

Newsletter of the Professional Historians' Association (NSW)

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PHANFARE

**25th Year Anniversary Issue with Vintage Original
Phanfare Cover**

Phanfare

NEWSLETTER of PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS ASSOCIATION, NSW

The Objects of the Association are:

*To set and maintain standards of professional practice
To promote the concept of professional history in the community
To advise professional historians and prospective employers on desirable terms of employment
To encourage professional development by means such as seminars, workshops, publications
To collect and disseminate information of interest to professional historians
To maintain links with similar organizations
To maintain the Register of its Professional Members*

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PHA NSW



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This issue was produced by the Hills District Group consisting of Ruth Banfield, Cathy Dunn, Terry Kass, Katherine Knight and Carol Liston.

President's Report

Twenty five years ago PHA (NSW) was established!

Part of our celebration is the conference *Islands of History* on Norfolk Island from 18-25 July. It is well subscribed with a wide-ranging programme. See <http://www.phansw.org.au>

The other part of the 25th anniversary celebrations will be at our annual *History in July* gathering on Wednesday 28th July at History House. Who were Edward, Viscount Lascelles and John Dow? Dr Kirsten McKenzie University of Sydney will answer this question when she speaks about *Swindlers, Rogues and Opportunists: Impostors in the British Empire*.

We recently supported the proposed new degree, Bachelor of Historical Inquiry, at UNE described as:

a response to demand away from the generic BA with a major in history, to a specifically named history degree ... Interest in the study of history of all types among many sections of the population continues to grow. The introduction of the Masters in History (M.Hist.) at UNE in 2009 has attained enrolments far exceeding original expectations ... Particularly popular topics are family, local history and **public history**, in all of which areas UNE is a leader in the field ... Our proposed degree will provide those who wish to work in museums, exhibition centres and publicly funded heritage and conservation bodies, a combination of study in professional areas, with more academic periodic and thematic

approaches and subjects in the discipline of history.

University of New England Proposed New Degree Bachelor of Historical Inquiry, 2010

We have completed our local government mail out, including rural councils, a grand total of 140 councils. Thanks are due to all the executive committee, but especially PHA Secretary, Jodi Frawley who co-ordinated much of the project, and member Mary Jean Sutton who assisted with research and data entry. It is important to keep reminding local and state government bodies that our expertise exists. We are now turning our attention to lobbying heritage consultants and some state government institutions to the skills and expertise that professional historians can and do provide.

In keeping with our aim to maintain links with other similar organisations, several PHA members represent the Association on allied committees. Terry Kass has represented us on the NSW Heritage Advisory Panel for two three-year terms and will be retiring soon and Jodi Frawley will take his place. Sue McClean has represented PHA interests on the Royal Australian Historical Society committee for three years and has just been elected for another term. I appreciate these and other members' participation on committees which are important in maintaining the profile of PHA (NSW).

At the latest PHA workshop we explored the City of Sydney website, in particular the archives section, with archivist Mark Stevens. The full professional development program for the next four or five months is posted on the website http://www.phansw.org.au/professional_dev.html

We assisted the Dictionary of Sydney Trust in its bid for ongoing funding and office space, as several of our members have been or are involved with this project.

Land and Property Management Authority are planning a major digitisation project for the Old System Titles (see enclosed article).

The Annual General Meeting is set for Wednesday 11 August at Royal Australian Historical Society at 6 pm. I hope to see many of you there to support your organisation.

Please contact me if any ideas or concerns for PHA (NSW).

Virginia Macleod

president@phansw.org.au

What Use is the PHA?

The year 2010 marks 25 years of the PHA, a welcome milestone for a small professional organisation run solely by its members on a voluntary basis with little or no paid staff. A remarkable achievement, yet I have heard that some younger members or potential members have been asking 'What use is the PHA?'

Though they are beneficiaries of the achievements of the PHA, they might think it has little or no value. But, they have no inkling of what the PHA has achieved in 25 years.

Maybe it is time to look back to what working conditions for consulting historians were like 25 years ago.

Twenty-five years ago, there were a few historians working outside the universities, the usual hiding places for such unworldly specialties, which to many had nothing to do with the realities of everyday life. History was a foolish hobby indulged in by a few eccentrics. That common attitude made it difficult for historical research and writing to be regarded seriously when undertaking commissioned work. Many historians working outside academe were active in heritage work though a few had salaried employment.

