

DAY 4

Background and Historical Notes

Day 4:1 - Balmain East Wharf to Stephen St, Balmain

The area bounded by Johnston and Darling Streets and the waterfront was the first precinct to be sold in the 1836 Gilchrist land sales. The four original purchasers - George Paul, Captain Pearson, Lt George Weston and Captain John Peacock – are recalled in street or geographic names. Only Pearson ever lived there, the others reselling or losing their land to pay debts.

(1) **Illoura Reserve**, which covers most of the eastern waterfront land of the 1836 purchases, was created in 1970 to commemorate the Cook Bicentenary. An Aboriginal name was chosen (meaning 'pleasant place') and the landscape design was by Bruce McKenzie. The land had seen many waterfront industries come and go: Chapes' and Talbot's wharves; Bell's, Francis Hayes (1840s), Peverley's (1860s), Henry Beattie's (1873), Foster and Minty's, and Gardiner Brothers shipyards; Perdriau's Ferry depot c1875; Iron foundries; soap and candle manufacturers; beverage firms; Nichol Brothers; the Penguin Floating Crane; Fenwick's tug berths; a Maritime Services Board timber store; and probably more. In addition, Johnston's Bay Sailing Club sailed off Peacock Point around the turn of century.

(2) **No 2 Edward Street** is a 1974 Glen Murcutt design while Nos 7-17 make up an early stone Regency terrace (1870) of six called *Harbour View Terrace* built by developer Francis Smith Jnr. Little Edward Street includes some 1840s houses, particularly Nos 2-8 (c1844) and Nos 10-12, built by James Suddy, a Balmain slater.

In William Street, No 18 also dates from the 1840s when Henry Gardner began building boats here. Most of the houses in the street and their waterfront boatyards came to be owned and operated by the Gardners and their neighbours and relatives by marriage, the Roses. Nos 25-31, *Charles' Villas* and *Elizabeth's Villas*, are elegant pair of semis are built in the 1850s with balconies added in the 1880s.

Johnston Street had a wharf well into the twentieth century and by 1900 there were floating baths attached to it. This little stretch of waterfront reserve was gradually filled with small cottages, wharves and slipways, most eventually absorbed into Bailey and Jorgensen from the 1920s to 1974 - operators of lighters, barges and tugs. The site was sold in 1977 and *Bellevue Gardens* home units built on it but, in contrast with the 10 storey *Tourmaline Court* built a few years earlier next along the waterfront, planning controls applied which ensured public waterfront access. *Tourmaline Court* is on the site of James Allen's large wharf and shipbuilding shed which operated from 1878 into the 20th century and later used by Bright's Docking before being sold to developers.

Little Nicholson Street and Datchett Street were created in 1840s subdivisions of two long slivers of land from Darling Street down to the water. Little Nicholson was the spine of the first of these lots to be subdivided and was kept narrow to maximise the blocks. The terraced pieces of parkland about half-way up on the left originally had outbuildings on them which were part of 1840s *Glentworth House* up near Darling Street. After further subdivision a joinery was built here in 1921 which became the Department of Education furniture factory in 1967. However, the factory burnt down in the 1970s and the land became part of the park.

(3) **Datchett Street**, apparently named after the village of Datchet, near Windsor in England, is on land bought in 1838 by cabinetmaker, John Barrett. Much of the land was steep and difficult but Barrett tried to maximise his return by creating lots with 6 metre frontages. The first weatherboard house downhill on the left, **No 12, Iver**, was the earliest house built and the owner Mrs Ewing bought several lots, gaining a wider frontage. Other cottages were built on the original lot sizes from the 1850s onwards. The waterfront was involved in shipbuilding, but the site was much altered after a Maritime Services Board site was established nearby.

On the walk to Ewenton Park, note the breakwater on this little bay and the Water Police Base (NSW Police Marine Area Command), which moved here from Pyrmont in 2004. The 1960s container wharves breakwater further enclosed this little Bay now called, since the 1980s, Camerons Cove after Ewen Cameron of *Ewenton*. The bay has had previous names – Sandy Bay, Steam Ferry Bay, Granmore Bay, Graham's Cove and Jubilee Bay. Much of its foreshore is reclamation undertaken from the early 1900s on.

Innkeeper William Ternen bought land here in 1836, and built *St Patricks' Inn* up towards Darling Street, along with several houses and a wharf (later used by the Balmain Ferry Company). In 1882 part of the

Ternen land was sold to James Anderson, who leased it to John Graham who bought in a small (30m by 7m) floating dock. Anderson then had nearby Booths Saw Mills build a far larger floating dock (96m x 17.5m), capable of accommodating most sailing or steam ships then coming to Sydney. Launched in the 50th year of Queen Victoria's reign (1887), it was called the *Victoria Jubilee Dock*. The new dock (the 'Victoria' part of the name was later dropped) was towed around to join the Anderson dock and yard. Renamed Jubilee Engineering, the company operated a major ship servicing facility for years alongside the MSB site, becoming at some stage a branch of RW Millers, and the floating dock remained in use into at least the 1920s. In 1918, Sydney Harbour Trust established a Depot alongside, closer to Datchett Street, resuming in the process much of lower Datchett Street. Jubilee Engineering relocated to Louisa Road from the 1930s, and in 1952 the Harbour Trust's successor, the Maritime Services Board (MSB) expanded across the site. The MSB Depot (No 2) was used for buoy and beacon maintenance and boat repair. It was closed down in 1990s when the MSB was broken up. Against local opposition the Water Police Maritime Command Facility, then in Pymont, was moved here in 2004 into purpose built facilities.

Ewenton Park, a pleasing amphitheatre-like space created in the late 1980s from a former industrial site, together with the town house developments on its northwest fringe, gets its name from the grand house up near its southwest corner. The park area once had small cottages, wharves and a slipway here in late nineteenth century. Its shoreline was considerably changed by the container wharf development. Uphill along Jubilee Place, a plaque on a townhouse gatepost commemorates the site of the workshop where the winged keel was built in great secrecy for *Australia II*, winner of the America's Cup in 1983.

(4) The house, *Ewenton*, was begun about 1854 by Robert Blake, formerly an Irish soldier and then Sheriff of NSW, who subdivided and built houses in this area. He called it *Blake Vale* but it was bought by Ewen Wallace Cameron, a partner of TS Mort, in 1856, and the name changed to *Ewenton*. The house is a mixture of styles, since Cameron had architect James McDonald add a two storey wing in 1860 in Georgian colonial style and later a four storey Scottish baronial wing in 1872. The Cameron family lived here until 1891 after which the building became variously a house, boarding house and part of an industrial site. Fire damaged in 1980, it survived and was restored as part of the townhouse development.

(5) Around the turn of Grafton Street and immediately past Grafton Lane is *Hampton Villa (No 12b)*. Built in 1847-49 by cabinet-maker and MLC, the Honourable Edward Hunt MLC, the house was leased in 1872 to businessman and art lover, Eliezer Montefori. Then in 1888-92 it became the home of Sir Henry Parkes, the veteran Premier of NSW. These were the years that Parkes was actively promoting Australian Federation, starting with his Tenterfield speech of 1889 and culminating in the 1891 Federal Convention in Sydney. In the 20th century the house became a knitting factory at one time and later flats. It was restored and returned to a private residence in the 1970s.

(6) From Grafton Street the scale of the impact on more than 1.5km of the Balmain waterfront of the now disused (in 2011) **container wharves** begins to become apparent. Not apparent are the fine houses and masses of waterfront industry and wharves which the container wharf construction swept away from the 1960s onward, despite community protest. More community protest is being raised by future use proposals.

