

The Glebe
Society

BULLETIN

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P.O. Box 100, Glebe, 2037. Phone 660-0026.

WITCHES' HOUSES



289 Annandale Street,
Annandale 2038

5th April, 1977

Joey Rowden,
Editor,
The Glebe Society Bulletin,
4 Leichhardt Street,
Glebe. 2037

Dear M/s Rowden

We were pleased to note your reference to the Annandale "Witch Houses" in the March edition of the Bulletin, and to know that they are valued by Glebe residents. Number 260 Johnston Street, "Kenilworth", is giving us some concern at present, as you wrote in your article.

For the interest of your readers here is a little background information about the houses which will explain why they are valued, apart from their unique architectural style.

The Annandale estate was purchased by John Young in the 1870's from the Johnston family, the original grantees. Young formed a company and developed the area, much as we know it now. John Young was a builder and his work included St. Marys Cathedral and the Lands Department building. He also introduced the game of bowls into N.S.W.

Young was responsible for the houses in the "Witch House" group, with the exception of number 270, "Oybin", which was designed by Charles Blackman, the architect. "Oybin's" future, and present near derelict condition is another story.

Number 258, "Claremont" was "Kenilworth's" twin and was demolished in 1967. Number 268, "Roselle", and similar to 266 was demolished in 1973. The remaining houses are number 260, "Kenilworth"; number 262, "Highroyd"; number 264, "Hockingden"; number 266, "Greba"; and number 272, "The Abbey". Young lived in "Kentvilla", number 274 which was demolished at the beginning of this century and the land subdivided. "Highroyd" and "Hockingden" were built for Young's two daughters and until a few years ago "Hockingden" remained the property of a descendant. Folk law has it that "The Abbey" was built for the absent Mrs. Young by her husband to attract her back to Australia. Whether that is true or not, the Youngs never lived in "The Abbey".

"Kenilworth" had a famous tenant at the turn of the century; Sir Henry Parkes lived there briefly until his death. His funeral left from the house and children then attending North Annandale Public School lined the roadside to see the cortège pass.

"Kenilworth" is of particular concern to us at the present time as it has been vacant and for sale for months. While it has stood empty vandals and thieves have done their work and there is now restoration as well as renovation to be undertaken. We understand that it is a mortgagee sale.

We feel sure that somewhere there is a person, or persons, in Sydney - perhaps in Glebe! - who would be able to restore and value the house as it deserves. But perhaps someone who would be able to undertake this not inconsiderable, though exciting task, does not know about "Kenilworth". The house has a RECORDED listing with the National Trust, as do the others of the group, with a review of the listing which will depend on future developments. It is also listed as a historic building under Leichhardt's proposed planning scheme.

Thank you for this opportunity of writing about the "Witch Houses" and hope it will be of interest.

Yours faithfully,

B. Mason

Hon. Secretary The Annandale
Association

MISCELLANY

Glebe Estate Workshops, 123A Mitchell Street. Classes in spinning, weaving and woodworking will begin at the new Glebe Estate Workshops on Monday, May 9th. Separate classes for adults and children. Those interested please ring 660.7265.

For many years now Kate Smith has been guardian and chief paster of newspaper cuttings relating to the Glebe Society in a large press cuttings book.

Diana Schlicht has kindly agreed to continue this archival activity and would be the grateful recipient of relevant clippings that she may not have caught herself.

MEET THE MANAGEMENT

RALPH KAYE - Junior Vice-President

Born in the Bronx area of New York thirty years ago. The Bronx did not have the same reputation then as now, but the inhabitants of the 4 and 5 storey tenement blocks kept to their own territories. Ralph lived in the area until he had graduated as a chemical engineer from Newark University. Between flats he lived for six months in a garage in New York State, in an area comprising dairies and I.B.M., his workplace.

After a brief spell in California, Ralph managed to legally avoid Vietnam and subsequently went to Canada. The job possibilities there were poor, so he spent a year getting to know Jill, a nurse from South Africa, and married her.

About this time they spent \$160.00 on a charter flight from Vancouver to London, and used London as a base for exploring Europe. Ralph worked on the land for a couple of months on a Kibbutz in Israel, before coming to Australia.

Job opportunities were good for Ralph here and for the next few years Jill and Ralph lived in or near the Leichhardt Municipality. A five month visit back to the United States confirmed their opinion that they had grown away from the American system.

Back in Australia, a year living in Kingsford to be close to the University of N.S.W., where Ralph was taking courses for his new job at the State Pollution Control Commission, confirmed his suspicions that Glebe was a friendlier place to live.

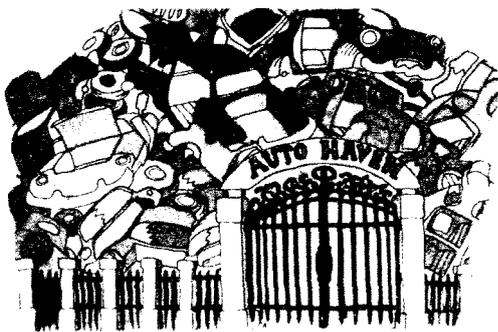
Ralph and Jill now divide their spare time between looking after their two small children and renovating their house in Toxteth Road.

