

CENTENNIAL parklands

The magazine of the centennial park & moore park trust

VOL 2

SPRING 1997



recalling the
history of the
parklands

centennial parklands spring issue

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Welcome to the Spring issue of *Centennial Parklands*. I am pleased to say that the inaugural issue brought much positive feedback from a wide range of readers. We've picked up on some of the suggestions for story ideas in this issue and, where possible, we will try to do that with each edition of the magazine.

We continue our exploration of the parks and leisure scene around the world with an interview with Liz Greenhalgh, UK cultural consultant, who shared the findings of her recent UK Parks study with Parks and Recreational professionals at a recent Centennial Parklands breakfast.

We also introduce you to Mrs Irene Chapman and Mrs Edna Laing, octogenarian daughters of John Nichol, the Parks Superintendent during the 1930s. They share with us some of their memories of growing up as residents of the two wonderful old Federation houses in Centennial Park and compare notes with the current residents, Park Rangers Brian and Carolyn.

Still on a nostalgic note, we take a look at the evolution of the Parklands and how well they are bearing up to the kind of demand and use patterns which have dramatically changed since the Parklands were developed in the late 1800s.

Back to the present, we introduce a delicious Spring recipe from David Noonan's kitchen at the Centennial Park Cafe; have a bit of fun with the ancient Chinese practice of *Feng Shui*; and walk you through the Spring plantings in the parklands with the Trust's landscape architect and horticulturist.

We hope you enjoy the eclectic mix of stories in this second issue of the magazine. Happy reading!



Tina Broad
Editor

Cover Photograph: Saturday afternoon cricket in Centennial Park, around 1910.

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Centennial Parklands is published quarterly by the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust, Locked Bag 15, Paddington, NSW 2021.
email: broadt@firststate.com.au

Editor: Tina Broad
Production Editor: Henry Pepper
Design: Global Graphics
Masthead design: Chris Cason
Contributors: Carolyn Culey
Genelle Sharrock
Jackie Randles
Tony Rasman
Jillian Lawler
Liz Potter

Photography: Karen Mork,
Henry Pepper

Centennial Parklands is printed by Bridge Printery, a corporate Friend of the Parklands.

A \$12 million beautification program for Moore Park will result in the greening and upgrading of 25 acres of parkland, reports *Henry Pepper*.

MOORE PARK'S 25 ACRE MAKEOVER

Artist's impression of the upgrade

Around 10 ha of environmentally degraded Moore Park will be replanted with fig trees, landscaped and become a genuine recreational area, as part of the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust's recently announced plan to redesign and beautify the area.

Announcing the program to upgrade Moore Park to the same status as neighbouring Centennial Park, NSW Minister for the Environment, Ms Pam Allan, said that although established in 1870, Moore Park had historically been neglected.

After nearly 130 years of public service, Moore Park has earned the right to a makeover. The Park – named after Mr Charles Moore who was Director of the Botanic Gardens between 1848 and 1896

– was planted between 1867 and 1869, 20 years before the proclamation of Centennial Park on Australia Day, 1888.

"We are taking the first steps to redevelop a green space close to the city which will benefit many Sydney residents," Ms Allan said.

Under the plan the Trust will:

- Plant large numbers of Moreton Bay Figs and other species of fig trees to enhance Moore Park as well as retain its existing character. Some are to be planted with existing specimens along avenues and roads, others will be planted in larger, more natural groves;
- Create new landscaped public open space on the eastern end of the Park;
- Create a new bus station
- Install tree-lined boulevards linking the proposed bus station with the

Sydney Cricket Ground precinct;

- Repair widespread soil compaction and some of the other environmental impacts of car parking;
- Improve irrigation systems and upgrade the popular Kippax playing fields, through relaid grass and new cricket pitches;
- Plant more shrubs and bushes to create additional wildlife habitat and screen out noise encroachment from surrounding roads;
- Create a natural environment conducive to peaceful contemplation;
- Reinstitute Old Grand Drive as the grand formal avenue entrance from Moore Park to Centennial Park; and,
- Create more public space for kite flying, bike riding, family outings and other activities. ♪

Public Transport Improvements For Precinct

With 3 million additional people expected to visit the Centennial Park and Moore Park precinct from next year, the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust has launched a five year campaign to improve public transport and reduce the number of visitors arriving by car.

The Trust's plan is necessary because of expected public interest in new and/or upgraded facilities opening in the precinct. Fox Studios expect their cinema complex to attract Sydney-siders and visitors to Sydney and the upgraded Hordern Pavilion and Royal Hall of Industries will be able to accommodate large scale events. Plus the refurbished showground stables opens next year, and the SCG/SFS are to host Olympic cycling, marathons and soccer events in 2000.

