order in 1979. Cuneo was Italian, from Genoa, and imported statuary into Sydney prior to settling here and his hotel was the social centre of the area during his years of ownership. He named one of his sons Garibaldi as well as this important landmark building.

Cuneo was built and occupied by the Cuneo family, Thomas using the front portion as a butchers shop from the 1880s.

3. 39 ALEXANDRA STREET

On the corner opposite the Garibaldi Hotel, this was Joseph Clarke's General and Produce Stores, shown in a photograph dated 1894, with a wide sheltering verandah extending to the edge of the footpath. The adjacent house also appears in the photograph.

The following three sandstone cottages are much the same age and were built, owned by or associated with Italian and Swiss Italian settlers John Cuneo, Antonio Bondietti and Ponziano Cavalli.

4. 64 ALEXANDRA STREET – QUEDGLEY

This house was first occupied in 1875 and an 1884 plan shows J. Cuneo, licensee of the Garibaldi Hotel, as owner.

5. 66 AND 68 ALEXANDRA STREET

Similar in style, both sandstone houses were built by Swiss-Italian stonemason Antonio Bondietti between 1868 and 1870. They were sold to Mrs Elizabeth Potts in 1875 and she lived in number 66 for many years whilst number 68 was leased to tenants.

6. 43 ALEXANDRA STREET

A two storey brick house with roughcast walls and a slate roof, c. 1917, this house indicates the popularity of the eastern or River end of Alexandra Street for subdivisions occurring after 1900. The wharf allowed easy ferry access to the city.

7. 47 ALEXANDRA STREET – CINTRA

Built on part of Ambrose Foss's original large landholding, and later owned by the Cuneo family, this is a most unusual example of a free standing, late 19th century terrace house in this part of Hunter's Hill.

8. 51 ALEXANDRA STREET – LUSCOMBE

This house first appears in directories of 1900, with A.L.H. Cooke as occupier.

9. 55 ALEXANDRA STREET – KIOLA

Later than 1884 and thought to be once the gardener's house for Moocooboolah, its owner during 1890 was Conrad Nattey who had emigrated from Germany in the 1850s.

10. 70 ALEXANDRA STREET

A small 19th century sandstone cottage, which shows on various local maps and plans, is thought to be enclosed within this mid 20th century house.

11. 72 ALEXANDRA STREET - OREWA

A brick Federation house originally identical to number 76 Alexandra Street, both allotments being purchased by John Metcalfe in 1897. From 1904-1916 Orewa was a hospital or nursing home. In 1919 Professor Eastaugh bought it and his family lived here for 34 years.

12. 74 ALEXANDRA STREET

An important example of local architect Henry Budden's work, with its distinctively complex form, dated 1903. A description of the house in 1905 notes — 'Mr Weedon's house shows clever treatment of a rather difficult problem in planning, the building being so arranged that the best rooms command the best views'; Art and Architecture, 2 (1905).

13. 76 ALEXANDRA STREET

Originally identical to number 72 Alexandra Street.

14. 78 ALEXANDRA STREET

This two storey house is built of a pale brick popular at the time of its construction in the early part of the 20th century.

15. 80 ALEXANDRA STREET

With tall walls, roughcast surfaces and verandahs looking to the River, this is one of Hunters Hill's most striking examples of early 20th century houses.

16. 82 ALEXANDRA STREET - KOKERA

This house was built in 1890 by Thomas Turner. Its architecture reflects the shingle style introduced to Australia mainly by the Canadian John Horbury Hunt. Extensive alterations have been made to the rear of the house.

17. 65 ALEXANDRA STREET - MOOCOOBOOLAH

One of many surviving Joubert sandstone houses, this was built c 1862-4 by younger brother Jules and was the last Hunter's Hill home he and his family lived in. An interesting detail is that the whole of the glass used in its construction is thought to have been brought from France. Jules Joubert left Sydney in 1881 and spent many years associated with large Exhibitions in other States, and particularly in Melbourne.

