



# THE GLEBE SOCIETY BULLETIN

Box 100, Glebe 2037

1/1980



## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

### Entering the '80s

As we enter the '80s, it is an appropriate time to look back into the past eleven years of the Glebe Society and forward into the future.

Many factors have changed since the Glebe Society was born in 1969 - the early days have been covered in some detail by Max Solling - Bulletin No. 9, 1979. As the '60s came to a close, cities all over the world were still in the rampant phase of centrifugal expansion with inner city areas largely neglected except at the hands of developers and expressway designers. "Environmental protection" was unheard of in this area.

Nevertheless, a few individuals in Sydney, ahead of their time, were willing to do battle. The result was the formation of the Paddington Society, The Glebe Society, the Balmain Association and subsequently other action groups.

Looking through the Glebe Society Bulletin since the first two-page spread in July, 1969, is to glimpse a most dramatic change in life-styles and attitudes in the inner city.

### Radial Expressways

No. 2/1971 - "The Glebe Society objects to the routing of major expressways through The Glebe.

We object because these expressways will destroy The Glebe as a suburb and are not in the best long-range interests of Sydney.

The expressways would destroy one-sixth of a suburb expressing the history and character of Sydney, probably more so in its small area than any other area in Sydney, to take the motor car - where?....."

(Letter by Prof. Bernard Smith  
to P.M. Morton, Minister for Highways)

From 1970 to 1974 the Bulletins are crammed with anti-expressway articles culminating in the great Fig Street demonstrations in 1974/75. Our voice was heard. In 1975 Neville Wran attended an anti-expressway rally in Glebe Jubilee Park and promised that if elected his government would review the radial expressway policy - the rest is history - (and so too, probably, is the motor car).

## Public Transport

Although the "Open Road" may bleat on about the 'great benefits' of inner-city expressways, it is now widely accepted that much public money must be spent on public transport systems. The Glebe Society anticipated this trend by producing its Monograph No. 2 "A North Western Railway" written by John Gerofi and Jim Coombs in 1974. Later, in July, 1976, the Society organised "The Great Train Ride" from Redfern, through Darling Harbour, Wentworth Park, Federal Park viaduct, Lilyfield, Leichhardt and on to Dulwich Hill.

## Houses versus flats

"Sydney will remember the 1970's as the decade we used up all the grass. Private homes once provided reasonable areas of grass but our tendency is to tear down these homes, build units and put cement drives where lawns used to be".

Albert Mispel & Peter Pockley  
Bulletin No. 4/1972

A local point of early resistance was "Lyndhurst" which was due to be demolished in the face of the North-Western Expressway. Remember the Green Bans? In 1974 The Glebe Society persuaded the Builders Labourers Federation (N.S.W.) to place a Green Ban on Lyndhurst. This saved the day. Neville Wran gave an undertaking soon after that a State Labour Government would preserve Lyndhurst.

## Town Plans and Urban Living

Some good things happened during the '70s. The independent and progressive Council from 1971-1974 restricted home-unit development to two floors. In 1974 Federal Labour Government purchased the Glebe Estate from the Anglican Synod of the Church of England.

In 1975 The National Trust classified Glebe, along with Paddington and Hunters Hill, as a 'Conservation Area'.

As we all know this progressive period was reversed last year by the unfolding of the new "Town Plan" in which the whole of Glebe is classified as 2b(4) (see article in this issue by John Hoddinott). However, there is hope that the massive opposition organised by the Glebe Society and other action groups in the Municipality will result in the Plan being amended by the Planning and Environment Commission. Also the new Heritage Commission has been given strong powers to protect worthwhile old buildings. In 1979 The Glebe Society was successful under this new legislation in having an interim preservation order placed on the University Hotel at the corner of Glebe Point Road and Parramatta Road,

## Environment and Pollution

The '70s was surely the decade of the environmental revolution. To many residents of Glebe this may have passed by unnoticed. The State Pollution Control Commission was formed in 1972 at the same time as the 'Clean Waters' and 'Clean Air' Acts were brought in. These have been followed by the Environmental Impact Assessment regulations, noise and emission controls and the Noise Abatement Act. While much of this legislation is new and lacks bite at the moment it only needs action from watchdog groups like the Glebe Society to make environmental control a reality at last.