Announcing the plan in Sydney recently, Trust Director Robin Grimwade called for the Centennial Parklands precinct to be rezoned a "public transport area."

Mr Grimwade also detailed the Trust's car pooling scheme – believed to be the first of its kind in Sydney – which aims to reduce the number of cars driven to the precinct during major events.

The events-parking fee at Moore Park rose from \$7 to \$10 for vehicles carrying less than four people from August 1997.

For vehicles carrying four or more passengers, the fee remains at \$7.

"The key to our plan is ensuring public transport becomes the more attractive option. Increasing the cost of parking is just one step towards convincing people to switch," Mr Grimwade says.

"Our primary objective is to reduce congestion and air pollution by reducing car use," he says.

Under the Trust's transport action plan:

- improved public transport services will offer faster access to the precinct than cars
 - a new onsite bus station will be constructed
 - light rail options will be examined
 - consideration will be given to improving bicycle parking facilities
- "It is time we started the process of getting visitors to the precinct used to the idea of public transport as a viable alternative."

"The provision of better public transport options and more frequent services will make it easier to persuade people to make this important switch," Mr Grimwade said.



With new facilities around the Parklands precinct expected to attract three million additional visitors each year, there is an urgent need for improved public transport.

'It is time we started the process of getting visitors to the precinct used to the idea of public transport as a viable alternative'



URBAN PARKS AND SOCIAL RENEWAL - A UK STUDY

British park administrators are set to deliver improved community services in the 21st Century, following a traumatic two decades of budget cuts, reports

Tony Rasman

While British parks went through a process of massive funding cuts in the late 1980s that turned the process of park administration upside down, public reaction centred on the loss of uniformed park keepers, a move which heightened anxiety about safety in public spaces.

Liz Greenhalgh, a consultant who recently conducted a wide-ranging study into future usage of Britain's parks and open spaces, said the public became very concerned about these developments. Since then, however, a major boost in park funding through the national lottery – see accompanying box story – has allowed administrators to improve services and start planning for a new century.

Her study looked at 11 regional park management authorities ranging from Sheffield in the north of England to Bristol in the south west. 1,000 people were interviewed and researchers held additional discussion groups with young people. Safety and security issues, particularly among women and parents with young children, and conflicts of interest between different user-groups, were subjects the researchers focused on.

The key finding was that all those interviewed said they would spend more time using public open space if coordinated activities and events were held. A more curious finding was that people increasingly see parks as a more private place than their home. The modern home, respondents said, is bombarded with domestic noise from phones, faxes and computers. So people seek to escape to a park for a greater sense of privacy and peace.

"We found an interesting 'community gardens' in central London. The local authorities owned the land but the local community is now managing it. However, in many instances, this tended to work the other way around. Land was bequeathed to people and the local authorities have taken over management," Ms Greenhalgh said.

The Corporation of London (similar to the Sydney City Council), a well-financed local

British Parks Win The Lottery

Britain's urban parks have been one of the big winners from the introduction of a national lottery, according to Liz Greenhalgh.

When Westminster approved the establishment of a National Lottery, the intention was to use the proceeds to upgrade the arts, sport, charities and national heritage. However when fund managers, The National Trust, announced the purchase of the Churchill papers for 11 million pounds (around \$A 25 million) in the first round of grants, an uproar ensued.

As a result of the controversy, The National Trust looked for more popular causes and settled on public open space. The resulting urban parks program, which kicked off in 1995, has since granted some 57 million pounds (around \$A 130 million) for 48 parks in the first round of funding.

"This is the biggest injection of funds into British urban parks this century," Ms Greenhalgh notes.

authority, runs its parks on old fashioned lines with lots of security and rules about what you can and cannot do in the space. "While this approach may alienate some, our research found that these parks are heavily used by ethnic minorities who feel safe," she said.

During the 1980s, Britain's Local Government Authorities were forced to introduce compulsive competitive tendering (CCT) – which involved outsourcing and contracting out of work, including park maintenance. During this period most parks lost their 'keeper.'

Ms Greenhalgh believes it is essential for public open space managers to find ways to better serve their communities. A 1988 Audit Commission report on park management claimed that less than 5 percent of adults use parks regularly. "No matter how much one may dispute that claim, it does not bode well for further claims on increasingly scarce public resources. Will the park, like so many other areas of public provision, be seen ultimately as provision for the poor?" she asked, "as a last resort for those who cannot afford to buy their leisure choices in the market place?"

