

## Notes for CAMWEST's

### 2006 Parramatta Heritage Ride B: 9 April 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

#### **Parramatta Park Tudor Gate House:**

Built 1885 to replace Governor Macquarie's small stone lodge. First occupied in November 1885 by Samuel & Matilda Case (newly-weds). Gatekeepers and their families occupied it over the years, the last to live there being Mr & Mrs Thomas Hill and their two children from 1951 to 1966. After a period of neglect it was restored and re-opened in 1980.

#### **Barrack Lane:**

The Warders' Cottages in Barrack Lane were built in early 1820s as dwellings for warders working on the Convict Barracks which were built at the same time. The northern boundary wall of the Convict Barracks formed the southern wall of the cottages.

#### **The Lancer Barracks:**

Owes its name to the NSW Lancers, Australia's first cavalry regiment. They were designed by Lt John Watts, Aide-de-Camp to Governor Macquarie. Completed by 1820, it is the oldest continuously-used military establishment in Australia. Originally three 'well-preserved, simple buildings, with pleasant proportions' set in enclosure of 8 acres. Now there are two buildings and a lawn that 'retain the atmosphere of the Old Barracks and Parade Ground'. Watts also was the designer of the extensions to Old Government House, Parramatta, and the twin towers of Parramatta's St John's Church. Watts left Sydney in 1819, but returned to Australia later to become Postmaster-General in Adelaide.

#### **Brick barrel-drain:**

Built circa 1820 – 27 to drain land reaching from present junction of Argyle and Church Sts, crossing Macquarie, Smith, George and Phillip Streets before emptying into Parramatta River. Cylinder of brickwork throughout, with an internal diameter around 1200 to 1300 mm.

#### **Elizabeth St Bridge:**

Present bridge replaces the old footbridge, built between 1890 and 1910 which carried both a gas and a water pipe. By mid-century the old footbridge was becoming an eyesore and, as cycling became more important in Parramatta in the 1980s and 1990s, CAMWEST (Cyclists' Action Movement WEST) began to advocate for the old bridge to be replaced with a wider bridge to be used for walking and cycling. The new \$1.7 million bridge combines award winning engineering with artistic flair by Sydney artists Greg Stonehouse and Susan Milne. It hides a water pipe, with the gas pipe now re-located under the riverbed. Officially opened in March 2003.

#### **All Saints Cemetery:**

Many early residents of Parramatta buried here. It had fallen into disrepair, but was rehabilitated after Council did an Assessment and Recommendation Report in 1996. Most famous person buried here is Gregory Blaxland (died 1853). Blaxland came to Australia from Kent (England) and was the junior partner with Wentworth and Lawson in exploring a way across the Blue Mountains in 1813. He was later active in the colony in advocating for trial by jury. He was also famous for his vineyards in Dundas and Parramatta where he produced wines.

#### **Richie Benaud Oval:**

Richie Benaud—one of Australia's most famous cricketing captains—lived near this oval as a boy and played cricket here after 1937. He attended Parramatta High School from 1942 and is currently in his late 70s. Benaud represented Australia 45 times; he '... lost only four of his 28 Tests as Australia's captain and earned himself a place among the great Australian captains'.

#### **St Patricks Cemetery:**

Is the oldest undisturbed Catholic cemetery in Australia. 'Many Catholics buried here had suffered flogging rather than attend ... church services, when the only religion in the colony at that time was Church of England.'

### **Lake Parramatta:**

Formed from a man-made dam, Lake Parramatta is on Hunt's Creek, which is about 6 kms long, starting near the intersection of North Rocks Rd and Pennant Hills Rd, and flowing south-west to the lake then on to the confluence with Darling Mills Creek at Northmead. The area of the Lake Parramatta Reserve was used by Aboriginal people, due to fresh water, the diversity of food types available, and the natural 'comfort' of the topography. The foundation stone for the dam was laid in 1855 and all the sandstone used in the dam was quarried in the area. Historically the dam is important in that it was the 12<sup>th</sup> engineered dam built in the Western world, and was 'the second arch dam built universally that involved calculations for its construction'. It holds 280 megalitres of water and it provided the water for Parramatta until 1909. The dam was raised by 12 feet of concrete in 1898. In the 1920s and 1930s it was a popular recreation spot where people enjoyed swimming, rowing, water-skiing and so on. There was even a swimming and lifesavers club and clubhouse. The kiosk was built in 1937. Lake Parramatta went into decline in the 1950s due to encroaching residential development and the dumping of building waste. Parramatta City Council responded to representations from the Wildlife Preservation Society in 1958 and there has been a prolonged push to get Lake Parramatta back to its former cleanliness and attractiveness. It is now much improved.