18. 59 ALEXANDRA STREET - ORROROO

Records show that this brick house was built c 1892. The daughter of the owner, Mr. Thomas, married Henry Budden the architect (see number 74 opposite). The house was let until 1920 when William C. Wise, Town Clerk of Hunters Hill, purchased it and lived here for many years.

Architectural innovation for the period is obvious in the use of shingles, distinctive chimneys, decorative timber detail and the combination of polychrome brick work with a rusticated sandstone base.

19. 57 ALEXANDRA STREET - THE EAGLES

Built of brick, with stone eagles on each of the gate pillars, its abutment to Martha Lane is unusual in a suburb where houses are sited well within their garden boundaries. Reputed to have been built for an island trader from Fiji who had Pacific Island house boys living in the grounds, records list Reverend J. Jones as living here from 1890. He was Pastor of the Congregational Church for seven years.

The walk continues down Martha Street alongside The Eagles to Ambrose Street and into Passy Avenue.

20. 4 AMBROSE STREET – MONTEFALCO

This two storey timber house was built in 1890 and is a rare surviving example of its type. With boards of different patterns, distinctive corner detail and French windows opening onto wide verandahs, the house overlooks the River and across to St. Peter Chanel church. It is in a very similar grand style to many other nearby brick and sandstone houses of the same period.

21. 1 AMBROSE STREET

A cottage stood here in 1870 and was lived in by the gardener Conrad Nattey from approximately 1877 until 1890. It is thought that this delightful sandstone cottage became the Porter's lodge of Milthorpe, 12 Crescent Street.

22. 2 AMBROSE STREET

- RECTORY OF ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

A tall, late Victorian building in the Italianate style designed by Mr. J.E. Kemp, that is almost contemporary with its neighbour, Montefalco. Built in 1890 at a cost of 1710 pounds, its front and eastern bays demonstrate an interesting variation of architectural styles found in many of the houses of this period and built on nearby subdivisions.

23. 8 PASSY AVENUE - WURLEY

A brick bungalow, now one of three buildings of a retirement village, was completed by 1903 for W.A. Windeyer a well known and longtime resident of Hunters Hill.

24. 6 PASSY AVENUE - TRANBY

An Arts and Crafts style house with striking roof form, low verandah and brick and roughcast walls built around 1903.

25. 1 PASSY AVENUE - PASSY

One of Hunters Hill's earliest two storey stone houses, Passy was built by Didier Joubert before 1858 for Monsieur Louis Francois Sentis, Consul of France and the Sicilies and first French Consul in Sydney. The grounds originally extended to Lane Cove River, with frontages to Woolwich Road and Ferry Street. Edye Manning, who owned the Parramatta River ferry service, was the second owner, from 1858.

Extensive alterations disguise the western facade of this grand and historic sandstone house.

Continue down Passy Avenue to Woolwich Road, and turn left.

26. 16 WOOLWICH ROAD - WOTONGA

The garden setting is an important feature of this house built around 1905 for Arthur O. Lloyd. In 1915 it was valued at 1400 pounds and demonstrates many Federation architectural features such as tuckpointed brickwork, shingles and tall roughcast surfaced chimneys.

27. 18 WOOLWICH ROAD

This impressive example of the Federation style, on a sandstone base and using brick, stucco, shingles, slate, carved woodwork and stained glass, was designed by architect George W. Durrell and built in 1906. The wide garden and tennis court contribute to the leafy, uncrowded character of this end of Woolwich Road.

28. 20 WOOLWICH ROAD

A rare surviving dark brick bungalow, built c 1920, on a corner block by one of C.E. Jeanneret's sons. It remained in their ownership until 1958.

29. 9 WOOLWICH ROAD - WAIWERA (OPPOSITE)

Charles Jeanneret built this house which is attatched to St. Claire (see 2 Wybalena Road) in about 1878. From 1879 it was occupied by Dr. Frederick Norton Manning, Superintendent of Tarban Asylum (Gladesville Hospital).

