

Architectus

Public buildings & spaces that have shaped Leichhardt



Pioneers Memorial Park was established on what was once the site of Balmain Cemetery. During its years of operation as a cemetery from 1868 -1912 10, 608 burials took place in the 11 acre site. Prominent people buried there included architect, Edmund Blacket & his wife Sarah; Thomas Rowntree and architect and surveyor, Ferdinand Reuss senior.

1 Pioneer Memorial Park



After years of neglect the cemetery was destroyed in 1941 to make way for the creation of the Pioneers Memorial Park. The 1941 Old Balmain Cemetery Act dedicated the area as a public park with the understanding that the monuments and headstones would be placed around the site.

Unfortunately this did not happen and the cemetery was levelled and many of the headstones and monuments were used in the building of the park and park wall. Only 16 memorials including those of the Blackets were rescued and relocated in the 1940s.

A search of the register today reveals only a handful of Italians were buried here, no doubt reflecting the predominantly Anglo-Celtic population of the time, however no Catholic burials took place at Balmain Cemetery.

Methodist Church

The Methodist congregation had modest beginnings in 1880 with services being held in a house in Carlisle Street. The seating at these services were planks put across the room, one end on chairs and the other on the bed as the room was the living quarters of the household.

2



In 1888 a new brick church was built at 1 Wetherill Street to provide for the increased numbers. In the English Methodist tradition places of worship were called halls not churches to attract people, especially the young, who did not want to go to "church".

By 1906 more space was needed and the central hall was built. It seats.

Since 1977 It has been known as the Leichhardt Uniting Church

Leichhardt Council acknowledges the traditional owners of this land. The Gadigal and Wangal people who form part of the Dharug nation and their descendants. Images are courtesy of Leichhardt Library Local History collection.

3

Leichhardt Post Office



The first official post office in Leichhardt operated from a small building on Parramatta Road and then at George Purdie's general store on the corner of Wetherill Street and Balmain Road.

Around 1883 the first official post office opened at 9 Short St. It was replaced by this building in Norton Street which opened for business in 1889. The building, with its tower designed by colonial architect, James Barnet, was completed in 1888 and is a good example of the Victorian Italianate style.

1921

*9 staff

* despatched more than 600,000 letters.

*delivered more than 1.3 million letters

In 1979 the building, was registered with the National Trust and restored to its former glory. The post office continued to operate in the building until 2000 when postal functions were relocated to the Norton Street Plaza.

Leichhardt Town Hall

Town halls were not only centres for local administration but also venues for meetings of Oddfellows and Masons, concerts and bazaars and an array of other activities -they were a social focus for the community.

Leichhardt Town Hall was completed in the centenary year of 1888. Built by architects Drake and Walcott in the Victorian Free Classical style at a cost £6000. The Town Hall marked the 'coming of age' of the Leichhardt area which was undergoing a period of rapid development.

4



The site of Town Hall is the highest west of Sydney between Martin Place in the city centre and the Blue Mountains. It was officially opened in September 1888 by Governor Carrington with 5000 attending and a public holiday being declared for schools in the district.

The tower clock was installed in 1897 to mark Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. It was an extension of a square central tower of 27 metres which was built with the original structure.

5

All Souls Anglican Church



In October 1880 a meeting of Church of England residents was held to take steps to provide church accommodation for the district of Leichhardt.

A temporary school church opened in Marion Street in 1882 and shortly afterwards it was decided to erect this church.

In 1880 Edmund Blacket took his son Arthur into his architectural practice which then became known as Blacket & Son. It was under this name that All Souls was designed in 1883. They designed the church in the simple brick ecclesiastical Gothic Revival style with brick facades and a tiled roof. It cost £6000 to build and could seat 600.

It Boasts several fine memorial windows and a memorial board containing the names of over 200 Church of England men of the Parish who gave their lives in WW1.

The tower and spire in the Inter-War Gothic style was added later. The nearby rectory of rendered masonry and slate roof was designed by architects Coward and Bell in 1887.

6

School Of Arts



School of Arts or Mechanics Institutes were first established in Australia in 1833. They aimed to provide further education for working men through public lectures, classes and access to a library. The schools flourished and became one of the leading providers of adult education in the colony. Provision of public education by the state and later provision of free public library facilities by local councils meant the end of most of these institutions.

The first School of Arts in Leichhardt was built in 1904, mainly as a result of the efforts of J.S. Hawthorne, MLA for Leichhardt who secured a grant of £500 from the government. It began with 120 members and Mr Hawthorne was its first president.

A later building was opened in February 1914 by Hon A.C. Carmichael, Minister for Public Instruction and member for the area. It had a good library, recreation rooms and reading room, card room and 6 billiard tables.

During WW1 membership dwindled and in 1916 totalled 160. However, by 1921 an enthusiastic committee had pushed numbers to 525.

9

Bald Faced Stag Hotel



Situated on the corner of Parramatta and Balmain Roads the Bald Faced Stag has operated as a public house since the early 1830s. It has the distinction of having held a continuous licence longer than perhaps any other hotel in the Commonwealth.

The building began as a single-storey timber hostelry and was owned and operated by the Hearn family. Charles Hearn owned a large area of land nearby which was used by drovers as a stockyard and resting place for sheep.

The hotel has been rebuilt four times with changing architectural styles - Colonial, Late Victorian Italianate, Federation Free Classical and the latest c1920, a two-storey brick structure with ornamented parapet in the style known as Inter War Free Classical.



Leichhardt Council encourages the use of public transport. For timetable information call the transport infoline on 1300 500 or visit www.1300500.com.au.

7

Leichhardt Fire Station



A fire brigade, known as the Leichhardt Volunteer Company, was originally formed in the area in 1887 but was disbanded when the current station was opened and permanent staff engaged.

The fire station is built in the Federation Arts and Crafts style to a design by E. L. Drew who was assistant government architect. The tender was let to J.C. O'Brien of Petersham in June 1905 and was built in 1905-06 under the direction of W.L. Vernon, Government Architect.

Leichhardt Fire Station is one of a series of stations designed by Drew for horse drawn vehicles.



8

Leichhardt Public School



This group of buildings of sandstone and brick is a conspicuous landmark on their corner and Norton and Marion Streets. These buildings demonstrate an evolution of architectural styles produced by the NSW Government Architects Office in the Victorian Federation period.

Originally Leichhardt Public School operated out of a makeshift hall on this site from 1862. At this time it doubled as a Congregational church. Known as the Petersham School it began with 29 boys and 27 girls enrolled. By 1869 this number had risen to 110 pupils and a pupil teacher was appointed to assist.

1875

Inventory of equipment: 48 scripture lessons. 96 framed slates 3 1/2 dozen pencil holders 5 bottles of ink 3 blackboards inkwells 18 Australian class books

1912

LPS ranked as one of the largest schools in the Country. there were 2,205 children enrolled

During the 1880s more additions were made and in 1891 the infants department was built.

In 1897 the girls department building was constructed to a design by W.E. Kemp. Over the main entrance is a bell tower with a conical copper roof.