### **Historic houses on Sorrell St:**

Two contrasting houses to look at are—

- (a) No. 70 on east side of Sorrell St. This single-storey rustic sandstone cottage is in the Victorian vernacular style.
- (b) No. 54 on east side of Sorrell St. 'Endrim' is a two-storey sandstone mansion in the Victorian Georgian style, with Tuscan porch and sandstone gabled stables. It is listed with the National Trust of Australia, has a permanent Conservation Order by the NSW Conservation Commission, and is protected by a Heritage Order of Parramatta City Council. It was built between 1854–56 as a private residence for the Rev. William Gore, the Rector of All Saints Church (Parramatta). Designed and built by the architect and builder James Houison, Endrim served as a leased parsonage for the church before passing into private ownership. In the 1950s, for example, it was occupied by the family of H.V. Horwood, Mayor of Parramatta in 1954–55. Following the sale of the property by the Horwood family, the offices of Lewarne & Goldsmith were relocated to Endrim in 1984.

### **St Patrick's Cathedral:**

Building begun as a church on this site in 1827, but was still unroofed when Bishop Polding arrived in 1835 and, when finally completed, it was used as a schoolhouse. The foundation stone was laid on St Patrick's Day 1836. The original building was too small and was demolished. The foundation stone for the new building was laid in August 1854. The Pugin Tower was ready by 1878 and the spire was blessed in January 1883. However, by 1936 a new church, incorporating the existing tower and spire, was opened to meet the demands of a growing congregation. In 1986 the Diocese of Parramatta was established and St Patrick's was designated as a Cathedral. Disaster struck on 19 February 1996 when a fire destroyed the interior and roof. In 1997, Design Architect Romaldo Giurgola and the firm MGT Architects was commissioned for the restoration and design of the new Cathedral complex. This international firm designed new Parliament House in Canberra. The brief for St Patrick's was for the restoration of the original church as the Blessed Sacrament Chapel as well as the creation of a new extension accommodating 800 people. The Cathedral complex includes a cloister, new parish hall and historic Murphy House, the original presbytery. The Cathedral was re-opened on 29 November 2003.

### **Kings School Site and Oval:**

Originally the site of an experimental farm for fruit trees in the early days of the colony, in 1834 it was given to the Anglican Church to establish the Kings School, the first large public boarding school providing secondary education in Australia. The original school was built by Scottish stone masons to produce a striking Georgian stone building with a Greek Doric style portico. The Colonial Architect, Ambrose Hallen, designed the building which was completed in 1836. Over the years various additional buildings and enlargements occurred, including a third storey to the school in 1925. The original school building and the principal's residence form the 1836 Old Kings School Group, now listed on the State Heritage Register. The Kings School relocated in 1968 to Pennant Hills Road and the original site was acquired by the NSW Government to accommodate the Marsden Rehabilitation Centre. The site now houses the Heritage Council and Heritage Office. The complex overlooks the Parramatta River at the point where, in 1818, Governor Macquarie had the Marsden St dam constructed as the town's first water supply.

#### **Prince Alfred Park:**

In 1797 this was the site of an old log prison that was burned down. It was replaced by a two-storey stone building in 1804, the second storey being used as the first 'female factory', an attempt to give employment to vagrant women in the colony. The first woollen goods in Australia were spun and woven here by these women.