30. 22 WOOLWICH ROAD - WYBALENA

Built in 1895, this stone house was Charles Jeanneret's last home and was occupied in 1900 by S. Jeanneret and in 1914 by Mrs. J.A. Jeanneret. Mrs.C.E. Jeanneret lived here until her death in 1919. The aboriginal name, Wybalena meaning 'resting place' was taken to this house from Charles Jeanneret's previous home (3 Jeanneret Street) in about 1899.

Cross Woolwich Road into Jeanneret Avenue

31. 3 JEANNERET STREET - WYBALENA

cover photograph

Charles Jeanneret began to build this house for his family during 1874. In 1878 it was described as nine rooms and in the following year as fourteen rooms. The original balcony fencings were of wood. By 1884 it had become a sixteen room house with two pavilions and a summer house on 25 acres of land. During Charles Jeanneret's occupation of Wybalena, an orchard formed part of the extensive grounds.

The two youngest of Charles Jeanneret's eleven children were born here. A subdivision of the grounds was made in 1918, creating Jeanneret Avenue and Glenview Crescent, by the new owner Thomas Buckland, Chairman of the Bank of New South Wales.

During the 1930s the house fell into disrepair and was restored by new owners in 1940. From 1967 it was home for the Vice-Chancellor of Sydney University and now is privately owned.

Glenview Crescent has three important neighbouring examples of Jeanneret's sandstone houses looking south over Parramatta River. Turn left, all are on the right hand side and demonstrate many similarities and variations of Victorian architecture popular after 1870.

21, 25, 27 GLENVIEW CRESCENT – GLENVIEW, GLENCAIRN AND GLENROCK

These were all built by 1888 for C.E. Jeanneret on part of the 11 acres he acquired in 1875. They were said to have been built for his sons on the occasion of their marriages.

Walk west along Glenview Crescent to Wybalena Road

33. 17 GLENVIEW CRESCENT - JAMBEROO

A single storey dark brick house in the style of a Calfornia bungalow, few of which remain in Hunters Hill. Built around 1920 it has a distinctive gabled front attic.

34. 23 WYBALENA ROAD - BLENERNE

Edwin S. Lumsdaine built this stone house with extensive views towards Parramatta River in 1891. Henry Deane lived here from 1894 to 1913. Fern Bay Pleasure grounds, owned by Jeanneret, were further down Wybalena Road at Pulpit Point. For many years a large oil terminal, the Point was rezoned for housing and subdivided in the late 1980's.

35. 13 WYBALENA ROAD - BENTHAM

This tall two storey house was built below the road with views of Parramatta River for Henry G. Kilby during 1890.

36. 11 WYBALENA ROAD

This is a modern house built from materials of buildings demolished in the early 1960s, including the well known St Malo, to make way for the controversial expressway at Figtree Bridge. The unusual leaf shaped roof tiles are interesting and came from Figtree Chapel, now St Marks Church, dismantled stone by stone and rebuilt in Figtree Road.

37. 9 WYBALENA ROAD - LABRENA

An interesting stone house and outbuildings on land originally of John Terry Hughes' grant, and later part of the grounds of Passy. Its style seems to belong to the 1850s or 1860s, and the northern wing is thought to have been a small whaler's cottage of the 1840s. Henry G. Kilby was living here between 1888 and 1890 while building Bentham next door.

38. 7 WYBALENA ROAD – WINDRADINE

In 1881 Stanley Jeanneret (son of Charles Jeanneret) owned this land, part of the Wybalena Estate subdivision. The house was built for Horace Suttor, stock and station agent. By 1914, with a new owner, the name Windradine had been acquired. A drawing of the house was exhibited at the 1892 Sydney Arts and Crafts Exhibition.