The problems were:

- No agreed rates of remuneration

- No standardised contracts plus an absence of sources of appropriate advice regarding contracts

- No support mechanism in times of dispute

- No peer support mechanism and nowhere to go to obtain relevant advice

- A lack of understanding of tax and superannuation issues

My own attempts to seek advice or set up some sort of support structure led me to enquire if there was a union that might be appropriate for me to join. Enquiries in various places lead me to the Health and Allied Research Employees Union as the 'most appropriate' for me (Yes, that's right. Believe it or not, that was the most suitable union for me!) Discussions with union representatives soon made it perfectly clear that they had little idea of what I did and that they were uncomfortable with a self-employed professional who worked in such a field.

So, when Heather Radi, told me one day in Mitchell, that a meeting of historians who were working like me was being held at the University of Sydney to propose a professional association, I was most interested. From that initial meeting, a larger meeting was called and in time, the PHA was formed.

What has the PHA achieved?

A recommended scale of fees

The formulation of advice regarding contracts

A programme of workshops and in-service training to improve professional skills

A Professional Indemnity Insurance scheme for consulting historians

An information service providing news of employment opportunities

The raising of the profile of professional historians and the value of their work to government departments, architectural and planning firms and amongst potential clients after years of patient and thankless lobbying

The publication of *Phanfare* which soon become more than a newsletter keeping members informed of matters of interest by turning into a medium for advocacy

Possibly, most valuable of all, has been the creation of a network which links professional historians so they can informally discuss matters that are of common interest or concern

I would rather not go back to the situation current for professional historians 25 years ago. The PHA carries out many vital roles undertaken by no other body. Keep the PHA strong. Support the organisation that supports you!

Terry Kass

The minutes of the inaugural meeting that set up the PHA are reproduced from the first *Phanfare*.

REMINDER

Membership renewals are due on 30 June 2010.

This year you can renew your membership either by **cheque** or **direct payment** to our bank account.

Please be sure to put your **name and renewal** in the description field and email the treasurer when you have paid treasurer@phansw.org.au.

The renewal form is at <http://www.phansw.org.au/membership.html>

MINUTES OF A PUBLIC MEETING OF HISTORIANS IN THE
CONFERENCE ROOM, ARCHIVES OFFICE OF NEW SOUTH WALES,
GLOBE ST., THE ROCKS, AT 6.00P.M., 27 FEBRUARY 1985.

Present: From the Steering Committee, Ann Mitchell (chair),
Terry Kass (minutes secretary), Carol Liston,
Kate Blackmore, Heather Radi.

Apologies:

Hilary Carey, Andrew Moore, Richard White, Debbie
Cramer, Ian Jack, Max Kelly, Janice Franklin,
Heather Nash, Geoff Sherrington, Ken Cable.

1. Nominations

A call was made for any additional nominations. None were
received.

2. Chairperson's report

Ann Mitchell reported that on the authority of the last
public meeting of 14 November 1984, that an account in the
name of the Professional Historians' Association, N.S.W.
was opened with the United Permanent Building Society,
Martin Place. The current balance is now \$744.77. Total
subscriptions and donations were in the order of about
\$930. Outgoings were about \$165. For instance, the cost
of printing, stationery and postage for this meeting was
exactly \$100.

3. Questionnaire

Heather Radi reported on the results of the questionnaire.
The first analysis of 25 replies was later done again when
more replies were received, but the results were almost
identical so the report on the questionnaire given to
members is based on those first 25. The results will provide
the incoming committee with data on the needs of members
and will be useful for the sub-committees.

4. Constitution

The constitution was introduced by Carol Liston who did much
of the work of drafting it. She noted that various con-
stitutions from comparable bodies were used to draft this
one. The new Associations Incorporations Act will shortly
become law and will benefit the P.H.A. considerably since we
will have the security of incorporation with few of the
costs. However, minor modifications had to be made to enable
us to fit under the new Act with minimal alteration later.

Ann Mitchell then went through the constitution. A list of
amendments on the draft distributed by post was also handed
out to members. There was considerable discussion, mostly

about the issues of membership and the organisation of general meetings, and about the Register of Professional members.