#### **Lennox Bridge / Riverside Theatres / Parramatta Heritage Centre:**

The place where Church Street crosses the Parramatta River is historically significant as the site of the earliest documented river crossing in the Parramatta district, dating from the earliest years of colonial settlement. These three buildings (bridge, theatres and centre) occupy an important site in the European history of Australia. 'The Lennox Bridge ... survives as a rare example of early nineteenth century civil engineering technology. It is probable that some of the stones from which it is built originally formed part of an even earlier structure. The original portion of the bridge is significant as one of the foremost examples of the work of the colony's first Superintendent of Bridges, David Lennox, renowned for his engineering works and innovative bridge designs. The Lennox Bridge, due to its visual prominence and aesthetic qualities, today enhances the scenic amenity of that section of the Parramatta River which flows through the city centre. Widespread recognition of its historic and social importance has resulted in Lennox Bridge having many times achieved the status of a symbol for the Parramatta locality. Heritage Status: The cultural significance of the Lennox Bridge is recognised by numerous individuals and conservation-oriented organisations throughout Australia. The bridge has been classified by the National Trust of Australia (NSW)...and is also included on the Australian Heritage Commission's Register of the National Estate.'

A Bicentennial Project, Riverside Theatres opened in 1988 offering three venues under the one roof. The Rafferty's Theatre, the most intimate space seats around 100 people ... The Lennox Theatre is a flexible space seating approximately 220 people. Both the Lennox and the Rafferty's can also be empty spaces for other diverse events. The largest theatre, the Riverside Theatre, can house up to 764 patrons with comfortable, plush seating in a conventional proscenium arch stage with orchestra pit and fly tower. Larger scale productions including international acts are often seen on the Riverside stage including Shakespeare, comedy, drama, ballet, contemporary dance and musicals.

#### **St John's Anglican Cathedral:**

St John's Church was opened on its present site on 11 April 1803, making the site (but not the church) 'the oldest continuous place of worship in Australia' (for those of European descent; i.e. not counting Aboriginal sacred sites). The twin towers facing Hunter St were built by convict labour under the supervision of Lt. John Watts. They are of handmade sandstock brick overlaid with cement render to give the appearance of stone. They are 'the oldest remaining part of any Anglican Church in Australia'. In 1852 it was decided to rebuild the church, with exception of the twin towers, and the new church was opened in July 1855. In the 1880s the north and south transepts were added.

#### **St John's Anglican Cemetery:**

This is one of the oldest cemeteries in Australia and contains the graves of many pioneers and famous figures: Baron Alt (first Survey-General of NSW); John Irving (convict, freed because of his surgical

skills); John Harris (First Fleet surgeon); and Rev. Samuel Marsden. It also has what is believed to be the oldest gravestone in Australia, that of Henry Dodd (died 1791). Also buried here are Lady Mary Fitz Roy, the wife of Governor Sir Charles Fitz Roy, and Lt C. C. Masters, Aide-de-Camp to the Governor, both of whom died in a carriage accident near Old Government House on December 7, 1847.

#### **Parramatta High School:**

Opening in 1913 the school was for many years the only co-educational public high school in the Sydney area. The school's motto: *fax mentis incendium gloriae* (Knowledge is the Pathway to Glory) was chosen by the first headmaster W.L. Atkins in 1915. The school colours, light and dark blue, were adopted from the blues of Oxford and Cambridge Universities (in line with the plan for Parramatta High School to be the "Oxford of Australia"). Only a few 'luminaries' can be mentioned here: In the sporting field - **Richie Benaud** was carving up all opposition on the cricket pitch—with both bat and ball. His deeds became legendary, leading to his selection for the CHS side and culminating in his playing for the NSW second eleven while still at school. **Dr Phil Chapman** Antarctic explorer, astronaut and rocket scientist. **Professor John S Croucher** Mathematician, statistician and author. And many others.

#### **Parramatta Park:**

Originally the Governor's Domain, Parramatta Park is a site of national cultural heritage. It contains evidence of Aboriginal occupation and colonial settlement. The original inhabitants of Parramatta were the Burramatta ('burra' meaning eel and 'matta' meaning creek) clan of the Dharug people after which Parramatta was named. The Park is one of the earliest sites of Aboriginal/European contact and still has two of the oldest remaining buildings in Australia - the Dairy Cottage and Old Government House.