Changes in international trade forced containerisation impacted on Sydney quickly and existing wharves were totally inadequate for the large new ships loading containers using huge gantry cranes. The MSB began creating container wharves in Johnstons and White Bay, the first section opening in 1969. This process continued and plans were announced in 1999 to increase harbour activity by 350% by 2020. Residents were not pleased, living in 2002 with an average of 900 clattering cargo movements each night. Then in 2003, government policy changed and it was announced that all container and eventually car carriers would operate away from Sydney Harbour. Almost instantly the wharves seemed redundant and the container terminals closed in 2004. The concrete hardstands and giant sheds were then used to land and house imported vehicles. In 2009 the Government announced that the eastern tip of White Bay Wharf 6 – this end of the wharf complex – would be leased to a marine refuelling and supply facility, something the locals have been less than enthusiastic about because of anticipated operating noise. The rest of Wharf 6 and its continuation at Wharf 5 was to be used for Cruise Ships (together with function and exhibition facilities), replacing the Darling Harbour terminal lost to the massive Barangaroo development.

Grafton Street has some fine turn of the century houses. Some of the area ahead was acquired by Adolphus William Young who was Robert Blake's predecessor as Sheriff of NSW, presumably naming the streets in his subdivision after family members (Adolphus, Stephen, Vincent, Ann and Jane).

Before the container wharves were built, the block bounded by Adolphus, Vincent and Stephen Streets, contained another four or five fine houses - some from the 1850s. Beyond them, along the waterfront, was maritime industry. Punks Wharf, built in 1884, became the Howard Smith coal wharf / coal loader from 1919. West of this, Perdriau's ferries (later Balmain Steam Ferries) operated and in 1883 established Balmain Engineering Company to build steam engines and other engineering requirements for steam

ships. The company wound down in the 1890s depression and the site was used by a succession of other engineering firms until Howard Smith established their ship repair workshop there in 1928. The rest of the waterfront to Stephen St was used at various times by brick and pottery makers, timber merchants, and then shipbuilders, Poole and Steel. All the houses, land and industrial sites became part of the container facility in 1965.

(7) In **Adolphus Street, Nos 33-27** are four simple 1856 Victorian Georgian stone cottages built by John West, a speculative builder. The corner with Vincent St (No 25 Adolphus) is the c1857 former **Rob Roy Hotel**, built by Peter McBeath. McBeath lost it and other property here when he defaulted on his mortgage in the 1870s. Gaining a reputation for violence for a time, the Rob Roy which continued under various owners until 1958 when the licence was transferred and it became a boarding house. The cantilever balcony has been removed and doorways bricked up. In Vincent Street, Nos 1-5 were also built by McBeath, while No 7 *The Grange*, is an elegant, Victorian Georgian style house built in 1856 as *Austenvue* by a court officer called Austen. Much deteriorated by 1966, its restoration signalling a change in attitudes to conservation in Balmain.

Day 4:2 - Stephen St, Balmain to Victoria Rd, White Bay

At its water end, **Stephen Street's** Ferry wharf operated from 1881 until the MSB takeover in the 1960s. On entering Birrung Park look straight ahead to the large stone house out on the bend in Donnelly Street at the northern boundary.

(8) This is No 13, **The Winery**, built by engineer and mathematical instrument maker, William Barraclough, in 1885. There is uncertainty that it ever actually was a winery.

(8) Birrung Park, on former industrial and residential land, provides a pleasant barrier between houses and container wharves. Initially called 'White Bay Park', it was designed by landscape architect, Stuart Pittendrigh and opened in 1982. The first 100m or so of the walk through the park crosses an area once occupied by houses and then purchased in 1902 by the engineering firm of Poole and Steel. The company demolished most of the houses as they expanded, operating here until after the Second World War as shipbuilders, mechanical engineers and machinery manufacturers before the MSB acquired the site and demolished the remaining buildings by 1965. In 1968, the MSB leased the upper part of the site to Swift and Company to construct a chemical tank farm for liquid bulk storage, setting off enormous residential and Council opposition. By 1979, when the tank farm operators sought to extend their lease, government policy had changed and it was announced that bulk chemical storage would be removed from Sydney Harbour and this area would become open space.

From about the point where *The Winery* in Donnelly Street is closest, the rest of the park is associated with John Booth (1822-98), who acquired the land at various times from 1853 onwards. Booth was a significant citizen of Balmain and the municipality's first Mayor in 1867. At the western end of the park area (below Booth and Palmer Streets) he established the Balmain Steam Saw Mills and Joinery Works in 1854 which by the 1880s had become the second biggest industrial enterprise in Balmain, after Morts Dock. Sourcing timber from their sawmills on the Manning River and northern Queensland, even building their own ships until 1880, Booths produced a wide range of wood products which they could deliver to all parts of the Harbour by water. A major fire in 1874 destroyed most of the factory but it was rebuilt to more modern standards with parts of the waterfront reclaimed to enable expansion of its wharves and workshops. On the land immediately behind the mill and along Donnelly Street, Booth also built or acquired about 15 houses.

Booths ceased trading in 1902 and the site was used by timber or manufacturing enterprises, the most notable being Morrison and Sinclair shipbuilders from 1904 until their move to Long Nose Point in 1923. The Sydney Harbour Trust purchased the whole area in 1923, setting up its own shipyard. In 1929 the Trust leased the site to the Atlantic Union Oil Company (later Esso) as an oil storage depot. The company demolished most mill buildings and houses and built storage tanks for oil, petroleum and other chemicals. The last houses in the park area were finally demolished by the MSB in the late 1960s. After WWII, Atlantic built more tanks close to Donnelly Street including a large one, the site of which is the walled sunken area south of Jane Street which the walk steps down into. After the construction of the container wharves, the storage tanks fell increasingly into disuse and Esso withdrew from the site around 1980. The western section of the park, above where the original saw mills stood, was the site of several homes directly associated with the Booth family including *Wonga* (1858), *Surbiton* (1855) and *Undercliff* (1862), but these were demolished in 1928 for the oil terminal.

(9) The extensive 10 hectare former **Lever Brothers** site is across Booth Street and down the steps. A couple of recycled remaining industrial buildings remain with many new apartments set amidst Waterdale

Park and extending back up to Punch Park and across to Buchanan Street. Lever Brothers was founded in Lancashire in the 1880s by William Hesketh Lever, who is credited with being the first manufacturer to imprint a brand name on a bar of soap ('Sunlight') and wrap it before sale. The company established their Balmain plant in 1895 to extract oil from copra, mainly for shipment to Liverpool in the UK, and in 1900 the plant began to manufacture Sunlight soap and glycerine. Other products followed, including Lifebuoy antiseptic soap, Monkey Brand, Lux flakes and toilet soap, Pears soap, Rinso, Persil, Solvol, Omo, Handy Andy and Continental packet soups. Following mergers, Lever Brothers became Lever and Kitchen in 1924 and then Unilever in 1930. The plant employed up to 1250 workers in 1958 and had many storage tanks, extensive wharves and a small fleet of lighters and workboats. However, the Balmain plant was wound down from the 1970s, having lost its waterfront and glycerine plant to the container wharf development. Production ceased in 1988 and together with the adjoining Ampol site, the area was sold in 1996 for the development of the *Watervale*, *Dockside* and *Somerset Mews* apartment complexes.

At the end of the apartment complex, Buchanan Street sits below a quarried bluff, once part of the Bald Rock promontory. There were two public wharves in the vicinity, Reynolds Street and the Bald Rock ferry wharf, which offered services to the city until the 1960s. Between Buchanan Street and a no-longer existent section of Reynolds Street that then ran to the water, a wood and coal yard, and an engineering, blacksmiths and boilermakers works operated well into the twentieth century. Further into White Bay were more wharves, coal yards, timber mills and boat builders. In 1936 Ampol established a depot on 2 hectares of land between the old line of Reynolds Street and across Buchanan Street. The headland was quarried and storage tanks and administration buildings built. Thus from the 1940s through to the 1960s the whole waterfront from the beginning of White Bay through to Adolphus Street continued to be intensely occupied with waterfront industry. The Ampol plant operations were transferred to Kurnell at the beginning of the 1980s with the office buildings being used by educational institutions until demolition around 1994 prior to the apartment development.