39. 2 WYBALENA ROAD - ST. CLAIRE (OPPOSITE)

One of Hunters Hill's most picturesque houses, together with its annexed neighbour Waiwera, this has both architectural and historical interest as one of a pair built by Charles Jeanneret in 1878–9. The curved roof and cast iron detail of the tower are unusual.

40. 1 WYBALENA ROAD – MORNINGSEA

This Edwardian style house was built c.1898 and was owned by the Kopsch family from 1899 to 1942. Mr. C. Kopsch was a scientific instrument maker and the house originally included an observatory.

Turn left and continue along Woolwich Road noting houses on the opposite, northern, side.

41. 5 WOOLWICH ROAD – ETHANDUNE

Designed by the architect George W. Durrell this home has a foundation stone marked 1902. An elaborate version of Federation architecture, it has a conical copper turret on the southern side.

42. 6, 8 AND 10 WOOLWICH ROAD

Three houses of similar style all built about 1904 with many Federation architectural features.

43. 2 - 4 WOOLWICH ROAD - THE TOWERS

Old photographs of these large two storey semi detached houses show look out turrets on top of the towers. Built about 1916, the brickwork of no 2 is fortunately unpainted.

Note – Apart from farmhouses and those built by the very early settlers, the first buildings erected for sale in Hunters Hill were four timber houses imported from Germany, complete with German carpenters, by Swiss migrant Leonard Etienne Bordier who arrived here in 1849 with Count Gabriel de Milhau. Transported in separate sections, the houses were erected in 1855 on 1 acre allotments, two either side of Ferry Street. Only one remains, The Chalet in Yerton Avenue (48).

44. 1 WOOLWICH ROAD - THE HUT

The prefabricated Bordier-imported houses all had stone out-buildings, and although the timber building was demolished, a square sandstone portion of the present house is believed to have been part of the original development. Didier Joubert acquired all the Bordier houses through mortgage and in 1862 he sold this property to Charles Jeanneret whose family occu-pied it until 1874 when they moved to Wybalena.

Turn left into Ferry Street; the old ferry wharf on Parramatta River is at the bottom of the hill. Of particular interest in Ferry Street, where the first wharf was built, are the rubble-fill type of stone garden walls.

With a distinctive sweeping slate roof, verandahs and side entrance this is another excellent example of George W. Durrell's architectural designs to be found in this part of

Built in 1909 for T. Nancarrow, a dentist, it was called

46. 10 FERRY STREET – OATLANDSThis delightful example of 'Georgian' style architecture, built c.1875, stands on part of John Tawell's original grant, which then formed part of the Bordier subdivision. In 1880 Mr. Low, sold the property to Mr. Sidney Oatley, warehouseman, whose family owned Oatlands until 1935. It is symmetrical in form with elaborate bargeboards and plain timber posts around the stone flagged verandah.

47. 8 FERRY STREET

A modified Queen Anne style house built of brick in the early

48. 2 YERTON AVENUE - THE CHALET

This important reminder of Bordier's 1850s speculative venture in prefabricated houses is the only survivor. Sheltered behind tall shrubs with its decorative verandah detail and simple bungalow form it is perhaps the most 'historic' house in the municipality: see above 1 Woolwich Road and Note.

Note – A panoramic view of the city, Drummoyne, Huntley's Point and the Gladesville Bridge, can be seen by walking to the south end of Ferry Street. It was here that one of the earlier wharves on Parramatta River was built to serve residents of the district.

Turn into Muirbank Lane walking past the side walls of Oatlands and the large old Moreton Bay Fig tree into Toocooya Lane, noting the front of Muirbank before proceed-ing up Toocooya Lane to Jalna.

49. 1 MUIRBANK AVENUE - MUIRBANK

This imposing brick house with a northern turret and sweeping terraced lawns to Parramatta River belonged to William Henderson in 1897 and is an important reminder of the large number of extensive foreshore properties that existed in Hunters Hill before closer subdivisions crowded the shoreline. In 1900 Joseph Pearson, who had a mercer's shop in Hunter Street, Sydney, lived here. He was a first class cricketer who played against W.G. Grace and he also published Pearson's Road Guide, printed until 1920.