The modern home is bombarded with domestic noise from phones and computers. So people escape to a park for a greater sense of privacy and peace

Liz Greenhalgh visited Sydney in October as a guest of the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust. She addressed the third in the Centennial Parklands Breakfast Series at Sydney's Marriott Hotel. The Breakfast Series is a Trust initiative to provide a forum for Sydney's park and recreation management community to share their experience with international and interstate experts.



Because children benefit from encounters with nature from a very early age, Centennial Park has created a special outdoor activity program for young children that runs during school holidays. By *Carolyn Culey* and *Genelle Sharrock*.

exploring natural Environments in early childhood

Environmental education is often seen to be dealing with 'big' environmental issues such as global warming, destruction of forests or loss of biodiversity.

However it can be difficult to value something, and make efforts to protect it, if you can't make sense of scientific arguments and concepts.

Put yourself in the shoes of a child under five. There is little point in presenting you with 'hard' scientific facts about the environment – because feelings are more important to you than facts at this stage in your development.

This means the focus of effective environmental education for young children should be based around 'experiencing' rather than teaching and these experiences should be based on a sense of wonder and the joy of discovery.

Educators should focus on fostering 'small environmentalists' who feel an affinity for the natural world and who have a broad understanding of its processes and cycles. It is from these 'small' beginnings that adult environmentalists grow.

Interpretation for the very young requires a fundamentally different approach to that adopted for their older companions. Very young children are not conscious of themselves as distinct from the world around them. They experience everything with equal curiosity and interest. Although they are acquiring knowledge, this is secondary to the experience of interacting with the world around them. Young children may not be old enough to understand why they should be concerned with environmental neglect but they are old enough to appreciate the beauty of the world and to begin developing good habits.

Toddlers, Trees & Time Out

Modern urban life is one of the main barriers to the development of 'good green habits'. Many young children live in units or houses with small gardens and increasing numbers go to childcare where the main focus is on indoor activities. There can be few opportunities for children to feel grass beneath their feet.

Many parents are reluctant to let their children explore local parks or go for

unaccompanied walks.

While this is understandable, many children are being denied the childhood experiences their parents and grandparents enjoyed. For many children the closest they come to interacting with the natural world is a trip to the zoo or a nature program on TV.

Parents know that experience of the natural world is important for young children but they often feel ill-equipped to provide it themselves.

This opens up opportunities for parks such as Centennial Park. Traditionally, Centennial Park's outdoor activities were aimed at adults and children aged 8 to 15. As many of these activities revolved around guided walks, the participation of children aged under five was discouraged. This situation has changed dramatically following Centennial Park's routine school holiday evaluation which showed there was a strong (and unmet) demand for environmental activities for children aged between 18 months and five years.

Centennial Park's early childhood program began during the Spring 1996 school holidays with an activity called 'Toddlers, Trees and Time Out.' Spanning one hour, this session comprised a sensory nature walk, pond dipping and a simple craft activity. As many different environments as possible were included: open park spaces; mini forests; ponds and sheltered clearings. The program was quickly booked out.

Since then – and following an in-depth evaluation of the courses for the 18 month to five year old group – Centennial Park's early childhood program has grown significantly. Discussions are now underway with peak children's services organisations and local playgroup coordinators to provide more early childhood environmental education for these groups. ♡

For more information on the Toddlers, Trees and Time Out program please phone 9339 6699

Carolyn Culey is the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust's Senior Ranger – Education & Interpretation. Genelle Sharrock, a former Trust Ranger, is Campsie City Council's Environmental Education Officer. This article is an edited extract from their joint paper, presented to the 1997 Interpretation Australia Association National Conference.



Knowing our history: Rangers Carolyn Culey and Brian Page, pictured right, with Irene Chapman and Edna Laing who grew up in the Parkland's residences during the 1930s.



Growing up in centennial park

Edna and Irene Nichol were the envy of their classmates when they attended Paddington Public School in the 1930s because they lived with their families in Centennial Park's historic residences. A recent visit reignited childhood memories that six decades have not eroded, as *Jackie Randles* reports.

Mrs Irene Chapman and Mrs Edna Laing were recently invited to visit their childhood homes in Centennial Park. It was the first time in over sixty years they had visited the Rangers' residences. Although many things have changed since the Nichol kids used to roam the Parklands, the original features of the houses

remain much as they were eighty years ago. The houses are today occupied by the families of Rangers Brian Page and Carolyn Culey.