The following motions were put after discussion of the constitution.

THAT THIS MEETING APPROVES THE DRAFT, AS AMENDED, CONSTITUTING THE PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS' ASSOCIATION, N.S.W. AS RECOMMENDED BY THE STEERING COMMITTEE.

Carried unanimously.

THAT THIS MEETING AUTHORISES THE ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS' ASSOCIATION, N.S.W. WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT.

Carried unanimously.

THAT THIS MEETING AUTHORISES THE INCOMING MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TO MAKE SUCH AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS' ASSOCIATION, N.S.W. AS MAY BE NECESSARY TO BRING THE ASSOCIATION WITHIN THE PROVISIONS OF THE ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION ACT (1984).

Carried unanimously.

5. Election of Office bearers

Terry Kass read out the nominations received.

President: Ann Mitchell Vice-President: Kate Blackmore
Secretary: Carol Liston Treasurer: Heather Radi
Ordinary members: Hilary Carey
Terry Kass
Paul Ashton

No other nominations were received and the above were declared elected.

6. Appointment of an auditor

Ann Mitchell pointed out the constitutional requirement that the membership appoint an auditor and that this be delegated this time to the Management Committee. This was put in the form of a motion.

THAT THIS MEETING AUTHORISES THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TO APPOINT AN AUDITOR WHEN REQUIRED FOR THE PURPOSE OF AUDITING THE ACCOUNTS OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1984-85.

Proposed by Heather Radi
Seconded by Kate Blackmore
Carried unanimously.

7. Appointment of sub-committees.

The following persons signified their interest in the following sub-committees.

Ethics:	Ann Mitchell Mike Pearson	
Workshops:	Paul Ashton (Convenor) Terry Kass Carol Liston Hilary Weatherburn Ursula Bygott Christa Ludlow.	
Social:	John Shields Phil Mosely	Fees, Contracts, Copyright: Hilary Carey (convenor) Mark Lyons Helen Proudfoot.
Publications:	Heather Radi Catherine Snowden Rosemary Broomham Kate Blackmore Kimberley Webber	

8. Newsletter

It was suggested that the first newsletter be devoted to the minutes of this public meeting.

9. Vote of thanks

A vote of thanks to the Steering Committee for all the work they have put into framing the constitution and for other work done for the Association was moved from the floor and carried by acclamation.

PHANTALES

On 31 January 1918, 406 Victorian doctors under contract to friendly societies withdrew their services. The appointment of a Royal Commission failed to end their strike. The dispute dragged on for eighteen months. During that time the influenza epidemic caused unprecedented deaths. The dispute arose from the doctors intention of limiting friendly society services to lower income groups.

Introducing a course on dietetics for home service instructors in 1936 the General Manager of the Australian Gas Light Company said, "Possibly a great deal of lethargy and ineptitude sometimes displayed by certain men was traceable to a lack of calcium in the foods given them by their wives."

7

Book Reviews - Rivers, Lakes and Seas

I've just read a few histories which focus on waterways. Perhaps I have just become more attuned to the topic or maybe there is shift towards looking at water, rather than land. A century ago Australians thought of water as a mode of transport and for livelihood but recent angst about the state of rivers and lakes and the realisation that water has been misunderstood has brought it back into focus

Rosemary Broomham's *Myall Lakes National Park. A people's History* records the history and memories of an area, which before I read the book, I had only associated with environmental protest.

The Myall Lakes system is one of many NSW coastal lagoons which lie protected from the sea by dunes. This string of lagoons, or lakes, linked by creeks, stretches from Port Stephens to Smith's Lake, where it joins the sea. In all 31 000 hectares of land and 10 000 hectares of waterways (not including Smith's Lake) have been incorporated into a National Park. This book examines the natural features of the area and has a good variety of maps and an excellent timeline.

Unlike the lagoons on Sydney's northern beaches, for example, which were polluted by a variety of sources: industry, storm water run off, and waste disposal, Myall Lakes were situated at a sufficiently safe distance from Newcastle or any other growing urban centre. As a result for the first 150 years of colonisation the area was relatively undisturbed, apart from some timber cutting and milling. The impact of this was restricted by the limitations of technology and transport.