(10) The main reason for a diversion at this point is the 1876 **Bald Rock Hotel**, at 17 Mansfield Street, one of the diminishing band of Balmain hotels which have not yet succumbed to trendiness. Opposite the Hotel was located part of the site of an Australian Gas Company plant from the 1880s to 1911 and at No 2, Storey and Keers ship repair business was established in 1912 by a brother of John Storey, later Premier of NSW. Later they moved their main business to Louisa Road but were still using the Mansfield Street site up until 2005. Now various small businesses operate in the buildings from either Mansfield Street or down at Robert Street including a film and television studio and car sales and repair firms.

(11) **White Bay** was named for the Surgeon-General of the First Fleet, John White, who was succeeded as Surgeon-General in 1794 by William Balmain (see notes for Day 3, Section 3:2). The bay originally extended much further southwest to where Victoria Road now is, almost linking with Rozelle Bay to make Glebe 'Island' nearly an island, but the headwaters were reclaimed early in the twentieth century by the Harbour Trust. At various times Brewery, Steel Foundries and steel works, sawmills and timber merchants, coopers, blacksmith, woodblock works, a packing company and others operated in this area. From the nineteenth century sixty miler coal ships from the Hunter unloaded at Coal Wharves at the head of White Bay and in 1951 a large coal loader was built on the docks. It was extended in the 1970s but closed in 1991. On the other side of the Bay, at Glebe Island Bulk wheat wharves and huge grain silos were built from 1919 onwards after the closure of the Glebe Island Abattoirs. The disused silos were demolished in 2000 but cement, sugar and gypsum are still unloaded and the flat stands around on Johnstons Bay had been used for landing imported vehicles until this activity switched to Port Kembla.

The government (early 2010) determined that White Bay (part of the 'Bays Precinct' which includes Rozelle and Blackwattle Bays) will remain a working harbour area but major development, already controversial even before final decisions are made, seems inevitable. The cruise ship terminal in White Bay will be part of this development.

(12) The **White Bay Power Station** was built by the Department of Railways, 1912-1917. Its purpose was to supply electric power to the expanding rail and tram network – part of which was sent through the Long Nose – Manns Points tunnel to the north shore. The station was transferred to the Electricity Commission 1953, but like most city power stations, was wound down as the new coalfields generators came on line and it finally shut down in 1983. It is a heritage item and current adaptive use guidelines for the complex would see it retained as some sort of working facility (certainly not as a power station) in which historic elements of the power station are retained with some form of limited public access.

Day 4:3 - Victoria Rd, White Bay to Pyrmont Point

The White Bay area is another part of the old industrial waterfronts of Sydney whose function and purpose have changed and are about to change much more. The White Bay Power Station and the White Bay Wharves no longer keep the disused the Rozelle Bay rail line under Victoria Rd and the nearby marshalling yards active. Ahead, the great bulk-wheat silos are also disused and the great flatstand wharves are no longer the landing point for imported vehicles. Watch these spaces!

White Bay originally joined Rozelle Bay and the approaches to the Anzac Bridge are on the built-up causeway to Glebe Island which now separates the two bays.

(13) Glebe Island, named for its proximity to the former church-owned lands in Glebe, was a humpy little island of barely 13 hectares. It became the site of the city Abattoirs in 1857, and the causeway (then called Abattoir Rd) was expanded and the island joined to the 'mainland' in 1918. Over the years, the island was flattened to build wharves and huge grain stores. In 1915, after years of complaints about smell, pollution and traffic delays caused by herds of cattle and sheep, the Glebe Island Abattoirs were closed and moved to Homebush – now the site of Sydney Olympic Park. During WWII there was an upsurge of activity on the wharves. The first US troops to disembark in Australia came ashore at Glebe Island on 28 March, 1942, and there is a memorial marking this above the car terminal wharf about 100m north of the Anzac Bridge.

(14) The cable-stayed **Anzac Bridge** was initially called the Glebe Island Bridge – the third of that name. Construction began in 1989 and the Bridge with its 120m high pylons and deck 27m above water was opened December 1995. Its height had been designed particularly to accommodate two colliers which used Blackwattle Bay, the *Goliath* and the *Camira* - both had been taken out of service before the bridge opened. On Armistice Day 1998 the Bridge was renamed and the statue of the Australian soldier was added on Anzac Day, 2000. The New Zealand soldier on the other side of the road was added in 2008 to make this a true 'Anzac' memorial. It is an unintended irony, that these monuments to – amongst many more important things – Empire loyalty, almost cast their shadows on the forgotten memorial below to the US troops who signalled the shift in world order and Australian alliances once the Japanese advance showed the limitations of British Empire's once unassailable protective embrace.

For almost a century, traffic had struggled across the second Glebe Island Bridge, opened in 1902-03. This wooden and steel bridge, 110 metres long, remains in place next to the new bridge. Its central section is a steel swing span with a centrally located control room. The span is still operational although it is kept permanently open. As well as motor and horse traffic, it also carried Ryde line trams between 1910 and 1953. By the time of its replacement, traffic delays at opening times had become almost legendary. In its turn this bridge, too, had replaced an even earlier, low level wooden bridge built in 1857 to the Abattoirs.

Crossing the bridge offers good views of its predecessor as well as the massive redevelopment of the Pyrmont waterfront. The area closer to the Bridge had been the huge Colonial Sugar Refinery (CSR) Plant. The company had moved its plant here from Chippendale in the 1870s. A century later they had 440 staff here and an output of 6,000 tonnes of sugar per week, and as well as a huge distillery, molasses and golden syrup production. The plant also produced caneite and particle board. Along the way they also became the major landlord of Pyrmont, though one more likely to demolish than to be too concerned about maintaining its housing assets. Suddenly by 1990, the company changed its opposition to residential growth, closed down its plant and put its land into the pool of massive redevelopment then beginning. Amongst the waterfront tower blocks that now occupy the former factory site, a few of the CSR plant's original buildings remain, recycled into the new development.

(15) The last hundred metres of the pedestrian crossing pass the site of another **Power Station**, built as late as 1955 but almost immediately outmoded and subsequently demolished. Just below the walkway, and also demolished for apartments in the 1980s, was the **1930s Pyrmont Incinerator** designed by Walter Burley Griffin and his partner, Eric Nicholls. Despite its unsavoury role, burning 100 tons of refuse each day amidst a partly residential area, it was a cubist architectural wonder featuring details based on Aztec motifs.

The famous Merino king, John Macarthur, allegedly bought Pyrmont Point for a gallon of rum from its original soldier grantees. The name Pyrmont may come from a leap of imagination by one his guests who, at a picnic on the point in 1806, discovered a spring and somehow thought of Bad Pyrmont, a spa town in northern Germany. On the other hand, perhaps it was a Europeanisation of the name used by the dispossessed owners of the land, the Cadigal people, who called the area 'Pirrama', meaning 'rocking stone'. Macarthur had done little to his land, but his son, Edward, began clearing and subdividing in 1836 and soon industry began to flow into the area - timber mills, iron foundries and mills, tin smelters, galvanising works, a bone crushing mill - all very polluting and unappealing – along with wharves and roadways. Speculative development of worker's rental houses accompanied the process. But it was

quarrying that was the first major industry, as Pymont was a source of fine yellow sandstone of exceptional strength.