There are two Parkland homes: the former Superintendent's residence at the Oxford St Gate, built in 1891, and the Ranger's residence on Martin Road near the Showground Gates, built in 1899. As children during the 1930s, Irene and Edna lived in both of them. "Our father was the Park Superintendent", explains Irene. "I used to think that my mates at school were lucky because they had neighbours! I thought it'd be great to have somebody living alongside us. It wasn't until we all got married that we realised how lucky we were", recalls Edna. "Dear this takes me back!" Irene sighs as she scrambles energetically up the hill leading to the Martin Road house. "On Sundays the whole side of this hill would be covered with bikes. There were very few cars — people used to get dressed up in their Sunday clothes, go walking round the park and have afternoon tea. Everybody was very well dressed. They'd ride around the park in a sulky. It was the thing to get dressed up in your Sunday best, hats and all!" Edna agrees. "Oh! You wouldn't go

without your hat! If my father could come back today and see the picnics and all of that — oh no, that wouldn't have been on!"

Unfettered by the suburban congestion that faced other inner city kids, the Nichol children could roam the Park at all hours, ride horses with the rangers, collect tadpoles from the ponds, feed the ducks and befriend stray animals. They would practice bushcraft, and the boys would camp out in the stables from time to time.

As the sisters approach the front door they recall great Uncle John. "He used to stay with us. He was Dad's old uncle and would walk around here exercising every night", explains Irene, peering intently into a window. "That was my bedroom!" she exclaims excitedly.

Edna disagrees, "No it wasn't — that was mum's."

As the sisters debate who slept where in the Martin Road house all those years ago, Edna is suddenly distracted. "There was a Daphne bush growing right here! I can remember that lovely smell!" She turns towards the Park's iron railings. "I got through one of those railings once. I remember it as well as anything. I used to squeeze through it. I'd put my head through first and then the rest. My mother couldn't understand how I'd get out. She'd come out and I'd be gone. So she watched me one

Edna Nichol and her father, Park Superintendent John Morgan Nichol.

day and was horrified to see what I was doing. I was

stopped from doing that quick smart!"

The sisters walk through the house talking about how it used to be. Edna wanders into Carolyn's cheerful sitting room, she points to where the piano used to be. Music was a big part of the Nichol's family life. "My father played the violin," Irene recalls.

"This is where we used to get into trouble. My brother Doug slept there, and we slept here in the opposite room. He used to make shadows on the wall and make us laugh. That used to disturb the musicians and then we'd get into trouble. You can imagine six kids giggling!"

When the sisters lived here in the 30s, vendors came to a window cut into the pantry wall. Irene lists the groceries her mother would purchase through the

People used to get dressed in their Sunday clothes, go walking round the Park and have afternoon tea. They'd ride around the Park in a sulky. It was the thing to get dressed up in your Sunday best, hats and all.

window. "Everyone would call, the egg man, the man with cakes, the Chinese vegetable man," Irene says.

Edna recalls the depression-era swagmen who would turn up at the house. "My mother would never turn them away. She'd always give them a sandwich. One day my father happened to be home and this man came with a big piece of steak. He said to my mother, 'here Missus, cook this for me!' My father came out and told him to get. He went for his life, steak and all!" The sisters burst

into riotous laughter at the memory of their father chasing the swagman out of the house.

The conversation turns to their father. "He absolutely loved flowers", recalls Edna. "You'd ask him the name of a flower and he'd give you the botanical name! We'd say, 'Dad, don't tell us that name, tell us the proper name!' She remembers her father's fascination with his microscope. "He'd put all these things on slides, insects and petals and things, and I remember him showing us flies' legs at one time, with all their hairs and everything!"

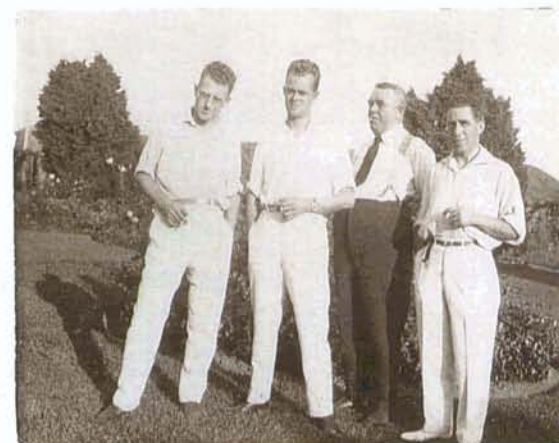
Walking through the Superintendent's House at the Oxford St Gates, Irene and Edna are pleased to see that the house is now being lived in by a family. The women talk about the years they spent living in the big house at the top of the Park.