From the early twentieth century a few people made a living by fishing, especially once ice was produced locally, so fish could be preserved and shipped to markets in Newcastle and Sydney. The methods of fishing and boat building are interestingly described in the book. In the same period the Lakes were being promoted as a tourist destination. Excursionists arrived by steamer, or braved the rough roads in a coach, to stay in a few scattered guest houses.

By the middle of the century a few people settled in the area and campers arrived during the holiday seasons. This essential Australian experience is expressed through recorded recollections.

However this was to change during the 1950s and 1960s. The dunes which surround the lagoons were found to be rich in minerals and also offered a cheap source of sand. This altered the topography of Myall Lakes as large areas were excavated and roads formed. During this period scientists began to measure and study the geology, flora and fauna of the area. A campaign developed to prevent further dismantling of the dune system and preserve the area for a national park. The conflicting attitudes about this are well voiced in the book, quoting from interviews.

This story of changing settlement and lifestyle during the two centuries of colonisation is typical of coastal NSW where the attraction of lagoon areas close to the ocean, has meant camp sites sprang up. The impact of extractive industries here however has irrevocably changed a unique environment. Luckily some coastal lagoons in NSW have managed to escape human interference: mining, fishing or building, and maintain their natural rhythm,

intermittently opening or closing to the sea. But only a few have not been tampered with. Let's hope Myall Lakes, now managed as a National Park, will be degraded no further.

Rivers and Resilience by Heather Goodall and Alison Cadzow is concerned with the George's River as a point of reference for Aboriginal communities. Despite colonial and urban impact, the river has remained a means of travel and source of livelihood. Its length still forms an important communication line for the community today. Journalist Chris Hammer, a Canberra-based expert on the Murray Darling Basin, tells in *The River* how he set out to actually see for himself this vast system. His descriptions of dams, locks, canals, lakes, and other acts of human intervention are set in the history and economy of the area. Dry riverbeds, jetties marooned miles from any water, and parched wetlands are there too. He also contrasts the health of the Paroo River, which has been largely left to its natural devices. Overall the book conveys the diversity and complexity of these major rivers.

While all the authors are well-versed in the history of the waterway they describe, their writing draws strongly on the voices and recollection of individuals who once lived there, or are living there now. It is the human viewpoint derived from interviews and including direct quotes which has made the history much stronger.

Virginia Macleod

ooOOOoo

What is a Phantale?

Newer members of the PHA may not know what a Phantale is. Similar to the short biographies of film stars that appeared on the Fantaes confectionery wrappers, the PHA Phantale was a short or pithy anecdote. Often they were amusing. At other times, they simply evoked a heartfelt sigh of recognition from other consulting historians as they recognised the scenario described. And now, here is a Phantale.

A Phantale

Recently, a weekend gathering of medieval re-enactors (the people who get dressed up in appropriate armour to re-enact medieval tournaments and battles) was held in the Glenworth Valley north of Sydney. Participants attending the re-enactment had to spend the weekend in medieval dress even if they are not involved in fighting, and even if they were merely visiting or watching. There are many other activities including dancing, feasts, making clothing and artefacts and so on, apart from tournaments and battles.

Amongst the entertainments, there were a number of bars operating at the festival. One of them advertised that it featured 'lingerie waitresses'.

But, what a surprise for those seeking a thrill. Medieval 'lingerie' consisted of numerous layers of neck to knee shifts!

Old System Title - Land and Property Management Authority Workshop 22 April 2010

The LPMA intends to convert all its land title records to digital form. It has recognized that its records held on paper are unique and therefore vulnerable. While digitization of the Old Form Torrens Title volumes is complete, the program to digitise Old System Title records and indexes is still at the planning stage.

It has engaged a company, Recordkeeping Innovation (Barbara Reed, Director), to advise it on options and priorities for digitisation of the Old System records.

The records which have been identified for consideration are:

- Old System Grants Register 1792-1862 (388 volumes register, 15 volumes index)
- Deeds Register 1823-1892
- General Register 1825-1992 (10 million images)
- Vendors Index (1455 volumes)
- Purchasers Index (357 volumes)
- Miscellaneous Register of Deeds 1920-1976 (1708 volumes) Powers of Attorney, etc.
- Primary Application Search Books (120 shelf metres) Evidence of ownership provided by the landowner – bound and organised by PA number.
- Primary Application Search Sketches (16.2 linear metres) Internal working documents - unbound and organized by PA number.
- Official Searches 1920-22 (71 linear metres) Internal working documents, created when the LPMA provided all evidence for conversion to Torrens Title – loose paper in envelopes.
- Official Search Sketches (8 volumes) – Accompanying the above – loose papers and folders
- Miscellaneous Old System Searches (20 volumes) Failed searches, or searches too big to store in the other sequences.