The most famous quarrying family in Pymont – the ‘quarrymaster’ of Quarry Master Rd (and, of course nearby Saunders St) – began with the arrival in Sydney of Charles Saunders, a stonemason from Devonshire, in 1852. He leased some land in northwestern Pymont and established his first quarry. Eventually 300 men and 60 horses were at work in the Saunders quarries providing the stone for most of Sydney’s best-known nineteenth century public buildings including Sydney University and the GPO, as well as many private buildings. The keystone for the main arch of Sydney GPO was a single block weighing 25 tons about 4m x 2m x 1.5m, hauled to Martin Place from Pymont by a team of 26 Clydesdale horses. A little way up Quarry Master Rd there is evidence of one of the quarry sites which transformed the city’s built environment and Pymont’s topography.

By the beginning of the twentieth century Pymont was also an important port exporting most of NSW’s farm produce but the most dramatic changes in that respect were about to happen as the new Sydney Harbour Trust began a massive reconstruction of Sydney’s port facilities.

Pymont began a startling transformation in the last decade of the twentieth century. In 1900 it had been one of the most industrialised and urbanised places in Australia, with up to 20,000 inhabitants and 25 hotels. After WWII, the outmoded heavy and grimy industry in the area went into decline, houses became more likely to be demolished than repaired or built and by 1990 Pymont was one of the emptiest places in Sydney, the population below 1,000 and its schools, churches and most of the pubs closed.

Plans for public housing came to little over the twentieth century but by the late 1980s public housing seemed less likely than private development and by the end of 1989 this was under way. The City West Development Corporation was created in 1992 to completely redevelop Pymont-Ultimo with private development and public infrastructure. This role was taken over by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority in 1999. The new Pymont is very modern, though with constant connections to and interpretation of its remarkable heritage. It is pedestrian and public transport friendly and has greatly increased and attractive public spaces, despite a massive medium and high density rebuild that will bring it back to around 20,000 residents again.

(16) The former Gatehouse and several other buildings from the **CSR Plant** have been incorporated into the massive new development which now parallels the Johnstons Bay waterfront. Steps and landings lead down to the waterfront and retained wharves and some industrial remnants have been incorporated into structures, parks and artistic features. At the bottom of Harris St, little Elizabeth Bay is reached with the beginning of the parkland around to Pymont Point.

(17) This section – **Water Police Park** (completed by 2010) – was Wharf 25 in the MSB days. It became the site of the Water Police Base before its move to Balmain across the water in 2004. The site was slated for more multi-storey apartment development but the community and City Council battled to prevent this. Sydney City acquired the site and began work on the significant park and community facility site. Community defence of this land is not new. In 1875, the first baths built in NSW were located here, and were kept going in the face of official efforts to close them which continued right up until WWII. The new park has structural reminders of both its baths and wharf eras. During the War, even the US Supply Base here was under frequent attack from local kids in billy carts. However, the baths were quickly and finally closed in 1945 before resident support could regroup.

(18) **Pirrama (formerly Pymont Point) Park** is the continuation of Water Police Park at the headland (former wharves 22, 23 and 24), and was completed in 1996. It, together with Giba Park on the quarried heights above, were the initial flagships of new Pymont open space. The park space is multi-textured, multi-use and superbly located on the waterfront. The sculpture, *Tied to Tide* by Turpin and Crawford, echoes of both the cranes and fishing poles of the old waterfront. Stone stairs on the Elizabeth Bay side, climb up to Giba Park, which looks down on the Point and the Harbour.

Day 4:4 - Pymont Point to Pymont Bridge

(19) **Giba Park**, the name from an Aboriginal word for stone, is wonderfully located above it all, the north-eastern end on the landscaped roof of an apartment block. Reaching it is interesting as well, whether up the stone stairs on the Elizabeth Bay side or via a **public lift** opposite Wharf 21, Jones Bay Wharf.

(20) **Jones Bay Wharf** (Wharves 21-19), one of the last-built of the finger wharves, is worth exploring, both inside and out. A double-decker wharf with high and low level access, it features interpretive signs reminding readers of the exploitative conditions that prevailed on the waterfront until WWII. Death and

injury rates were high, and there was little in the way of compensation or caring as almost all labour was casual. In 1917, the waterfront exploded into turmoil in the Great Strike, but it was a one-sided battle with the forces of authority completely aligned with the owners and shippers. In one incident at Darling Harbour in August 1917, in a fight between three or four strikers and three strike-breakers, one of the strike-breakers, Reginald Wearne (a stock and station agent), shot two of the strikers. One, Harry Williams, was killed and another, Merv Flanagan, wounded. In court, the charges against Wearne were dismissed, Williams' death was ignored and the wounded Flanagan and his brother, who were impudent enough to be Aboriginal as well as unionists, got three months hard labour (for using violence) and effectively barred from working on the wharves thereafter.

The system of wharves from Dawes Point around to here, was constructed over several decades by the Sydney Harbour Trust. The Trust was created in 1901 following the outbreak of Bubonic Plague in Sydney, for which ship-borne rats and conditions on or around the wharves were blamed. The government used the opportunity the plague presented to resume the foreshore, dredge, cut away cliffs, reclaim, and create a massive, modern system of wharves, access roads and railways. Millers Point and Walsh Bay saw the most dramatic work, but the Darling Harbour-Pyrmont wharves had something which they lacked – railways. Until the 1980s, a mass of freight rail lines and spurs filled Darling Harbour and reached into Pyrmont along Pirrama Rd (the Jones Bay Rd) and through the line in from Glebe now used by the Light Rail.

(21) The next wharf around is **Darling Island** (wharves 18-12), perhaps historically the most important of them all. The first three buildings met, now occupied by a TV Network, were the Navy's Royal Edward Victualling Yards, designed in 1910 by Government architect, Walter Liberty Vernon. Darling Island is now a mix of medium density housing, commercial blocks, and public space. Originally an actual island, the Australasian Steam Navigation Co established their first shipyard on Darling Island in 1837 and by the 1840s several shipyards were operating, joining the island to the mainland. Sixteen ships had been built in these yards by 1884 and its 100 metre slipway could accommodate 2,000 ton vessels. Under state control, it became a huge cargo wharf and in 1925 Darling Island handled 238 ships and 518,000 tons of bagged wheat. As wheat operations moved more to Glebe Island, Darling Island by the 1930s became Sydney's main passenger wharf. Before the age of air travel most travellers left or arrived in Sydney through here. Troop ships like the *Queen Mary* left and arrived here during WWII, and after the war much of the tide of immigration (and increasing numbers of tourists and other visitors) flowed in through Darling Island.

Across Pirrama Rd the Sydney Casino, Star City, is hard to miss. It opened originally in 1995 as a temporary Casino in one of the Darling Island wharves before occupying the present complex in 1997.

(22) **Wharves 7, 8, 9, 10**, are now a Marina and various commercial developments, as well as the Heritage Centre for the National Maritime Museum. These wharves are fronted by **Pyrmont Bay Park** (completed in 1995). Wharf 7 is used by the Maritime Museum to provide berths for the Sydney Heritage Fleet including the 19th century iron barquentine, *James Craig*. Nearby, on the approaches to Pyrmont Bay Ferry Wharf, the Museum's 'back wall' has been made into a 'Welcome Wall' capturing names and stories of Australia's immigration history.

(23) The **Australian National Maritime Museum** emerged along with the Darling Harbour project in 1984 in recognition of the enormous significance of maritime heritage to Australia. Designed by Philip Cox, its development faced political and industrial hurdles which delayed its opening until 1991. It offers permanent and temporary exhibits which emphasise the importance of the sea to Australia's history and culture, and quickly became a vibrant and popular museum. Its largest permanent exhibits include the Daring class destroyer, HMAS *Vampire*, the Oberon class submarine HMAS *Onslow* and the Cape Bowling Green Lighthouse from North Queensland.

Day 4:5 - Pyrmont Bridge to Observatory Hill

(24) The Cadigal people called **Darling Harbour** 'Tumalong', 'a place to find seafood'; Europeans called it 'Cockle Bay' for similar reasons. It gained its present name in 1826, in honour of Governor Ralph Darling and by then already had several wharves, including the market wharf at Market Street. Finding seafood here is still easy, though more expensive.

