

### 8.3. MM03: Vale Ian Stapleton

Ian Stapleton was one of the pioneers and pillars of heritage conservation in Sydney and indeed Australia. Schooled in Orange, he studied architecture at the University of Sydney between 1970 and 1975.

After graduation, Ian Stapleton worked for a short time in the Special Projects Section of the NSW Government Architect's Branch, which took on work involving heritage and historic buildings – in-keeping with the shifting attitudes towards conservation during this period culminating in the groundbreaking NSW *Heritage Act 1977*.

He then joined the architectural firm Fisher Lucas. At that time, Clive Lucas was one of a handful of private practitioners who specialised in the restoration and conservation of historic buildings. Clive Lucas and Ian Stapleton would become business partners. Clive Lucas Stapleton and Partners and more recently Lucas Stapleton Johnson [LSJ] are the manifestations of that enduring collaboration.

In the course of his long association with Clive Lucas, Ian Stapleton worked on a myriad projects, including the refurbishment of terrace houses in Woollahroomooloo, the redevelopment of the finger wharf there for residential and commercial use and the repurposing of Sydney's grand GPO. All are highly regarded among Stapleton's legacies.

Ian and his wife Maisy, herself a curator and heritage expert, moved to Waverton in the early 1980s. Over the course of the next 25 years they restored a beautiful Federation-era house. And together they wrote a regular series of articles on Australian architecture and restoration for the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

The Stapletons' articles formed the basis for Ian's book *How To Restore the Old Aussie House*, co-published by Fairfax and the National Trust of Australia (NSW) in 1983, and reprinted in 1991, 1993, 1998 and 2008. He collaborated with Clive Lucas and Ian Evans on *Colour Schemes for Old Australian Houses*, 1984, and *More Colour Schemes for Old Australian Houses*, 1993. All works featured his fine architectural drawings. In these pre-internet times, all were the culmination of years of on-site and archival study.

From the mid-1990s Ian and Maisy wrote *Australian House Styles* together. It was published in 1997 and reprinted several times.

Ian Stapleton was president of Australia ICOMOS [the International Council on Monuments and Sites] from 1992 to 1994. He helped draft the organization's Burra Charter, which remains the benchmark for best heritage practice.

Many of his projects won awards and accolades, among them the New South Wales National Trust Heritage Award for 2013 restoration of Don Bradman's childhood home in Bowral.

His firm has received over 50 awards from the Australian Institute of Architects (formerly Royal Australian Institute of Architects).

Ian and his firm made an impact on North Sydney too, both as a resident and a professional. Among the more than local 20 buildings on which he worked were 'Ingleneuk' in Cremorne, 'The Briars' in Wollstonecraft and 'Rob's Cottage' at Waverton.

Ian Stapleton received the National Trust (NSW) Lifetime Achievement Award in May 2023. He died the following month.

**I therefore recommend:**

- 1. THAT** Council acknowledge the significant contribution of the late Mr Ian Stapleton to heritage conservation and architecture and our community.
- 2. THAT** Council consult with Ms Maisy Stapleton and the Stapleton family in respect of the location of a tree to be planted in his memory and that following such consultation the tree be planted with a plaque identifying the reason for the planting.
- 3. THAT** Council write to Ms Maisy Stapleton and the Stapleton family expressing deep sympathy and condolences on the passing of Mr Stapleton and include a copy of this resolution.

**COUNCILLOR ZOË BAKER  
MAYOR**