The earliest that digitisation can start is in 2011-12, and the project is still at the planning stage. The above records are all State Archives, they will never be destroyed, but will be progressively moved out of Queens Square and conserved once they are digitised.

Currently, partial or complete digitisation are the only options being considered. The cost of the project will be between \$7 million and \$9 million.

It is recognised that the Indexes will present a challenge, because they are partly typed and partly handwritten. In the handwritten section (before 1903), the surname does not appear against every first name, but is placed at the beginning of the sequence of names, and the top of the succeeding pages. Indexes will therefore need to be consolidated and enhanced.

Technical questions to be dealt with:

- Colour filming or black & white?
- How long will the records be out of circulation?
- Do the records need to be separated and rebound?

- Priority of typed records over handwritten?
- Will there be standalone products like the CD of the Old Register?

Criteria to be used to determine the order of priority for digitisation:

- Age of record
- Status as a vital record
- Condition
- Relative archival value
- Quantity

Priorities determined by the consultants:

- 1792-1824 Old System land indexes and grants registers
- Vendors Index to General Register 1825-1892
- Index to Miscellaneous Register 1920-1950
- General Register in chronological order from Book 3 (the earlier sequence is on microfilm at State Records)

The consultants recommended that the Causes Writs and Orders and the Searches and Sketch material not be digitised. This caused much discussion in the audience, who were mostly Old System searchers. They put in a very strong request (which historians would support) for digitisation of the Search Books and Search Sketches.

LPMA has recognised that there is already competition over access to the Research Kiosks in Queens Square, now that access to the Old Form Torrens register is only digital. They intend to put kiosks in the State Library and State Records (Kingswood and The Rocks), but there are no plans to make them available in country NSW. The State Library representative suggested that the library network might be used to achieve this.

Lesley Muir
RAHS

An influential gatekeeper at Sydney's Botanic Gardens



Banksia serrata – in the Cadi Jam Ora garden. The banksia family is named after the botanist Sir Joseph Banks.

At the Botanic Gardens CPD workshop in March, it was apparent there was a warm and productive relationship between historian Jodi Frawley and RBG library technician Miguel Garcia. For Miguel, Jodi's research had thrown light on previously unknown aspects of the Garden's history. For Jodi, Miguel and his staff's support in her research contributed to her success in gaining her PhD.

Both spoke with such enthusiasm that I wanted to learn more about Jodi's post graduate theses, copies of which are in the library. Jodi's research had begun with an honours thesis for her BA in Communications, Social, Political, Historic Studies 2004 – "Information, People, Place – Global botanical information networks and local nineteenth century Australian Botanic Gardens".

The concept of Botanic Gardens as places of scientific enquiry developed during the last 300 years, she wrote. According to local physical and political environments, some also became urban parks or recreation centres. Botanic Gardens were established in empires and republics through the world. They proliferated during the colonial era of the 19th century. During this period, the flow of botanical information and ideas was becoming globalised from local bases.

Jodi's thesis focuses on the social relationships that underpinned these developments – “the relations between botanists, gardeners, scientists, settlers and indigenous communities”.¹ She considers “local/global spatial configuration in relation to three Australian botanic gardens: Sydney, Brisbane and Rockhampton”.²

Among the results of her investigation, Jodi concludes that “the activity of the information gatekeeper was pivotal in the institutional and spatial arrangement of a local place”.³ This led to her investigation of the role of Joseph Henry Maiden, the influential 10th director of Sydney Botanic Gardens, whose tenure extended from 1896 to 1924. Her PhD thesis, “Botanical Knowledges, Settling Australia – Sydney Botanic Gardens 1896 – 1924”, was completed through the Department of History, School of Philosophical and Historical Enquiry, University of Sydney in 2009.