In 1855, at the dawn of railways in NSW, a goods line was built into the Darling Harbour mudflats. It was intended to go further but this took many years to achieve. However, the mudflats area was reclaimed and became a 26 hectare goods rail yard servicing the busiest port in Australia. Surrounding the port were finger wharves, industry, mills and sawmills, warehouses and markets.

(25) The Pyrmont Bridge Company raised capital and built the first **Pyrmont Bridge** in 1857-8 partly to service the quarries bringing their stone into the city from Pyrmont. From it roads linked to Glebe Island (with its new bridge) and Parramatta Rd via Glebe. The new Pyrmont Bridge was wooden and had a swing span, but its high toll (9d for carriages; 2d for each person) discouraged use. It also limited shipping access to the Goods Yard, despite dredging, and prevented the rail line from extending into Pyrmont. The bridge was bought by the Government in 1884 and tolls were abolished. By 1902 it had been replaced by the current 369 metre 14 span bridge. Twelve of the spans are wooden but the two that make up the 800 ton swing span are steel. This span, still operated by its original electric motors, can open or shut in just 45 seconds. The design became known as an Allan Truss after the bridge designer, Percy Allan, who eventually designed more than 580 bridges, almost all of them in NSW. With the opening of the Western Distributor freeway in 1981, Pyrmont Bridge was closed and was to be demolished to improve access to the wharves and good yards. After public protest (and recognition that the goods yards themselves were by then redundant), the Government reconsidered and it reopened as part of the Darling Harbour redevelopment in 1988 as a pedestrian bridge with a monorail on top. It still continues to open regularly, though not at its former rate of 7,000 or so times each year.

(24) In the meantime, **Darling Harbour Goods Yard** had been completely transformed. It was still in full use during and after WWII for goods, but by the 1970s the development of Port Botany and containerisation saw the Darling Harbour freight era coming to an end. By the 1980s it was virtually empty and in 1984 the last goods train pulled out. The Government announced its complete redevelopment as an entertainment, convention and exhibition centre as part of the lead up to the 1988 Bicentennial of European settlement. Work began in 1985. With the Bicentennial only a couple of years away, the project was fast-tracked by the newly created Darling Harbour Authority, leading to considerable and sustained public controversy, as well as predictions that it would never be completed in time. Nevertheless, on May 4, 1988, Queen Elizabeth II was able to duly declare the completed Darling Harbour Project open, after which, generally, Sydneysiders' complaints were replaced by a growing enthusiasm for the area.

In 1998 the Cockle Bay complex was added to the range of buildings and facilities. During the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Darling Harbour was a major visitor centre as well as the site for the Volleyball, Weightlifting, Boxing, Judo and Wrestling competitions. Each year, at least 14 million visitors come to Darling Harbour, many of them patronising the nearly 100 restaurants, cafes and bars.

(26) Across the Bridge, the **Sydney Aquarium**, is now one of Darling Harbour's oldest attractions. It stands on the oldest wharf of the area, the Market St Wharf, originally built in the 1820s to land produce for the Sydney Markets which were up where the Queen Victoria Building now stands. Beyond it is the redeveloped **King St Wharf** area. The wharves here display a great deal of their history in interpretive signs along the way. Built on 1970s concrete container wharves 9-10, small finger wharves have now been added (and renumbered 1 to 9). The billion-dollar complex opened in 2001 with restaurants and commercial areas fronting the water, and business and residential development behind. In 2003 ferry and charter and cruise ship services moved to these wharves as well.

Lime was essential for mortar and building and, in early Sydney, came almost entirely by burning shells. The reconstituted Lime St was named for the lime-kilns operating in this part of Darling Harbour until about 1850. Shelley St is a result of the King St Wharf redevelopment, although partly incorporating the former, and once appropriately named, Wheat Street.

(27) Beyond the King St wharfs, is the 22 hectare expanse of what is slated to become **Barangaroo**, a massive and controversial development of commercial and residential towers, a hotel and parkland. The area has been named after the wife of Bennelong, the famous Aboriginal of Captain Arthur Phillip's time (see notes for Harbor Circle Day 1:1).

In 1800, this length of waterfront was a quiet bay reaching in to Sussex St. By 1900, it was a mass of small wharves for ferries commuting to the west of the city, and for colliers, cargo and passenger steamers, tugs and tall sailing ships. Early in the twentieth century the entire bay was redeveloped by the Sydney Harbour Trust's massive reconfiguration of Sydney wharves from Dawes Point through to Pyrmont, building large modern finger wharves. In their turn, these were replaced in the 1970s by the great flat concrete hardstands of today (2011) which filled in the entire bay and effectively extended the city 400m westwards. Their role was to accommodate containers, but the heavy road traffic this generated was becoming a problem in Sydney. The subsequent development of Port Botany pulled most cargo shipping around to Botany Bay and the wharves around the western harbour were progressively consolidated and closed, leaving this site vacant, and effectively bringing to an end Sydney Harbour's historic role as a significant working port.

An industrial era also ended with the closure, the Sydney waterfronts being a battleground for workers' rights and conditions from the nineteenth century. Throughout much of the area's history, and the Great 1930s Depression in particular, waterside workers lined the streets here each morning along what became

known as 'The Hungry Mile', hoping for a day's work. The bosses' representatives would pick and chose, leaving the less fit and those known for their industrial activism, to go hungry for another day. Unionism transformed workplace conditions after WWII but the tension never disappeared. In 1998, this was one of the sites of the last great waterfront confrontation, between the unions and Patrick Stevedoring supported by the then Federal Government.

Wharf 8 operated as a Passenger Terminal for cruise ships and a Function Centre, for a time (and in 2011 was operating in temporary accommodation further north on the site) but this role is now proposed to be moved to White Bay.

In 2006 an international design competition set out the parameters of the project which included a mix of commercial, residential, recreational and public space development which would transform the area. A key element was 100% public access to the foreshore and retention of the concrete wharf-line and quarried cliff fronts. However, when Stage 1 of the Barangaroo development was announced late 2009, to commence in 2010, the creators of the original concept felt those features had been overwhelmed by an increased scale of development including a signature sail-like hotel extending beyond the foreshore. The multi-billion dollar development will include coves, parks, canals and, of course, tower blocks. Something of the original shoreline will be replicated, with a 2.7 hectare cove separating the tower blocks from a large new Headland Park at the northern end. By 2014 the first of tens of thousands of residents and commercial tenants will begin occupying part of the site. It is to incorporate climate friendly planning principles and be carbon, waste and pollution neutral.

The amazingly broad **Hickson Rd** is an extension of Sussex St built before WWI as part of the Harbour Trust's massive construction which swept away the old wharves and warehouses. Used by the great horse-hauled wool waggons and motor lorries, its width was also intended to allow for a rail line to Walsh Bay, but this was never built. Hopefully the transformation that comes with Barangaroo will include light rail, as well as new ferry access.

On the corner of Hickson Rd and Napoleon St, note the brick former Grafton Bond store. Napoleon St seems to have been named after Napoleon III (Emperor of France 1852-70) rather than his better-known uncle, Napoleon Bonaparte.

(28) The **Australian Gas Light Company** (AGL) was formed in 1837, manufacturing and delivering gas from this site for town gas street lighting from 1841. The 5 storey stone office and former warehouse building at No 36 Hickson Rd was built in 1845 as part of the Gas Works which extended from these buildings across to the waterfront, while the adjacent two-storey brick building was added to the plant in 1899. Not long afterwards, the new Hickson Rd went through the centre of the outmoded plant and AGL moved to Mortlake.

If possible, take a look (or a walk) into the rear foyer of 30 The Bond (immediately next to the lift) for interesting architecture with a dramatically incorporated rock face.