Ralph is "anti-automobile", somewhat embarrassingly admitting to a minimal 4000 miles driving a year. He believes in a supportive community and extended families. He and Jill hope to have more children. He describes himself as apolitical, pacifist and supports free-thinking. As far as Glebe is concerned he would like to see the dealienation of the waterfront, the building of a High School and no expressways.

WHAT THE MANAGEMENT DID

In order to keep members better informed, from now on we are reviving the regular bulletins on what the Management Committee does at their monthly Management Committee meetings.

1. We are urging the Lands Commission to acquire the Parkes properties at Glebe Point. This request has been favourably received and the Society may be involved in new planning for the Point.
2. The Planning Committee is looking into the tenure of the NCA at Harold Park.
3. We are writing to the National Trust seeking their involvement of the saving of the Witches Houses in Johnston Street, Annandale.
4. Historian Max Solling is to give a series of historical lectures commencing on May 25th. See elsewhere in the bulletin for details.
5. A submission is being made to the Local Government Boundaries Commission supporting consolidation and Glebe's return to the City.
6. We will be opposing NRMA/Road Lobby propaganda regarding the North Expressway.
7. Mr. Lander will be asked to take positive action to provide cycleways.
8. A further approach will be made to Ministers seeking progress on the transformation of the Hudson site into a High School.



AUTONOMOUS HOUSE

The Autonomous House Project is an ongoing experimental living environment (!) being developed over the past three years by the Department of Architecture at Sydney University to fill the gaps left by our energy-inefficient houses and industries, and to investigate and put into practice some of the principles of low energy shelter, recyclability or resources and renewable sources of energy.

In May last year, the Alternative Technology Fair was held at the Autonomous House to enable those people not directly involved in the project to examine some of the future lifestyle options available and to see some of the systems and hardware potentially capable of supporting and sustaining these options. On the weekend of May 8th and 9th, several hundred people attended the wide ranging series of lectures, workshops and films, and participated in a seminar conducted by the occupants of the house. Since the Fair, considerable feedback has been generated from all areas of interest and it seems to be generally felt that a more cohesive framework could be developed to integrate the separate energy and shelter systems, and to explore the possibilities of co-operating interdependent systems to provide continuous life support.

As a means of organising and implementing the necessary design initiatives and strategies for integrating the various technologies, environments and lifestyles we are proposing to hold an Integrated Technology Fair at the Autonomous House Site in Darlington, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday the 20th, 21st and 22nd of May 1977. We are planning a continuous three day workshop focussing on the following interest areas - food, health, shelter, energy, communications and education. There will be a large covered community meeting space for music, seminars, films and workshops, as well as numerous outdoor stalls and exhibits. Natural food and drinks will be available throughout the weekend. All welcome.

HISTORY

LECTURE SERIES

Max Solling has agreed to give a series of lectures on various aspects of the history of Glebe and nearby areas. These will be held at the Forest Lodge School on Wednesday evenings at 8.00 p.m., from May 25th for eight weeks. So book these dates in your diary. Further details of these lectures later, but they will include topics such as Recreation, Everyday Life, Religion and Education.

GARDENING

Theo Ahlston, after doing a sterling job for over two years, has retired as convenor of the garden group, although he is still our corresponding secretary with the Garden Club of Australia. Our sincere thanks to Theo for all the work he has done during his time as convenor.

To date no one has been willing to take over as convenor from him. Do the gardeners in the Glebe Society want to have a garden group, or would you prefer to keep in touch with each other quite informally? Do you want to go as a group on visits to other gardens, garden groups, reserves, etc. from time to time during the year?

Would the gardeners in the Glebe Society like to meet, very briefly, after the coffee morning at Ted and Alison McKeown's, on Saturday, 7th May (strictly 12.30 - 1.00 p.m.) and decide:-

- (a) whether the garden group should continue;
- (b) if so, what kind of activities should it have; and
- (c) if so, who will act as convenor of the group.

FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday, 7th May. Morning coffee at the home of Ted and Alison McKeown, 10 Albert Street from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Monday, 9th May, 2.30 p.m. Monday Group meeting at Kate Smith's, 23 Avenue Road to discuss reforming the crochet group which provided items for "Elsie". New and learning crocheters welcome.

Saturday, 21st May, 12.30 p.m. Smorgasbord luncheon at the Glebe Rowing Club, Ferry Road. Members of the Glebe Society who are not members of the Rowing Club should contact Dorothy Perkins on 660.7623 before 19th May for signing in arrangements. It will not be possible to make arrangements for people just turning up on the day.

Monday, 13th June, 2.30 p.m. Monday Group meeting at Pat Moore's, 12 Alexandra Road.

FOR SALE

Mary Wargenau still has the following items for sale:-

2 divan beds @ \$200.00 the pair.
White chest of 5 drawers \$30.00.
14' x 10' olive green and brown carpet \$50.00.

And for \$870.00:-

Dining room suite
Light plate glass table
4 modern casket weave chairs
Matching cocktail cabinet and coffee table

Please ring 660.1229 for further details.