The gardens were part of the site of first dispossession of indigenous people. From 1788 soil was tilled and efforts made to grow crops, vegetables and fruits. In 1816, the site was first described as botanic gardens; among the oldest in the world. Throughout the 19th century, the role of the Sydney Botanic Gardens expanded from cultivating seed and plants intended to feed a growing population.



A colonial vegetable garden has been recreated as an educational resource.

Sometimes major community events were held in the gardens. Staff were housed on site and the gardens were home to animals both domesticated and wild. Propagating houses produced

¹ Frawley J, *Information, People, Place – Global botanical information networks and local nineteenth century Australian Botanic Gardens*, honours thesis for BA in Communications, Social, Political, Historic Studies, UTS, 2004, p. 6.

² Ibid., p. 7.

³ Ibid., p. 56.

plants for civic streets, spaces and institutions. Simultaneously, the gardens maintained their role as a scientific institution.

In this way, the Sydney Botanic Gardens' role became distinct from those of Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Rockhampton. They had all been collectors and acclimatisers of plants and seeds for their respective colonial governments to assist in regional settlement. By the end of the 1800s, however, they were losing their scientific functions to other institutions and becoming increasingly recreation focused.

By contrast, under the direction of Joseph Henry Maiden, the scientific role of the Sydney Botanic Gardens grew exponentially from 1896. Staff numbers increased and the gardens "became a substantial archive of Australian botany".⁴ Non-Australian plants, information and material in the collection expanded and the herbarium, library, museum and gardens all grew.

For Maiden the roles of herbarium and garden were "indissolubly united"⁵ just as they were in major botanical institutions like Kew, Paris and New York.

During the three decades researched, closer settlement was a driving force of governments in Australia. Closer settlement meant occupation and cultivation of Aboriginal lands, the transition from pastoralism to more regulated, smaller landholdings and the transfer of new immigrants attracted to mid nineteenth century goldfields, to new roles in agriculture and the emerging dairy industry.

Sydney's Botanic Gardens worked to support closer settlement by such activities as researching indigenous and exotic fodder grasses and gathering and disseminating information through transnational networks. In these ways, Jodi argues, they were complicit in the continuing dispossession of indigenous people while enhancing "the claim to land as a right of those belonging to the nation".⁶

Her investigations draw from post-colonial theory distinguishing settler-colonial theory from other types of colonial occupation. By the 1890s she describes Sydney Botanic Gardens retaining imperial connections, especially with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, but determining to be self-styled, "where science was for Australians".⁷

Because the gardens had retained their full scientific function in building their collection and research, they became a significant player in a transnational information network. Their collection, information and research were essentially "useful" in their application. Through the transnational network, key crops like tea, rubber, sugar cane, sisal and various timbers could be developed around the world and ideas and information about them be exchanged. This was a critical contribution to a country's economy.

While acknowledging the incompleteness of the Sydney Botanic Gardens archive as it relates to records of Maiden's work, Jodi pays particular attention to the colonial science principles that overlook the importance of "country" to indigenous peoples. "Country" has depths of

⁴ Frawley J, *Botanical Knowledges, Settling Australia - Sydney Botanic Gardens, 1896 – 1924*, PhD Thesis completed through the Department of History, School of Philosophical and Historical Enquiry, University of Sydney, 2009, p. 10.

⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

meaning, including spiritual and cultural, not recognised by the scientists collecting plants for the Botanic Gardens.

The hypothesis of Jodi's thesis is "that the Sydney Botanic Gardens played a key role in supporting the intensification of colonial settlement through its attempts to command and move botanical knowledges drawn from transnational network".⁸

She examines the biography of Maiden himself and the influences and practices that made him such an important "gatekeeper" in the development of the institutional collections. Next, she looks at botanical collecting and the production of botanical knowledge. Using the example of the blackbutt gum tree, she details the way in which scientific description enabled the transfer of botanical knowledge through the transnational network, simultaneously overwriting indigenous knowledges. Networks of reciprocity created resources available to the Sydney Botanic Gardens.

From the production of botanical knowledges, Jodi then considers the way in which they were mobilised. She gives particular attention to prickly pear, wattles and street trees.

In all of this, she considers Joseph Henry Maiden to have had a key role. His personal experience and character seem to have equipped him well for his eventual position as director of the gardens. Born in 1859 in Manchester, his family's move to London in 1872 saw him attend the London Middle Class School, where he was first given care of a museum collection. Teaching there linked collection with experience in the field.