The lift at the AGL site rises to Jenkins Lane, which was originally the most westerly street in this area, its little houses pleasantly located directly above the Gas Works. Down its southern end is an interesting terraced area. There are no prizes for guessing the origins of Gas Lane's name.

Kent St, like several hereabouts, was renamed in 1810 by Governor Macquarie after the Dukes who were the sons of King George III. Across the Bridge entry ramp, the tall green apartment block (*Observatory Tower*) was recycled from the former IBM Centre.

(29) A little further along, past the Fire Station, **The Ark**, (or *Noahs Ark*), the oldest building in Millers Point, sits perched above street level. In 1820, when Thomas Glover built these houses, this was the street level. Next to it, also above road level, is the important **Richmond Villa**. Built by Colonial Architect, Mortimer Lewis, as his private home in 1849, it was actually located facing The Domain behind Parliament House off Macquarie St. It was acquired by the Crown in 1880, and used by the Parliamentary Library, before the Country Party made it their home away from home. When Parliament House was redeveloped from 1976 on, *Richmond Villa* was disassembled stone by carefully marked stone, relocated and re-assembled here in Kent St. It is now headquarters for the Society of Australian Genealogists. The design prize-winning *Observatory Hotel*, on the western side of the street, was built in the early 1990s, made way for by demolitions of buildings not considered to be 'of heritage value'.

(30) The tennis court sits in the site of one of the earliest of many quarries in the area. Next to it, the **Agar Steps** were named after Thomas Agar who settled here from 1829 and the terraces stepping up with the stairs date from 1870-80s. At the top of the steps, a right turn will lead into the **Headquarters of the National Trust (NSW)**, part of which was a Military Hospital, built by Governor Macquarie in 1815. By 1848 the army had moved from their old Wynyard Barracks to the new Victoria Barracks in Paddington and the hospital closed. The building was transferred to the new Board of Education, substantially altered, and reopened in 1850 as a 'Model School'. Here student teachers were taught as well as students. Fort

Street Primary School continues, but now in newer buildings almost moated in by the deep curve of the Cahill Expressway access ramp. The old Weather Bureau block shares the same space. In 1911, Fort Street Boys and Girls High Schools were formed on Observatory Hill, but the Boys moved to Petersham in 1916. The Girls School continued here until the two schools were merged at Petersham in 1974. The former hospital / school was then taken over as the Ervine Gallery and National Trust Centre following a 1977 bequest to the Trust by wool buyer, Harry Ervine.

(31) Observatory Hill, besides having stunning views, has much else of interest. There is no sign now of the first windmill in Australia, erected here in 1796 and abandoned ten years later when it threatened to grind itself apart. What certainly is here is part of the walls of the never completed **Fort Philip**, begun in 1804 after a convict rising near Castle Hill. In 1825 it was made into a signal station ("Flagstaff"), and the only action it ever saw was as a polling booth in NSW's first ever election in 1843. Candidates included William Charles Wentworth and Captain Daniel O'Connell. At one point, led by whaler owner, John James, 500 O'Connell supporters, mostly sailors armed with harpoons and staves, stormed the hill and drove off the opposition. Despite charges by mounted police and postponement of the poll until the next day, the rioting continued through the night.

In 1858, the Sydney Observatory was completed by Alexander Dawson within the old fort site. The tower still has the orange time ball which was dropped at 1.00pm when the Fort Denison gun fired, providing both visual and auditory signals to allow ships to set their chronometers. There are two copper observation domes, one from 1858 with a German nineteenth century refracting telescope, and the other, added in 1877, now with a computer controlled reflecting telescope. Perhaps the most significant of the early Government Astronomers was Henry Russell, who in the 1880s began contributing to the *Astrographic Catalogue*, the first complete atlas of the sky. Eventually, the Sydney section alone took 80 years and ran to 53 volumes. By 1982, light and air pollution had minimised the value of the site as an observatory and the building became a working astronomical outpost of the Powerhouse Museum.

The front of the hill reveals its Edwardian bandstand, a Boer War monument, and a 2005 memorial to Hans Christian Anderson, along with a fine view of much of the route of the Circle Walk. Below lies charming Argyle Place with its village square and row of nineteenth century Georgian and Victorian houses.

Day 4:6 - Observatory Hill to Circular Quay

Often lumped under the generic title of 'The Rocks' (as with the Loop Walk associated with this section, for instance), the peninsula on the western side of the Harbour Bridge is actually Millers Point. Originally a rocky slope and promontory at the head of Darling Harbour, its landscape is amongst the most physically altered in Sydney, yet until recent development it retained a quiet, distinct character, with some of the most authentic heritage streetscapes in Sydney. The ridge and then the Bridge separated it from The Rocks and it avoided much of that area's robust reputation. Its rocky hilltops attracted Sydney's first windmills, former convict 'Jack the Miller' Leighton owning three mills here before his demise in 1822, when he fell off one. The rocky hillsides also attracted quarrying, which began the area's process of topographical change – later accelerated by the massive efforts of the Sydney Harbour Trust and the Maritime Services Board, as well as by the construction of the Harbour Bridge. Commercial wharves quickly appeared, initially servicing many of the 30 whaling ships that operated out of Sydney in the 1830s. As whaling declined in the 1850s, the wool trade became more important and great wool stores and warehouses were built near wharves now lined with the Clipper ships which shuttled rapidly between Australia and England. By then hundred of houses and a dozen or more hotels undulated along the narrow cobbled streets, looking much like a maritime village transplanted from England. By the end of the nineteenth century, though, the wharves were run-down and rat-infested and some, though by no means all, of the buildings were as well. Dramatic change lay immediately ahead.

(32) Argyle Place was named for Governor Macquarie's birthplace and is a wonderful mix of late Georgian through to Late Victorian terraces and townhouses that lead towards the solid bulk of the **Holy Trinity Church** next to the Argyle Cut. The first part of the church was completed in the 1840s using stone from 'The Cut'. Its present appearance was designed by Edmund Blackett and completed in 1878. It was long associated with the garrison troops at Fort Dawes and Fort Philip and other locations, with 14 different British regiments worshipping there until the last of them left in the 1870s. An attractive and fascinating church inside, it is usually open to visitors.

(32) The Argyle Cut was begun with convict labour 1843-45, and finished by 1859 by City Council workers using blasting powder. It provided a ready link between the wharves and locations on either side

of the central ridge but at night it also provided a dark and dangerous haunt for villains and larrikins. The Rocks area was not the only part of Sydney which became notorious for its crime, but the gangs that roamed The Rocks between 1840s and about 1900 were amongst the worst, glorying in names such as The Cabbage Tree Mob (who wore 'flash' clothes and cabbage tree hats), the Orange and the Green (Irish) and The Rocks Push. Such larrikins were described in 1896 by Nat Gould as "... these idle dissolute youths ... consort together for the purpose of waging war upon society ...". Despite all this and the undoubted poverty and disadvantage of some of the area, most Rocks and Millers Point citizens lived the best lives they could under the circumstances – evidence supported by a number of archaeological digs in the area and the standard of many of the surviving older dwellings.

Lower Fort St, for example, was well populated with the homes of prosperous merchants and wharf-owners - buildings like *Clyde Bank* (No 43) and the fine classical revival and Victorian townhouses and terraces in the direction of the Bridge pylon.

(33) A notable building is on the corner with Windmill St – *The Hero of Waterloo Hotel*. Built by stonemason George Paton 1843-44 using stone from the Cut, it has been licenced under its present name since 1845. It still has its Georgian windows and doors and has cells in the cellar allegedly either used for convicts or as a staging point in the shanghaiing of drunken sailors – perhaps using secret tunnels down to the wharves. It was certainly true that press gangs operated in this area, acquiring crews for short-handed ships about to sail, and the many hotels were ideal collection points.

Across the road, on the corner which is also the start of Ferry Lane, the old corner shop was also one of the area's pubs, known at different times as *The Whalers Arms* and *The Young Princess*. Ferry Lane has the charm of retaining the cobblestones that most streets here once had, even though most of its buildings were demolished soon after 1900.