"When we lived there, the front garden was a mass of colour — a real showpiece," says Edna. "People used to come and stand outside gazing at the flowers. We had delphiniums, poppies, pansies and roses — it was absolutely beautiful!"

After a morning packed with memories, Edna and Irene enjoyed lunch and swapped anecdotes in the garden with Brian and Carolyn who agree that the Park residences are wonderful places to live in. ♡



Edna Nichol, 11, with friend Irene Underwood and younger brother 'Jacky'.



Doug Nichol (left) with his brothers-in-law and father after a game of tennis at the Park Superintendent's house.

fame and fortune in the park

Your luck could change tomorrow depending on the feng shui of the gate you use to enter Centennial Park. By *Jillian Lawler*.

The essence of the ancient Sino discipline of *feng shui* is to harmonise the energies of the universe with the activities of the human race – some people believe *feng shui* is the eastern equivalent of environmental studies.

The mandarin character for *feng* is 'wind' and *shui* is 'water' – fitting elements for a *feng shui* analysis of an urban park, like the Centennial Parklands.

The positioning of the **Showground Gate** and **Jervois Ave Gate**, for example encourages good luck and prosperity to enter the Park. The energy coming



through the gates is of love, joy and truth and it is this energy which encourages people to talk and exchange the pleasures of life while they walk and exercise around the park. This is an excellent area for autumn celebrations with strong affiliations with the moon.

The Ranger's House and the four palm trees on the hill (inside the Showground Gate) ensure that the energy circulates around Grand Drive and balances the *yin* and *yang* of the Parklands.

The **Paddington Gate** and **Woollahra Gate** are ruled by the Chinese star of honesty, purity and uprightness, *lien-chien*. These two gates and the roads which

connect them form a magnet which attracts a light abundant energy, illumination, and fame. The downward slope into the Park on the northern side enhances this energy and encourages intelligent action and creativity. It is not surprising that the Federation of Australia Act was signed in this area.

The **York Road Gate** is ruled by the Chinese star *chu-men*, meaning great door or gate. The rounded rise to the right as you come through the gate and the slope of the road draws wealth down into the park. The downward slope of the land carries the energy over Model Yacht Pond and meanders across the new Centennial Square until it accumulates in Dickens Drive between Fly Casting and Willow Ponds, making this area a wonderful place for meditation and deep thought. This is an especially good spot to sort out travel plans.

Ruled by the Chinese star *lu-tsan*, which preserves rank and salary, the **Musgrave Avenue Gate** attracts academic success and is an excellent way for students to approach Randwick TAFE College. The incoming energy creates a lovely place for yoga or *tai chi* beyond the white bridge in the open space amid the conifers. The energy curves and meanders past Musgrave Pond and One More Shot Pond and provides another great area for meditation and the contemplation of new beginnings.

For park visitors who are embarking on a new career or business venture, the energy creating business success comes through the **Govett Road Gate** and **Randwick Gate**. ☯

Jillian Lawler, a Customer Service Officer at the Trust, has long been fascinated by Chinese tradition and culture. She is learning to speak Mandarin and practices geomancy, or feng shui as it's better known.

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cool colours for **spring**

Over the past months the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust's horticulture team, led by Kyla Watts, has been cultivating the new Spring plantings. The formal gardens are now in bloom. Don't miss the lovely floral displays in the Column Garden and at Frog Hollow, near Lachlan Swamp.

Landscape Architect Gillian Smart has chosen cool fresh colours this Spring, with blue and white featured in all displays.

"You'll see masses of Blue Delphiniums and White Poppies in the beds at Frog Hollow. The blue and white colour is carried through to the Column Garden, but here the delphiniums and poppies are combined with purple, green and white Kale Cabbages," she explains.



Gillian is fond of the Kale Cabbage, an unusual plant which resembles a quirky salad item you'd expect to find in a fruit and vegetable market.

"I like the way they keep the displays changing. The Kale Cabbage grows from being a compact rosette that can be made into geometric colour patterns, into a tall, wild, trifid-like flower. They are surprising!"

The Kale Cabbage displays are edged with a deep blue Lobelia. One of the most demanding challenges for the horticulturists is protecting displays from the Parklands wildlife.