He progressed to work which linked pure with applied science and communication with a broad audience. In 1880, he embarked on a tour to Australia. In Sydney, he found his way into a growing scientific community and subsequently an appointment as curator, lecturer and secretary to the newly established Technological Museum. In order to distinguish the museum from other emerging institutions, he developed a complementary body of research.

Rather than compete with the Botanic Gardens, Maiden's work on economic botany included research on the chemical composition of indigenous plants and the practical application of materials like Kino, resins and tannin. During his 14 years at the Technological Museum, his associations with many local and professional societies expanded, giving him a broad view of useful colonial science.

Like many of his scientific colleagues, Maiden subscribed to the "doomed race" theory, teaching children about plant foods of the Aborigines, while advising that the people were dying out. Only scientists could access and authenticate these botanical knowledges.⁹

Anthropology was a flourishing discipline in the late 19th century and Jodi writes that it has been shown to impact on research results in the period. Its corollary in Australia was the emergence of the White Australia Policy; a position reinforced through transnational communication with settler colonial societies like South Africa and the United States. Maiden's part in research and discourse was inevitably affected by this cultural perspective as he worked to support settlement.

⁸ Ibid., p. 29.

⁹ Ibid., p. 59.



A gunya, recreated by Aboriginal people in Cadi Jam Ora.

When Maiden took up the directorship of the Sydney Botanic Gardens in 1896, he took charge of a park complex and collections of plant material and information. The parks included the Botanic Gardens, Government Domains, Garden Palace Grounds, Centennial Park, the State Nursery, Campbelltown and the management of other state gardens.

Development of the herbarium collections of leaves, flowers and seeds and their associated information sheets became a primary goal under Maiden. Jodi argues that “herbarium sheets were both colonisers, in the sense that they mapped Australia for a non-indigenous community, and a transnational instrument able to be sent out to multiple locations around the world”.¹⁰

Botanical illustration was a vital part of field and laboratory work. Highly skilled botanical illustrator Margaret Flockton was the first to be employed in an Australian herbarium. She was appointed by Maiden in 1901 and was a member of the staff for 27 years.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 67.



Cadi Jam Ora offers an Aboriginal perspective on the site, where storyboard and garden have been developed with indigenous people.

Under Maiden's leadership, the library collection was greatly expanded, and the gardens themselves were sites of constant testing, acclimatising, botanising and cultivating of both Australian and exotic plants. His guiding principle of economic botany ensured that the Sydney Botanic Gardens became a useful organisation. The role of the Botanic Gardens under Maiden was infinitely more than "the provision of graceful parks on the banks of Port Jackson".¹¹

Jodi ends her thesis by suggesting: "Perhaps the post colonial narrative of the Sydney Botanic Gardens might include more participation from indigenous peoples. Maiden could never have anticipated this particular use of the collections, but the beauty of his collection style was that it created cultural possibilities through constant and continual mobilisation".¹²

While a brief summary of her theses can't possibly do justice to Jodi's research and writing, I can certainly appreciate Miguel Garcia's observation: "The value of her work to our own understanding of these gardens and their place in history is invaluable. I really do like Jodi's thoroughness of investigation of cultural perspectives."

Story and photos
Katherine Knight

¹¹ Ibid., p. 74.

¹² Ibid., p. 315.

Elizabeth Bay House – A Reply

Roslyn Burge, reporting on the launch of Sue Rosen's book on Experiment Farm at The Mint on 17 March (*Phanfare*, no 240, Jan-Feb 2010), quoted Paul Keating's passing reference to a 'dumbing down' of Elizabeth Bay House by the Historic Houses Trust. She also noted the call for more involvement of historians on heritage projects. One could consider it ironic that the interpretation of Elizabeth Bay House by the Historic Houses Trust, that offends the former prime minister, is largely based on extensive primary research undertaken by professional historians. And before proceeding, I should declare an interest as one of the historians engaged by the Historic Houses Trust to undertake primary research on Elizabeth Bay House in the 1980s.

