

## **MOSMAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY – FEBRUARY 2012 NEWSLETTER**

### **March speaker meeting**

It is with great sadness that the first newsletter for 2012 must begin because our first speaker of the year was to be Dom Lopez. Dom was always passionate about Mosman, a major identity and contributor, and will be sorely missed.

Our first meeting for 2012 will be at 7pm Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March, downstairs at the library. The talk will be about the transformation of Sydney Harbour evidenced through old photographs and will be delivered by Dr Ian Hoskins whose recently published book was a popular Christmas gift for many members. *See attached poster...*

### **New members**

We welcome 3 new members to Mosman Historical Society:

Peter John Alderson

Robert and Margaret Ouvrier

### **Australia Day award**

Congratulations to Murray Block on the award of his OAM. Breda also posthumously received an award. The Blocks have been longstanding and popular members of the Society and have been major contributors to the local community.

### **Local Studies at the library**

- Congratulations - Museums Australia have awarded Mosman Art Gallery a MAGNA award for the wonderful exhibition of creative design *Australian Accent: the Designs of Annan Fabrics and Vanda Pottery in the 40s and 50s* which was jointly curated by Donna Braye, the local studies librarian at Mosman Library and Julie Petersen of Mosman Art Gallery. This is a national award, the only other NSW exhibition recipient being the Art Gallery of NSW
- The *Memories of Mosman Streets* website has been given an update and is well worth a visit at [www.mosmanmemories.net/](http://www.mosmanmemories.net/)
- You might still be able to catch the first exhibition for 2012 called *Harnett's Bay in the Harbour*, displaying a picturesque history of the many faces of Mosman Bay through a selection of images from the Local Studies collection. The advertisement painted on the café roof *GERMEA FOR BREAKFAST* makes me wonder what Germea was and why it disappeared.

### **Mosman Rider walks**

The free Mosman bus is a wonderful service.

For the Festival of Mosman, the Clean Energy for Eternity Group devised a series of 11 walks which start and end on the rider route. Flyers are available in the Mosman Library community information area. You can download superb prepared descriptions and historical information

about the buildings and places encountered on each walk

from <http://www.mosman.nsw.gov.au/mosman/recreation/walks#mosman-rider>

You can SMS a blank text to 0459 667 616 and get a return text stating when the bus will reach its next waypoint or, for an iPhone or smartphone, there is a live tracker which can be downloaded.

### **North Shore Historical Society Prize**

This is a biennial competition with prizes of \$3000 and \$1500. It was established to encourage historical research at the community level and to seek out non-professional history enthusiasts with a story to tell, the emphasis being on North Sydney or the Lower North Shore. The deadline for a written precis is 31 May 2012, and for the completed submission 31 May 2013. More info can be requested from the competition convenor, Don Napper, on 9460 0634 or at [northshorehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.au](mailto:northshorehistoricalsociety@yahoo.com.au)

### **Bunkers Hill**

More information about the location and origin has come from Eve Bagnall who was directed to The Dictionary of Sydney by Elise Edmonds, from the State Library for this information:-.

Captain Ebor Bunker was an American from a whaling background who had emigrated to England during the American Revolution. He arrived in Sydney September 1791 aged 30 as master of a Third Fleet convict transfer. He was a pioneer of the whaling industry in Australia and became a leading merchant and citizen involved in many notable events. His trading operations were based at Bunkers Hill in The Rocks. On 14 November 1909, the *Sunday Times* (Sydney) described the old Bunker House on The Rocks as at first being made of bark and slab, and later, at the time of Governor Macquarie of stone. It was at the end of Gloucester Street overlooking the harbour, with Cumberland Street in the west and George Street to the east. A plaque remembering Bunkers Hill is located on the Gloucester Walk, in The Rocks. See: [http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/bunker\\_eber](http://www.dictionaryofsydney.org/entry/bunker_eber)

### **Peggy's Rocks**

The rocky outcrop near Raglan Street, Balmoral, is named Peggy's Rocks in many Sydney street directories and last year Libby Manuel enquired about the origin of the name. Thanks to Bill Macmillan who directed us to page 166 of Gavin Souter's book *Time and Tides* published in 2004:-

This is a tragic story concerning the Joel family, a well-known Balmoral boat building family who lived and worked in what is now called Botanic Road. Jack, the eldest of Charles Joel's sons, sailed off to Gallipoli in October 1914 and did not return home until May 1919. His much loved little sister Rebecca was known as Peggy.

Gavin was able to establish from surviving letters that in July 1915 Jack was still at Gallipoli, in February 1916 Egypt, April 1916 France. Peggy died January 1916 of typhoid fever aged 16.

At the time Jack was recovering from wounds in Egypt and was later sent to fierce fighting in Pozieres. His mother could not bring herself to tell him of his sister's death until October 1916. It is thought that Jack named the rocks after Peggy because she liked to stand there and gaze out to sea, maybe looking for a ship which would bring her brother home..

### **Quiz question**

The NOVEMBER 2011 quiz question was:-

In 1893 a tram service to Spit Junction from North Sydney commenced. In 1897 it was extended to Mosman Wharf. In 1900 a branch opened to The Spit. In 1902 an application was made to the Minister for Public Works for an extension to Balmoral. When did a Balmoral line open?

The line was officially opened on Monday morning 29 May 1922. It had taken 20 years since the first application. Major reasons for the delay were the difficulties of the very steep terrain and the competing proposals regarding the best route to tackle the precipitous descent. In 1902 a tram service as far as Mosman P.O. had already been established so the proposal was for a 2 mile circuitous route from there, in part through the military reserve. A later plan was for an offshoot from the Spit line, descending from Spit Road via Stanton Road and Kirkoswald to Edwards Beach.

In 1919 the original tram route along Military Road to the P.O. area was extended along Middle Head Road to service the many WWI returned servicemen recuperating at the Georges Heights military hospital. A branch from this extension down to Balmoral via Gordon Street then became the best option. Ironically, the Georges Heights extension from Gordon Street to the hospital was closed in 1922 due to diminished use.

The FEBRUARY 2012 quiz question is:-

Boronia House in Military Road was one of an identical pair of grand houses built in 1885 for brothers John and James Keary. What was the name of the other house and for how long did the brothers occupy them?