(34) For it was in this street, at No. 10 **Ferry Lane** (no longer in existence), in January 1900, that a wharf worker, Arthur Payne, was diagnosed with bubonic plague. He was the first of thousands to be rushed to the Quarantine Station at North Head. Dead rats began to pile up around the wharves but there wasn't much public panic until the first death occurred in February. What followed was actually a minor and short-lived outbreak, and although over 100 people eventually died, this was not a huge toll in a Sydney where dysentery, cholera and other effects of hopelessly insanitary conditions were rife. However, the wharves were closed down, houses and shops whitewashed, rat-catchers created mounds of dead rodents, and a rare political opportunity dawned. The government was given a rat-sent opportunity to resume all the waterfront, including virtually the whole of The Rocks and Millers Point. It was a chance to wipe clean an area traditionally associated (mostly unfairly) with crime, disease, slums, pollution and licentious living; and to provide Sydney with a modern, efficient port system. It would also, incidentally, clear the way for a future harbour crossing. The move was swift. By January 1901, R.R.P. Hickson was chair of the new Sydney Harbour Trust Commission administering the port and its shipping. Soon they also controlled almost every house, bond store, factory, hotel and shop in the area – more than 800 premises – which they now rented out. They also built substantial terraces of new housing and shops. Despite propaganda to the contrary, less than 10% of the properties needed to be condemned, although many more disappeared along with streets and landscape as the new roads, wharves and bridges, housing and shops were constructed.

In the 1930s the Maritime Services Board replaced the Harbour Trust, but remained the main landlord of Millers Point, though no longer interested in building or upgrading housing. Nor was Millers Point any longer such a centre of shipping and industry. Population declined and it increasingly became a backwater frozen in time until the 1980s caught up with it at last. The housing stock was transferred to the Department of Housing, governments sold increasing numbers of buildings off, and the wharves and their hinterland were opened up to private redevelopment. From the late 1990s on, there was massive re-development of Millers Point. The new occupants of the exclusive wharf and waterfront apartments and offices might not, however, always care to be reminded of the debt they owe to bubonic plague.

(34) The park at the intersection of Ferry Lane and Pottinger St gives an insight into the lost buildings of the area, with exposed foundations and interpretative material. The remarkable **Parbury Ruins** are on the corner of Windmill and Pottinger Sts (17 Windmill St) in the basement of a modern apartment block, literally a window into the past. Set below road level and illuminated from an external timer switch are the remains of a well-preserved 1820s cottage. It was built and lived in from 1822-1831 by Hugh Noble, who had been transported to Sydney in 1817 and married Ann Chapman, a 'currency lass' (a free-born colonial). As occupation levels rose and Millers Point was rebuilt, the 19th century cottage disappeared under later development but was revealed once more when construction began in 2002 of the modern apartment block. A remarkable conservation and interpretation process was adopted to preserve it in situ.

Windmill St opposite Pottinger shows two ages of the area. Uphill to the left, is a mix of pre-1900 residences and apartments leading back to the Hero of Waterloo; while to the right are post-1901 terraces built by the Harbour Trust after the plague demolitions, to accommodate local workers. There is an

institutional quality to these Glasgow-like blocks with their two levels of accommodation, archways leading to back yards and lanes. An even more telling view of them comes part-way up Kent Street where the uniform line of backyards and clotheslines and dunnies can be seen down the dunny lane (the laneways built to allow 'nightsoil collectors' to empty sanitary pans). The northern side of Windmill St, like the western side of Kent St, consists of one of the massive and now converted wool warehouses and bond stores that came with the post-plague redevelopment.

(35) The *Lord Nelson Hotel* is said to be Sydney oldest continually licensed hotel. It was built in 1834 by William Wells as a residence and converted into hotel in 1842. There is a theme here with the almost equally old *Hero of Waterloo* hotel a short way away and, up until the twentieth century, the *Napoleon Inn* facing the *Lord Nelson* across Argyle St.

The 1906 shops in Argyle St were the first venture into commercial or housing development by the new Sydney Harbour Trust, and the remarkable terrace of 72 flats around the corner in High St was built by them between 1910 and 1917. Argyle St crosses a bridge over Hickson Rd, reinforcing once more the monumental scale of the Harbour Trust's work in Millers Point. Before Bettington St, the remains of Munn St (named after an early shipbuilder who operated near here) includes the attractive 1875 Dalgety's Store, part of the once extensive warehouses of the dockland.

The *Palisade Hotel* (1912) was one of four built by the Harbour Trust to replace the eleven hotels they demolished in their clean-up of Millers Point and the Rocks. The hotels were also haunts of the street gangs always associated with The Rocks and Millers Point, but generally the Millers Point Push (sometimes known as 'The Irish Parliament') were less violent than most. However, in 1893 they kicked a sailor called Tom Pert to death outside the *Gladstone Hotel*, which was about where the Hickson Rd bridge now is. The whole Push was tried but acquitted because, remarkably, so many potential witnesses managed not to see anything.

(36) This hilltop is where Jack Leighton had most of his windmills. Until about 1970 the western side of **Merriman St** had a line of houses, most notably the four storey *Merriman Terrace*. Bunched in behind them, extending at least 200m west was a huge Dalgety store. However, when the Maritime Services Board (successor to the Harbour Trust) replaced the finger wharves with the big container and roll-on, roll-off concrete hardstands, they sliced off the western and northern edges of the point. Some of the houses' 'ghosts' may be seen on the wall in the little park at the end of Bettington St, and a glance over the Merriman St cliff shows the odd bit of plumbing that once connected to the Dalgety Store now 'lost in space'. At the end of the street, the Port Operations Centre Tower looms up to control Harbour shipping and berthing movements. On the eastern side, quaint terraces and cottages remain, the last being No 14, built in 1837. Beyond, Clyne Reserve was the site of houses 2-12 of the street along with other homes. Dalgety Terrace is a mix of surviving nineteenth century terraces (especially Nos 7-13) and early twentieth century Harbour Trust flats built for waterside workers.

(37) One of the few survivals from the wharves of the early years is the handsome stone **Moore's Store**, built by Captain Moore and Son in the 1830s. Wool, gold and other exports moved through the building. With the 1970s wharf construction, the whole building was moved 50 metres closer to the water to become a facility for waterside workers. It is now part of the Sydney Ports centre.

Being a waterside worker ('wharfie') here or anywhere else was a tough and precarious life until recent years. Until at least WWII, most work was casual and seasonal, depending on the cargoes available. Men gathered at various times each day for the Stevedoring company supervisors to pick their workers for the shift. Men could go without work for weeks and then miss out if they were out of favour with the supervisors. The same divisive system was used to select the seamen for the ships themselves. Little mechanisation was available, and most work – be it shovelling coal from ships holds or humping huge woolsacks up gangways – was manual and shifts could last as long as 30 hours. Attempts to organise workers often led to bitter struggles on these wharves. The failure of the great strikes of 1890 and 1917, which lasted weeks and were broken by police and the use of non-union labour, and the 1930s depression, kept unions weak and conditions poor.

From 1907 to 1918, the Harbour Trust built the great double-decker wharves of Walsh Bay with overhead access bridges and new or realigned roads. At the end of the process, they renamed the bay after the Trust's Chief Engineer, H.D. Walsh. Even as the work came to an end, the shipping scene was changing. Larger ships meant larger cargoes but less shipping movements, and the huge coastal trade would eventually almost entirely disappear as rail and road replaced it.

By the 1970s, when the MSB had redeveloped the wharves towards Darling Harbour for containers, the Walsh Bay wharves were obsolete and in decline. A process of wharf recycling began. Pier One, closest to the Bridge, was first (see below). Piers 4-5 were reconfigured far more successfully to house the Sydney Theatre and Dance Companies, with performing spaces and a restaurant.