"Caring for these plants requires intense maintenance," says Kyla Watts. "Nearly half the hort team's hours is spent looking after annual displays. We have to cover them with fences and netting to keep the birds and rabbits out. It's a shame, because when they're covered up like this, the beds don't look nearly as beautiful"

Gillian Smart will be re-designing the formal garden areas in the near future to take into account these kinds of maintenance challenges. Kyla says visitors can expect to see more perennials in the new landscape designs, which will continue to feature the colour and variety that makes Centennial Park's floral displays memorable. ♡

cafe forecourt upgrade - new style in the parklands

Spring and summer are looking better than ever for visitors to the Parklands. The Cafe forecourt redevelopment will be completed at the end of October, giving visitors a beautifully landscaped outdoor eating area with improved disabled access.

And the kiosk will reopen, offering espresso coffee, fresh juices, cakes and muffins, toasted Turkish bread sandwiches, summer salads – perfect for those who are looking for a quick breakfast, morning coffee, or lunch on the run!

Now is the perfect time of year to sit in the spring-time sun at the Centennial Park Cafe and savour the culinary delights of Chef David Noonan.

David's spring menu is inspired by his Park surroundings and he uses ingredients from as far afield as Shark Bay in Western Australia. He has agreed to share some of his culinary secrets with *Centennial Parklands* for those readers who don't get to the Cafe regularly. We kick off the Cafe's regular column in this issue with one of its most popular dishes. It can easily be served as a main course at lunch or as a light starter for dinner.



SHARK BAY SMOKED SARDINE FILLETS ON BOWEN ISLAND SOUR DOUGH TOAST SERVED WITH RED CAPSICUM AND SPANISH ONION RELISH

1 red capsicum seeded, grilled, skinned and diced
1 Spanish onion diced and pan-fried in olive oil
100g smoked sardine fillets
1 tsp sugar
3tsp red wine vinegar
1/2 a garlic clove chopped
1/4 tsp chopped rosemary
20 leaves flat parsley
oven roasted tomatoes
mayonnaise
sour dough bread

Cook the garlic in olive oil and add the rosemary, then onion, capsicum, sugar, vinegar, tomatoes, salt and pepper. Allow to cool and add parsley. Poach the sardines for one minute in water. Toast the bread, then arrange the relish, mayonnaise and sardines on the toast.



The park's prolonged formative phase has proved beneficial: it's the reason the park contains such a variety of landscapes from the very formal to the relaxed.

victorian park meets modern demand

Centennial Park's landscape heritage is characterised by its magnificent trees but during the park's establishment phase, many species failed to survive as *Henry Pepper* reports

It is hard to imagine the Parklands area in 1888. Hundreds of unemployed Sydney men were toiling to create an Australian example of Victorian England. It wasn't an easy task. The soils were sandy and barren. The original scrub needed clearing. Numerous rocky outcrops were demolished and removed and large quantities of top soil transported onto the site. Thousands of trees, bushes and flowers were planted and Lachlan Swamp was developed into the pond system.

But there were two key factors which led today's unique landscape, according to Peter Nowland, Landscape Architect at the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust. One was the physical factors of poor soils and harsh climate which determined a small range of appropriate plant species. Number two, the fact that Charles Maiden, Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens (1848–1896), turned his attention to the planting of the park and brought great sensitivity & innovation to the selection of plants and their placement.

"Normally a park would work off an all-encompassing plan. However, Centennial Park's original masterplan laid out only the roads and avenues. The rest of what you would expect from a comparable Victorian Park came slowly and was piecemeal as the park was always perceived as the poor cousin of the Royal Botanical Gardens.

"Another problem was the site itself. It proved fairly hostile to early efforts to establish trees and plant material

because of sandy soils and strong winds off the ocean," Peter Nowland said.

By 1896, problems followed the initial planting of 2970 trees. Jerusalem Pines had to be removed following heavy attacks by aphids. A number of other species also found the environment too tough.

The magnificent stands of paperbark trees (*Melaleuca quinquenervia*) that dominate Lachlan Swamp and line the Paddington Gates entrance, were initially planted as wind breaks. The process was to continue for much of the following decade. Among other successful species were Moreton Bay and Port Jackson Figs, Norfolk Island Pines, Holu Oaks, weeping willows, coral trees & date palms.

Between 1888 and 1914, over 11,000 trees were planted, although half of them subsequently died and had to be replaced. The great avenue of date palms was one of the earliest and most dramatic uses of these plants in Australia. Another decade-long period of plantings commenced in 1935, with 'urban forest' inspired plantings from 1966.

"Over the next ten years we have to do lots of replanting because much of the park's tree population is now in decline."

With hindsight, Peter Nowland believes the Park's prolonged formative phase has proved beneficial: it's the reason the park contains such a variety of landscapes from the very formal to the relaxed, the aquatic and the natural.

