

Living and Sharing Accommodation in Battery Point Or The Gappy Teeth Smile of Battery Point. I came to live in Battery Point in the mid 1960s. Like many other students of that era, I boarded with families, sharing accommodation the student way. Landladies shared their Battery Point and their expectations. The Wild Goose Folk Club, next to the "bottom butcher" was OK, church on Sunday at St George's almost mandatory, Kelly Steps "not to be used at night."

Later, as "a young married", I rented a flat on The Point, then bought a house, patronised the "top Butcher" and got to know the postman. I had firewood delivered and knew almost everyone in the street. Families in Battery Point knew one another and supported one another. Having no telephone, I was able to regularly accept calls from my distant family on my next door neighbour's phone.

Along with Play Group, local School activities, Community Hall responsibilities (letting the Hall and baking cakes for fundraising to "pay off" the Hall) and membership of the local National Trust Group, I became one of Miss Henslowe's volunteer Battery Point Guides. For 20 years, on regular Saturdays and specially arranged weekdays, I shared my knowledge and love of Battery Point.

When my children "left the nest" and I had the space, I decided to share my home and my interest in Battery Point and offer Bed and Breakfast from my home. Local Council planning approval and building and fire approval started the list of requirements for licencing approval at the time. Licencing authorities counted coat hangers, checked for bin liners and inspected pillows and mattresses at my accommodation and at the other Battery Point Bed and Breakfasts at the time. These accommodation hosts supported one another, shared information and helped out when bookings were a problem.

My very first guest, a Sydney Hobart sailor, has returned to stay every year for the twenty-one years I've enjoyed sharing my home with writers and gladly added their books to my shelves. At Festival of Voices time music has filled my house and I've helped bridal couples with ironing boards and umbrellas. Regular guests have become friends. I enjoy having new guests, often recommended by former guests. I have shared stories of historic characters and my Tasmanian library. I've helped guests with touring itineraries and enjoyed chatting with them all, Australian and International. Sharing my home, my interests and my suburb has been central to my business.

While the local School continues to "hum" and St Georges continues as a lively community influence Battery Point has changed in recent years. Along with a general "gentrification", eateries and coffee shops abound, Tour Guiding has become a commercial venture, parking permits have been introduced and postmen ride motor scooters. The accommodation licencing requirements of past years are no longer required. So the movement from hosted accommodation to the renting of whole houses has resulted in short term resident tourists, absentee house owners and drive in drive out service providers. Local hosted accommodation is outweighed by short term self-contained holiday accommodation.

Some sense of community remains, neighbourly "looking out for one another continues, but with whole houses let out on short term basis, we have a community smile of "gappy teeth". With a depletion of "real" community who will remember which is garbage night? Who will answer tourists queries? Not short term visitors staying in isolated houses, not even the workers in local businesses who drive in and out. Will short term visitors offer support the local School Fair or join the Community Association? The transient population will not know when their neighbour is in need or ill, let alone organise a food rota or take responsibility for a lost pet or, let's face it, even "Toss the Boss" on Friday night at the Prince of Wales?