(38) In 2003-04, this was added to with the opening of the *Sydney Theatre*, across the road from wharves 6-7. Part of the latest redevelopment of Walsh Bay, the 850 seat theatre was created partially within old bond stores.

Most of what has happened recently at Walsh Bay seems, in urban development terms, inevitable and pretty successful. The sleepy little, semi-isolated working class kingdom has certainly been dragged into the middle class twenty-first century world. However, some of the large glass and concrete apartments injected into the face of the soft century-old landscape of masonry can seem brash and disturbing.

In 1985, the first controversial proposals for large-scale private redevelopment of wharves 2-3, 6-7, and 8-9 emerged, but were withdrawn in 1990 following an ICAC corruption enquiry. However, waterfront land was not going to lie idle and a few years later a Mirvac-Transfield Consortium was approved to undertake a massive project, much of it 'adaptive reuse' (in current urban-planning-speak). Most of it was completed by 2004. The development opened access to the public around Piers 8-9 and 2-3 which, when added to already accessible 4-5 and 1, created a breathtaking new harbourfront for walkers. Pier 8-9, the former 1912 Central Stevedores Wool Store, became a sophisticated office complex (mostly Murdoch Press) combining glass-fronted modernity with the texture and industrial remnants of the original wharf. Near the beginning of Pier 8, an interpretive sign gives some idea of the amazing forest of more than 1100 turpentine piles – some up to 50 metres long – which anchor the Pier. Not all the timber survived the ravages of time and tide and this was said to be the reason Pier 6-7 had to be completely demolished and rebuilt. Not open to the public, it is a contemporary apartment complex and marina, but on the same scale as the original. This is really 'pierworld' here with apartments on the road facing those on the piers, all of it creating a remarkably powerful built environment. Pier 4-5 is still Sydney Theatre and Dance Companies. Pier 2-3, externally now the most original looking of the wharves, is currently offices and a car park.

(39) **Pier One**, closest to the Bridge, was the first of the Walsh Bay Wharves to be redeveloped, first as an amusement and restaurant complex which only briefly prospered, and subsequently as the Sebel Pier One Hotel.

and the rejuvenated Ives Steps Wharf, the road passes dramatically under the Harbour Bridge arch close to the massive southern pylons. Just beyond, and completely dwarfed by the Bridge, is a surviving ramp for the vehicular ferries which carried traffic across the harbour before the 'coathanger' opened.

(40) To the right, across the road, steps lead up and under the Bridge to Dawes Park where the archaeology of **Fort Dawes**, Australia's first permanent fortification is fascinatingly displayed. A battery of guns (and an observatory) were located here under the command of Lt William Dawes in 1788. In time this became a small castellated fort of dubious resilience which, in its heyday, boasted five heavy mortars and 13 naval guns. The buildings stayed until literally levelled during construction of the bridge in the 1920s, their foundations revealed once more in 1990s excavations. Parts of this together with interpretative material can now be seen on the site.

Beyond the Bridge, this area has probably been known as The Rocks since the day the convicts of the First Fleet landed and pitched their tents in the cover and vantage points of the rocky ridge away from the officers and main military encampment. The first hospital was also pitched in tents and canvas huts along what is now George St and somehow continued to inadequately serve the needs of the colony for almost 28 years until Governor Macquarie had his new Hospital constructed in Macquarie Street by 1816. As the wharves and shipping grew in and around Sydney Cove, The Rocks became the natural home of sailors ashore. There were almost 40 inns, along with brothels and other facilities, and any number of thieves and street assassins to take advantage of the cashed-up inebriated and the unwary.

Governor Macquarie tidied up the streetscape and in time, the area became a mix of prosperous wharves and warehouses, terrace and cottage rows, respectable and even fine houses, the ongoing maritime service industry and, well into the twentieth century, the larrikin gangs, or 'pushes'.

Like Millers Point, most of The Rocks was resumed after the 1900 Plague and there were some property demolitions but little development. Construction of the Harbour Bridge approaches tore away hundreds of buildings including most of the finer houses and by the 1950s there were only about 250 people left in a largely neglected, decaying suburb. Again, in 1955-57, the Cahill Expressway was carved through a swathe of houses and shops. Since the land was already owned by the Government, it was ripe for redevelopment and the Sydney Cove Redevelopment Authority was set up in 1968 and soon presented a plan to turn the entire area into high rise. Local action supported by Union Green Bans and broad community support halted development in 1973; and a change of Government, the new Heritage Act of 1977 and the upsurge in tourism, turned the process around. While development did occur in parts, most of The Rocks became an increasingly vibrant heritage-sympathetic tourist precinct with old shops, houses, bond stores and warehouses converted into restaurants and tourist shops. In 1998, the Sydney Harbour

Foreshore Authority incorporated the old Sydney Cove Authority into its umbrella of authority for Sydney waterfront development.

The waterfront curves in front of the serpentine Park Hyatt Hotel where Campbells Cove opens up ahead. In the shadow of the Bridge approaches, the industrial building with a chimney (now the Art Exchange) was built in 1902 to be a power station, but never used as one. It became a Geological and Mining Museum instead until the 1990s when it was closed in a government cutback.

(41) The rows of outdoor restaurants clearly indicate the current function of the row of gabled stone warehouses facing the water and known as **Campbells Storehouse**. Merchant Robert Campbell had established his first storehouses here by 1801, but the existing row was built progressively from 1839 to 1861. The Australian Steam Navigation Company bought them in the 1870s, adding the brick third storey in the 1890s. They were restored by the Sydney Cove Authority in the 1970s as part of the tourist-focussed revamp of The Rocks. Next to the east is the ASN Company Building, rather romantic looking with its Dutch gables and observation tower. Built for the Australian Steam Navigation Company as a warehouse and office building around 1883-84, its spire-like tower might be a hint that its architect, William Wardell, also designed the Catholic Cathedrals in both Melbourne and Sydney.

(42) The walkway continues along the wharf-front of the **Overseas Passenger Terminal**. This 1980s see-through building replaced previous terminals which had served a constant stream of passenger and immigrant ships. Nowadays ships are less frequent and are usually cruise ships during the cruise seasons, and the restaurants and bars have become the most enduring activity. The wharf offers a fine view of the whole of Circular Quay, including, of course, the Opera House. Sydney Cove, site of the first European settlement in Australia. The waterfront originally extended several streets further inland but the mudflats were reclaimed and from 1844 to 1855, a semi-circular stone wharf was built (the first part by convicts), around the head of Sydney Cove. This provided an effective system of quays for the warehouses that once lined its western and eastern edges. Originally 'Semi-Circular Quay', over time, 'semi' disappeared from the name. Several generations of ferry wharves here have served the city since the latter half of the nineteenth century.

(42) Nestled in the lee of George Street, to the right beyond the Overseas Terminal on what was originally the Sydney Cove shoreline, is the city's oldest house, **Cadmans Cottage**. It was built from 1815 onwards for the crew of the Governor's boats. The name of John Cadman, a former convict who lived there for 20 years from 1827, has clung on to the house.

(43) Between Cadmans Cottage and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Argyle St leads directly back to the Argyle Cut past the Rocks Centre. The **Rocks Centre** is the official visitors' and information centre for the area. The area around it is packed with tourist and arts centres, restaurants, hotels, interesting laneways and heritage buildings to explore.

(44) Approaching Circular Quay, the 1930s art deco former Maritime Services Board Building is the major building met to the right. In 1991 it became the **Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA)**. Major refurbishment is planned for the Museum. Entry is free.

The final open space beyond the Museum and edging the wharves is First Fleet Park. Almost under the viaduct, a circular installation shows a plan of the early settlement clinging to the edge of Sydney Harbour. This also marks the end (or the beginning!) of the almost 60km route of the Harbour Circle.