

*We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Hunters Hill
and show respect to Elders past and present.*



www.huntershillmuseum.org.au

“Bunk”

“History is more or less bunk”
HENRY FORD, Chicago Tribune, 1916

HUNTERS HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Diary Dates

General meeting

**Thursday 29th February
2024
10am for 10.30 in the
town hall.**

**Guest Speaker
Dr Andrew Bowes**

***A history of general
practice in Hunters Hill.***

**Morning tea will be served
at 10am.**

Hunters Hill Historical Society Inc

Office bearers and committee

2023/2024

President: Rod Stewart

Vice-President and Secretary:

Tony Saunders

Treasurer:

Felicity McCaffrey

Committee: Dorothy Cubban, Jan Griffiths, Dean Letcher, Jean Pritchard, Chris Schofield

Newsletter editor: Kate Armati

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The Towers restored to heights of glory



When Nick and Jacki Stevens bought 2 Woolwich Road in May 2011 they dreamed that one day they would restore the “missing” turret to its rightful place on their historic home.

The Towers, two large two-storey semi-detached houses (2-4 Woolwich Road) are believed to have been built about 1916 and incorporated Queen Anne Revival design elements popular in Australia at the time. The towers were rotten through or taken down in about the 1960s.

In the foyer of the Stevens home hangs a black and white framed photograph of the Towers in 1927 which was taken at the unveiling by the Governor General of the Hunters Hill war memorial that stood at the corner of Ferry St and Woolwich Rd. The image shows the turrets on each house with people watching from above the festivities below where hundreds are gathered for the historic and sobering event.

The photo was given to them by the previous owners His Honour Mr Justice Mark Lem-

ming and Ann Twoomey.

The reinstatement of the turret has come after the Stevens renovated the rear of the house incorporating the kitchen area with some small spaces into a beautiful family room and larger kitchen for Jacki who is a well-known caterer in the area.

“We started the slow process of doing the house up and the kitchen was first thing. There were already some nice big front rooms though,” Jacki said. Two spacious salon rooms spill onto a verandah which faces Woolwich Road and is a reminder of the gentler way of life when enjoying the garden was often with a cup of tea in hand in a wicker chair.

“We talked about reinstating the turret earlier on but realised it would be a huge process,” Jacki said. “With the kids finished school and more time it seemed right to do now.”

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Artist paints a new history inside turret

(Continued from page 1)

It took 18 months for the process starting from council approval (May 2022) until the turret was installed in December 2023. The Stevens used the architect Mark Armstrong of ARC Architects for the design (known for his work in the area) and construction by Neill Hardwick, of the Construction Team. The turret is constructed from steel with a zinc roof and is made in one piece which was craned into place twice before it finally stayed in place.

The interior walls and a roof landing are tiled in black and white marble and provides an entertaining nook where the Stevens this year enjoyed the new year fireworks and views to the harbour bridge and also across the suburb to the Gladesville Bridge.

Inside the roof is an exquisite set of eight paintings – one in each triangular section – each depicting an architectural building from around the world with one special image featuring 2 Woolwich Road and another Nick’s beloved visiting pair of King parrots.

Nick’s cousin, the talented Katrina Rhodes painted the images onto canvas and they were then “wallpapered” on the ceiling and sealed from the weather.

The Stevens have also restored the front garden and sandstone paving and were able to put in a car stacker below a car port to give more garden area.