"It's easy to plan for today but you don't really know what tomorrow's recreational pursuits are going to be. What we're trying to provide is the opportunity for visitors to do what they want to do within various 'settings'. These settings are the trees, the grass, the footpaths, the pavements. If we can provide this basic infrastructure, people can then do what they want and we can respond to new social ideas and recreational activities as they emerge," Peter Nowland said.

Park administrators perform a constant juggling act to ensure the parklands remain relevant to users while protecting heritage values. "There is a fine line between meeting people's expectations and altering the landscape. It's a matter of give and take ..." he notes.

Have Your Say

The Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust monitors social trends and keeps up to date with visitor needs through surveys, focus groups and written submissions. Park users with ideas and/or comments about Parkland use and design are encouraged to write to the Trust, Locked Bag 15, Paddington NSW 2021.





A DAY IN THE LIFE

Candida Baker, author and editor of *The Australian* newspaper's Saturday magazine, regularly rides and jumps at the equestrian facilities on the Randwick side of the parklands.

Pictured with her favourite horse, 'Jes,' Candida has been a constant park visitor for the 20 years she has lived in Sydney.

"Initially, I used to come for walks, then I got a dog and started walking her everyday. Then I started exercising horses at the livery stables.

"I've ridden pretty much since I was a child. What's always happened with my riding is that I do it for a while then, for one reason or another, I don't. When I have a big journalistic project it can be hard to find time ... I'll be good, come every week for six or seven, then I'll miss a month.

"So the riding goes back and forwards, I never really get to the standard I'd like to be at. But it keeps me entertained and it keeps me fit! Riding gives me time out. Time to think and relax," she says.

"I have had lots of special days in Centennial Park. There was the day I met (Australia's Nobel-prize winning author, the late) Patrick White and had a long talk to him.

Subsequently I saw him quite a few times, we'd walk our dogs together. "More recently, my son has had two major Centennial Park birthdays up by the

Amphitheatre. One year there was a little puppet theatre and a clown the next year."

Her tip for park users might sound a little off-beat, until you try it. "If you really want to enjoy the park," Candida says, "visit when the weather is bad. When the weather is wild there is nobody here. I love those days for the sheer emptiness of the park and the clean air."

The author of a series of non-fiction books, a collection of interviews with Australian writers and a novel called *Women and Horses*, Candida has just published *Powerful Owl*, a series of short stories, which includes one based in the park.

"I don't come here to write but I often come here to think about writing," she said.



Hector and Cameron visit Centennial Park at least once a week, sometimes heading for the playgrounds, on other occasions simply relaxing beside one of the ponds.

"We've been living nearby for the past two years and have been regular park visitors ever since," Hector explains. "We don't really do anything special here, just enjoy the birds and fresh air.

"It's great to show Cameron all the trees and birds. He can play in the open, surrounded by all these natural things. This is particularly good because we live in an apartment which doesn't have a garden. He gets bored at home because he can't play.

"Here, it's different. We both have a good time," Hector says with a comfortable smile.



ALL PHOTOS: HENRY PEPER

For 30 years Laurie, who lives in nearby Kingsford, has been running in one or more of the clubs that utilise the expansive parklands for long distance runs. Or, as he puts it, "I've been coming down here since Adam was a boy."

On the day CP caught up with him, Laurie was walking away some muscle stiffness.

"I like to jog but I'm still getting over the after-effects of the city-to-surf run – stiffness in the joints. I'm walking 'cause I want to get going again, get prepared for next year's city-to-surf.

"We (the veterans cross country club) have had some great days down here over the past 30 years. I run with the bus drivers from the Waverley and Randwick bus depots on Wednesdays. They have a lot of road races and cross country contests.

"It's very picturesque around the duck ponds. They have some great shows of flowers around there. We usually take in that part of the park on our cross-country runs, it's very pleasant," notes Laurie.

"There's been many changes over the years. All this current pond reconstruction is going to make the place even more terrific. It's amazing to watch all the water flowing through here during the wet season, spilling out across the racecourse on its way to Botany Bay..."

STOP PRESS ... CENTENNIAL PARK PONDS UPDATE

The first stage of the Centennial Parklands Ponds Restoration Program is complete. Park visitors will soon see significant changes to Model Yacht and Fly Casting Ponds as the new aquatic plants and replanting of the banks and islands take hold. Stage two sees work start on Willow Pond, Musgrave Pond and One More Shot Pond.