## The Future

Many of the older issues have disappeared but several notable problems remain - parks (especially around the waterfront), a rational town plan, pollution in many forms (air, water, noise from traffic and aircraft, visual) and a better public transport system, including the use of the railway through Glebe for passengers.. Added to this, the Society must face the inevitable return of people to the inner city and a higher population density. The increase in density can either be done piecemeal by profiteering developers or it can come about by rational town planning which considers all the needs of an area and develops accordingly. The Glebe Estate is a very good example of the latter. It will be a major task for the Glebe Society in the '80s to make sure that the latter course is taken.

Tony Larkum

## WHAT THEY DID

The Management Committee met on the 5th December and 7th January. The matters discussed included:-

1. Planning Sub Committee. Following the resignation of Alan Robertson as convener of this important sub-committee, Tony Larkum and John Hoddinott are to take over the more important aspects until a new convener can be found.
2. Blackwattle Bay Park. The question of who has the title to the land designated as a park was raised. Letters to be sent to Leichhardt Council and the P.E.C. concerning this.
3. Steetely's Site Issue. Council has leased this site to S.G.B. Scaffolding Co. for three years. The Society's protest organised by John Buckingham resulted in - 27 letters to the Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr. Landa, 26 letters to the Mayor, Mr. Rodwell, and 88 signatories to the petition.
4. Subscriptions. It was resolved to change the subscription date to June each year instead of both June and December. Those who previously had their subscriptions fall due in December will be given a period of grace until next June.
5. Wentworth Park Grandstand. A letter is to be sent to the Minister concerned, Mr. Crabtree, seeking an interview to discuss the management of the park. Paul Coup, Bill Nelson and John Hoddinott are to organise further action.
6. Glebe Fair. The idea of a Glebe Fair similar to the Queen St. Fair has been put forward by Peter Stanbury. This could be held in Mount Vernon St and The Glebe Town Hall. Further discussions to be held.

7. 43-47 Hereford Street. The Society has objected to Council concerning the proposal to build 35 town houses on this site. No. 45, Kintara is a very fine old house and should definitely be preserved.

8. Next meeting, 4th February at Peter Stanbury's at 8 p.m.

## OBJECTIONS TO THE LEICHHARDT TOWN PLAN

The Leichhardt Town Plan was placed on public display in April, 1979. The Society found many objectionable items, especially the overall zoning of 2b(4), meaning a density of 225 people per hectare; the lack of provision for adequate, let alone increased parks; the provision of an expressway effectively isolating Glebe from the rest of the municipality; no increase in the commercial area in spite of the increased population density; the threatened widening of several streets, meaning the loss of gardens. This is not a complete list but it may help to remind you of the salient points.

In mid-January, many members will have received a letter from Leichhardt Council inviting you to appear in person to voice your objections to the Scheme. These letters have been sent to all persons who lodged written objections to the Plan. The Society asks that, if it is humanly possible, all of you reply to Council requesting to be heard. This letter must be received by 8th February, and should be addressed to The Town Clerk, P.O. Box 45, Leichhardt, 2040, or it can be hand-delivered to the Administrative Centre, 7-15 Wetherill Street, Leichhardt by that date.

As the letter points out, the Local Government Act affords each objector the opportunity to appear before Council to be heard in support of the objection.

This is a procedure which Council is obliged to follow. The hearings are part of the legislative procedure.

It is very important to realise that there is no need to be afraid of the phrase "by counsel, solicitor or agent" in Council's letter. The wording reflects the Act's requirements. If you are articulate and concerned, please reply to Council's letter.

If you have friends or neighbours who have made written objections to the Town Plan, please pass on this information to them. (And try to persuade them to join the Society, if they are not already members).

**THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT ISSUE SO PLEASE SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS AND REPLY TO COUNCIL'S LETTER.**

**REMEMBER THE SOCIETY'S AIMS -**

To promote the general well-being of residents and ensure that The Glebe remains a pleasant place to live.

To preserve the unique historic and architectural environment.

To promote enlightened town planning.

To encourage more parks, trees, gardens

To save the foreshores for public use.

John Hoddinott.

Copy of letter from Mr. L.J. Ferguson, 10/12/79  
to Mr. A.G. Robertson, Planning Convenor

Dear Mr. Robertson,

I refer to your letter dated 9 October 1979 concerning the Society's request that the former Steetley Industries site at Rozelle Bay be transferred for public recreation.

While the Society's disappointment at the decision taken in this matter is appreciated, it is felt that the issues raised in your letter received thorough consideration during the deliberations concerning this land.

The Maritime Services Board acknowledges that, for a number of years, there has been a progressive decline in waterfront industrial uses in near City suburbs, particularly in the Leichhardt Municipality. Many former waterfront industrial sites have been converted to either parkland or residential uses.

In fact, I am informed that the situation has now been reached where, apart from lands owned by the Board, only relatively small pockets of land remain on which waterfront industrial activities may be carried out.

The Board adds that while it may be said at a particular point of time that demand for a certain type of land is low, it is also correct to say that the needs of a large port such as Sydney vary with changing economic, technological or other circumstances. The Board considers that it is essential to retain a reserve stock of land in order that it is in a position to respond to such changing circumstances.

An example occurred recently where the Board was able to accommodate two waterfront industrial users at its former No. 6 Depot off The Crescent Annandale. One of the two firms concerned was displaced from a waterfront industrial site by the construction of the new Glebe High School and if the Board had not been able to quickly respond to the situation a substantial number of people would have lost employment and port services would have been impaired.

In further support of the need to maintain sufficient areas of land for port purposes, the Board offers the comment that sea transport is recognised as being a most efficient user of energy in that even now it performs 51% of Australia's total domestic freight task for the consumption of only 8% of the transport energy, thus pointing to a possible resurgence of coastal and local shipping activity in years to come as fuel costs take their toll on the effectiveness of other transport modes.

On the question of alleged decline of waterfront access to the public since World War II, the Board has pointed out that neither the "Johnston Street public wharf", which formed part of a commercial boatshed lease, nor the Police Boys Club site were readily accessible to the general public in pre-war years, let alone post-war years.

Along with planning action already taken by Leichhardt Council and the N.S.W. Planning and Environment Commission, the release of the reclaimed lands referred to in my letter of 18/9/79 will enable substantial tracts of the Glebe foreshore to become available for public use.

In regard to claims that the leasing of the former Steetley site will result in increased vehicular traffic through Glebe streets, the Board understands that, to alleviate the problem, the prospective lessor proposes to transport imported goods to the site by lighter.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) L.J. Ferguson

Deputy Premier  
and  
Minister for Public Works and Ports

#### 2, 4, 5 - T - Ban by Leichhardt Council

In May, 1975, The Glebe Society communicated its concern in a letter to Leichhardt Council concerning the use of 2,4,5-T as a weedkiller in the Municipality.

Nearly five years later as a result of the wide publicity over the side effects of 'Agent Orange' (2,4,5-T), which was used as a defoliant in Vietnam, Leichhardt Council, together with Hornsby Council, has decided to ban its use.

Congratulations to Council! But why so late? If it is dangerous now it has been for the past five years. And evidence on the dangerous side-effects of 2,4,5-T has been available for at least ten years.

#### Christmas Party

Some sixty members gathered at the Rowing Club on 10th December for the final social get together of the year. It was a pleasure both to meet new members of the Society and to chat to old friends.

We look forward to renewing new acquaintances and enjoying continuing support from established members in 1980 since the eighties seem likely to provide at least as much activity, both social and communal, as the seventies.

Our thanks to the Rowing Club staff for their contribution towards making the evening such a pleasant one.