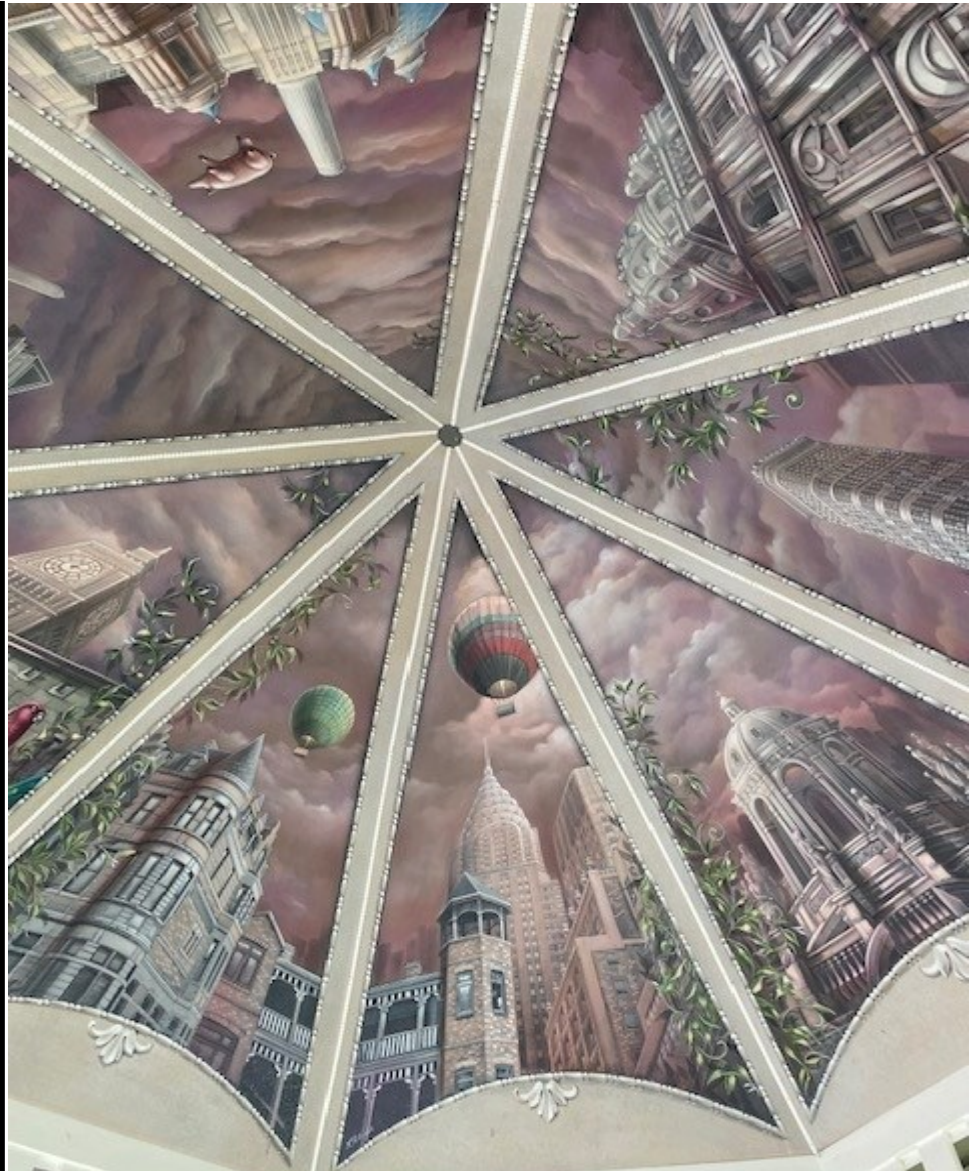
“We knew what we wanted to do with the house and we worked together with Mark the architect to create a modern extension with the older style with the most exciting when the turret went up,” said Nick.

Many residents of Hunters Hill have walked past The Towers for many years and were all excited and curious about the work being done to restore the turret.

The Stevens have lovingly brought back an important part of their home which reinstates the majestic features of The Towers.

Kate Armati

Photographs Page 1: Nick and Jacki Stevens enjoy views from their new turret; stately, once again, The Towers, 2 Woolwich Road.



Paintings by artist Katrina Rhodes embellish the ceiling of the new turret. The Towers (in middle panel above) sit in front of the New York Chrysler building whilst (below) they overlook the opening of the War Memorial in 1927.



Gladesville bridge to celebrate 60 years in October



Gladesville Bridge (above) joining Victoria Place, Drummoyne to Huntleys Point Rd, Huntleys Point, and the bridge (pictured below) today.

Gladesville Bridge will celebrate 60 years on October 2 this year so that's a good excuse to look back at the history of this significant structure. The first Gladesville Bridge was opened in 1881. It was a low level through-truss bridge with lattice girders supporting the roadway on five spans between steel tubular piers. There were two road lanes and, after 1902, double tram tracks.

One span of the bridge, at the southern end, was an opening span to allow river traffic to pass. The abutments of this bridge are still in place and visible at both ends. An information board on the bridge is located behind the old northern abutment. This bridge was closed in 1964 when the new bridge opened. By the 1950s, due to a rapid growth in private car ownership and road freight transport in Sydney, especially in the post- World War 2 period, traffic crossing the old Gladesville Bridge was becoming increasingly congested. With constant interruptions and delays from the trams and from shipping along the Parramatta River, it was apparent that a new bridge was required to alleviate congestion problems.



The government department at the time, Department of Main Roads, intended the replacement Gladesville Bridge to be a conventional steel truss of its own design. However, an alternative design, prepared by civil engineering firm G. Maunsell & Partners, was submitted by another English firm, Reed & Mallik Ltd, which had teamed up with Sydney-based builders Stuart Brothers. Maunsell recognised that a concrete arch bridge would be a much better solution for the new Gladesville Bridge than the steel truss the DMR had designed. The firm's first graduate recruit, 22-year-old Anthony Gee, was given the task of developing Maunsell's preliminary drawings into a viable design from which Reed & Mallik Ltd and Stuart Brothers, could formulate a price. The proposal was independently reviewed by internationally revered engineer, and pioneer of pre-stressed concrete, Eugene Freyssinet. As a result the proposed 277-metre (910 ft), six-lane, high-level concrete arch bridge was extended to 305 metres (1,000 ft and the design was accepted then the contract to build was issued.

DMR intended the new \$6.3 million Gladesville Bridge to be part of the Northwest Expressway that would act as a main artery to link Sydney with the northern suburbs, and through to Newcastle. Construction on the new Gladesville Bridge started in December 1959, and took nearly five years to complete. It was officially opened by Princess Marina (the Duchess of Kent who was on an extensive tour of Australia) on October 2 1964. The bridge was originally opened with six traffic lanes, but the extra-wide outer lanes enabled a later reconfiguration to take place. The bridge now has three northbound lanes and four southbound lanes, separated by a concrete median. At the time of construction it was the longest concrete arch bridge in the world.

Rod Stewart, President