2 TOOCOOYA ROAD AND 24 FERRY STREET - JALNA

These form one building divided into two dwellings. The Toocooya Road portion, with its most unusual facade, was

probably built as a later addition. A date, 1907, was found in plasterwork during restoration. The 24 Ferry Street part of the building was built before 1884. Arthur Yates, the seed merchant, lived in this Georgian style home in 1889.

Turn right to Ferry Street walking as far as Carey Cottage and number 16, the small stone building and then turn to walk back to the junction of Ferry and Alexandra Streets and All Saints' Church

51. 22, 20 AND 18 FERRY STREET

- MIA MIA AND CAREY COTTAGE

William Rennell lived in the tiny timber cottage, number 22, in 1889 and by 1924, when it was called Mia Mia, Mary Wilson was the owner.

The timber buildings of Carey cottage are a reminder of the early carpenters who settled and found employment in Hunter's Hill. One of these small cottages was described as an old hut...to be put in habitable order for use, during his life-time, of one John Mackerran', an aged former employee of Edye Manning. Manning purchased the property when he owned Passy from 1858. The front cottage is thought to be the oldest part.

Number 20 was once used as a school of the Congregational Church later as a cake shop and then as Tinker Tailor Interiors.

52. 16 FERRY STREET

The sandstone cottage, originally timber, and shop were first occupied by James Stanner, wharfinger and later blacksmith, in 1867. He was also unofficial postmaster of Hunter's Hill in 1858 and this cottage was used by him as the post office. In 1867 the building was extended to include a telegraph room. Soon afterwards the post office moved to number 23 Alexandra Street.

53. 26 FERRY STREET - BELLAMY

Thomas Salter sold this land to Lawrence Kelly in 1879 who also owned the land of numbers 28 and 30 Ferry Street. The house was built by 1880 and in 1893 was purchased by Thomas Parcel, a gardener, whose daughters ran a cake shop

The wide bungalow form, with a wrap around verandah so close to the street makes an unusual architectural contribution to this part of Hunter's Hill.

54. 28 FERRY STREET - FORTUNA

This charming, late Victorian, slate roofed cottage was leased by Lawrence Kelly to Mrs. Henrietta Wilson, newsagent, in 1924. The land had belonged to a Swiss-Italian gunsmith with a shop in George Street, Sydney, Giovanni Battista Modini. His son also became newsagent at Hunter's Hill.

55. 30 FERRY STREET - EURODUX

Lawrence Kelly, a gardener and coal merchant, purchased this land from Ambrose Foss in 1866 for 30 pounds and he was living here by 1875. The pale, finely picked sandstone is unusual for such a small cottage, which originally had a verandah roof extending across the front.

56. ALL SAINTS CHURCH

In 1884 this site was purchased for 1100 pounds, Mr. Horbury Hunt was appointed architect and construction commenced the same year. It is Hunt's only Sydney church, although he designed some of the Rose Bay Convent buildings and his most notable churches or cathedrals are those at Grafton, Armidale, Inverell and Newcastle. English stonemasons Hook and Taylor were used and the cornerstone laid at a ceremony on June 1, 1885; a Sydney Morning Herald description went as follows The Church is being built of excellent white local stone, in the style of architecture known as geometrical... A spacious organ chamber and the usual vestries for precentors and choir are contained in the eastern ends. The walls will be built in a square block of masonry from 2 feet to 3 feet 6 inches thick...

The earliest stained glass windows are the work of leading Sydney firm Lyon & Cottier, the east window, the Te Deum, costing 300 pounds. All Saints' had its first service in April 1888, and the organ built by Bevington & Son, of Soho, England, was first used in June of that year.