The ponds once supplied Sydney Town's drinking water. Today, the stormwater which flows into them from surrounding areas brings pollutants into the system and has a

major impact on the water quality. This program is setting new standards in stormwater management nationally and worldwide.

The program involves:

- planting aquatic plants (reeds and rushes) which will act as a natural filter system;
- improving the circulation of fresh water through the system;
- creating a healthy ecosystem by controlling exotic species, introducing native fish, and promoting growth of

zooplankton and insect larvae which feed on blue-green algae;

- stabilising bank erosion and planting them with native grasses to improve wildlife habitat; and
- raising community awareness of stormwater pollution control, particularly among residents in the catchment area.

Information on Stage Two of the Ponds Restoration Program is on display in the foyer of the Trust Administration Building (behind the cafe).

Construction begins on the Eastern Distributor

The initial phase of the Eastern Distributor construction is well under way as you may already have gathered while driving along South Dowling Street or Anzac Parade. The west side of Moore Park has been fenced off and Leighton, the contractor, has erected temporary site buildings there and at Drivers Triangle.

Leighton will open a community information centre in Moore Park at the end of October. The Leighton community relations staff will be based in the centre full-time and will be available to discuss community

concerns, from the construction, its impact on residents through to traffic flows and the environmental management of the area during and after construction. Project plans and models will be on display. Leighton has also established an information line for community enquiries: 1300 652 277.

Moore Park will be fully restored to parkland and recreational areas once the roadway project is complete. Improved pedestrian and cycle access will create a better parkland environment in a previously under-utilised area.

Trust's new Chair

Since the last issue of *Centennial Parklands*, the Trust farewelled Lynn Ralph from the Chair and welcomed new Chairman, Annette O'Neill and two new trustees, Michael Marx and Robert Wilson.

After eight years as the Senior Member of the Social Security Appeals Tribunal, Annette O'Neill recently returned to the NSW Department of Housing. She has a Master of Science in Planning from the University of London and a BA and Diploma of Social Studies from the University of Melbourne.

Michael Marx is a Bondi Junction solicitor. He is the Deputy President of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry and a Director of the Hakoah Club in Bondi. He is a Commissioner with the Ethnic Affairs Commission and the President of Waverley Action for Youth Services (WAYS) which



(l to r): Michael Marx, Jill Hager, Angelo Hatsatouris, Jill Hickson, Annette O'Neill, Robert Wilson. (Richard Cobden and Terry McGuinness not pictured)

offers support services to disadvantaged young people.

Robert Wilson joins the Trust after more than ten years in executive management at the Sydney Water Board. He is a board member of Greenpeace Australia and the Public Interest Advocacy Centre and he chairs the NSW

Sustainable Energy Advisory Committee.

The other members of the Trust are: Angelo Hatsatouris, Richard Cobden, Jill Hager, Jill Hickson, and Terry McGuinness.

Romantic Moonlight Cinema

After last year's highly successful season of outdoor cinema at the Centennial Park Amphitheatre, *Moonlight Cinema* returns this summer with a brand new program of classic, arthouse and Australian short films – under the stars and velvet skies!

Sydney's most romantic cinematic experience runs from 29 Nov 97 – 14 Feb 98. For more information, check your entertainment listings or telephone 9339 6699.

Stables redevelopment

The \$10 million redevelopment program for the heritage Showground Stables, part of the new Centennial Parklands Equestrian Centre, was given the thumbs-up at its August Open Day.

The Open Day gave potential centre users a chance to talk to Trust staff about the redevelopment plans in detail and to comment on prototype facilities.

Depending on the progress of the work (which has been a little slower than anticipated due to the September rains) the Trust aims to have a number of tenants – of the four-legged variety – take up residence in the stables by the end of the year.

A unique Christmas!

Are you looking for a unique venue for your Christmas party this year? Tired of the same old bonbons and balloons? Prefer natural and stylish trimmings to tired old tinsel?

Come and inspect Centennial Square, Sydney's newest function space in the lakeside setting of Centennial Park.

The Trust is currently taking bookings for Centennial Square Christmas parties, phone: 9339 6615.

Centennial Parklands Facilities:

Moore Park Golf Course:	9663 1064
Moore Park Pro Shop & Driving Range:	9663 4966
Parklands Tennis Centre:	9662 7033
Centennial Park Cafe:	9360 3355
Sports Facilities – including lawn bowls, hockey, soccer, cricket and touch football.	
Bookings:	9339 6621
Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust:	9339 6699
Centennial Park Rangers (24 Hour):	018 298 537
	or 018 298 508