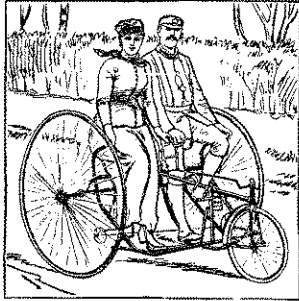
#### NEWS ITEM

The Sydney Morning Herald of 23rd January claims, in an article by Joseph Glascott, that parts of South Sydney, Marrickville and Leichhardt municipalities "would revert to the Sydney City Council before the next Council elections in September this year. Such a move has certainly been in the air for several months.

The obvious ward in the Leichhardt Municipality for amalgamation is Glebe. The Management Committee has discussed this possibility and in general, we favour the idea. Our opinion would finally depend on the effect on rates, representation, etc. The town planning expertise in Sydney City Council would be to the suburb's advantage. We will keep you in touch with developments. The Local Government Boundaries Commission report on the city's boundaries is due in March.

Editor's Excuses - Any omissions, bad spelling, crooked lines are to be overlooked. Who says the aging can't try something new? I do. Anyway, as Tony writes - "Help" for an editor, assistant, etc.

Merlyn Larcombe  
(Temporary)



#### BOOKS FOR SALE

The Society is trying to obtain some more copies of Ian Evans' "Restoring Old Houses" at \$16.95.

There are twelve copies of Bernard Smith's "The Architectural Character of Glebe", at \$8.00 per copy. This is the definitive book if you wish to understand the styles of Glebe buildings, and learn something of the suburb's history.

To order a copy of either, phone John Hoddinott at 692-0071.



The comic strip Fatty

Fatty Finn, the perennial juvenile, his dog Pal, his friends and enemies Headlights, Skeet, Seasy and Lollylegs, and a goat, are once more haunting the back streets of Sydney.

For the last three weeks, a film crew and cast, including Bert Newton as Fatty's dad, John Finn, and Noni Hazelhurst as his mother, have peopled Glebe, recreating in a new film, Fatty Finn, the adventures of the characters first devised by Syd Nicholls in 1923.

Fatty was a feature of Australian cartoon papers from 1923 to 1933, then made a comeback in 1951, appearing until Mr Nicholls died in 1977.

The new film is being made by the Children's Film Corporation for \$350,000, of which \$120,000 has been invested by the Australian Film Commission.

Tony's favourite comic strip which should have been given precedence over the presidential address. Alas, my inexpertise couldn't fit it in.

## For your diary

Sunday, 10th February, 11 a.m., Coffee Morning

To be held at Jenny and Peter Pockley's,  
19 Mansfield Street.

Monday, 18th February - Drinks at the Rowing Club,  
Ferry Road, 6 p.m.

Come along for an hour or so and discuss problems, ideas, etc. with some of the Committee. Check up on your objections to the Town Plan if you are lodging a verbal objection later to Council.

Saturday, 1st March - 7 p.m., at 120 Bridge Road.

ARE YOU 35 OR UNDER?

IF SO, THIS IS ESPECIALLY FOR YOU.

A party for 35's and under - \$2.50 will cover wine, salads, etc. and you are asked to bring your own steak for a barbecue.

This innovation we hope will prove successful, and if so will do again ... and again.

Please ring Peter Vester on 660.1875  
(after 6 p.m.) for reservations.

Saturday, 22nd March - Wine Bottling

At Tony Larkum's. See next bulletin for further details.

GWEN WILLIS would like to hear from anyone wishing to sketch or paint scenes around Glebe. Please ring her on 660.5027 (home) or 660.4018 (work) so that arrangements for a group can be made.

#### THE GREENING OF GLEBE

Many thanks to Leichhardt Council for their tree planting project along the streets of Glebe - an aesthetically pleasing addition to bare concrete pavements.

#### DOOR KNOCK FOR THE RED CROSS

Miss L. Milton, Secretary of the Leichhardt Committee's Red Cross Calling Appeal has asked the Society to publicise the need for volunteers for two hours of door-knocking each, mainly on Sunday 23rd March, but possibly up to the 29th. For information, phone 660-7930 (home) or 660-2611 (business).