Elizabeth Bay House, the state's most elegant and sophisticated example of 1830s domestic architecture, was built 1835-39 for Alexander Macleay, Colonial Secretary of NSW 1826-37.¹³ Macleay (1767-1848), accompanied by his wife Elizabeth and their six surviving daughters, arrived in Sydney in 1826 and moved into the rent-free Colonial Secretary's residence facing Macquarie Place. He was a civil servant from 1795 until enforced retirement in 1818 when his senior position was abolished following the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Macleay was also honorary secretary of the Linnean Society of London 1798-1825 and was highly regarded in scientific circles for his entomological and botanical knowledge.¹⁴ He brought with him to the colony, his renowned insect collection (the largest and one of the finest in private ownership)¹⁵ and a scholarly library of over 4000 volumes. Granted 54 acres at Elizabeth Bay soon after his arrival, Macleay began his transformation of the site into a horticultural showcase of indigenous and exotic species acquired by exchange or purchase from explorers, collectors and botanical gardens world-wide.

In 1981 when control of Elizabeth Bay House passed to the Historic Houses Trust of NSW (established in 1980 by Neville Wran, then Premier of NSW) it had been a house museum since 1977. The State Planning Authority had instigated restoration of the house to serve as the official residence of the Lord Mayor of Sydney in 1973. The ground floor rooms were to be a venue for civic receptions held by the Council and State Government agencies, while the upper floor was converted to two apartments: one for the Lord Mayor, the other for guests of the Council. By 1976 restoration costs had trebled to \$750,000 prompting newly-elected Premier Wran's determination that there should be greater access to the general public, hence its opening as a house museum the following year.

The restoration of the house's physical fabric had been overseen by architect Clive Lucas. The interiors featured bold decorative schemes, lavish furnishings, a spectacular chandelier from a palace of the Maharajah of Mysore, and a fine collection of William IV furniture. The mansion's grand neo-classical architecture complemented by such splendid aesthetic interiors, was indeed a residence redolent of a prestigious, affluent civil servant and man of science.

¹³ Scott Carlin, *Elizabeth Bay House: a history & guide*, Sydney, Historic Houses Trust of NSW, 2000.

¹⁴ Honouring Alexander Macleay were the butterfly *Macleayum graphianum graphianum* and plants *Macleaya cordata* and *Zeuzera macleayi*.

¹⁵ The scientific collections of Alexander Macleay and his son William Sharp Macleay, were inherited by Macleay senior's nephew William John Macleay who later presented them to the University of Sydney together with his own collection and an endowment to build the Macleay Museum.

When the Historic Houses Trust assumed management of the house only one upstairs room was open to visitors, consequently the priority was the return of the upper floor rooms to their original form. This involved the gradual dismantling (without inconveniencing visitors) of the two apartments: removal of false walls, kitchens, bathrooms and lavatories, all of which had been constructed with minimal disturbance to the original physical fabric.

In the interim, as had been the procedure with Vacluse House and Elizabeth Farm, the Historic Houses Trust embarked on a program of extensive documentary research and further investigation of the internal fabric. Research of the Macleay family papers and other collections in the Mitchell Library, SLNSW, National Library of Australia and the Linnean Society of London revealed the substantial debts that Alexander Macleay had left behind in England. His British pension was not forthcoming, his brother's bank in Scotland, of which he was a partner, had failed. There were the domestic and educational expenses of a large family. He maintained city and country properties, spending liberally on landscape improvements to the latter, and had recklessly continued to expend borrowed funds on the acquisition of rare 'type' specimens.¹⁶

In the large collection of letters written from Sydney to her older brother William in Cuba, Fanny, the Macleays' eldest daughter, informed him that most of their father's salary of £2000 and his British pension of £750 (drawn on colonial funds) was sent home to appease creditors. Fanny bemoaned the difficulties of 'keeping up appearances', that she and her sisters had to make their own clothes and undertake household chores as they could not afford servants and Mama did not like convict servants in the house. Fanny expressed continuous concern about her father's lavish expenditure on landscape improvements to his land grants Elizabeth Bay and Brownlow Hill at Cobbitty, the building of a house at the latter and ultimately the planned grand residence at Elizabeth Bay for which foundations were laid in 1835.¹⁷

In 1837 Macleay was again forced into retirement when Edward Deas Thomson was installed as Colonial Secretary by his father-in-law Governor Bourke. Macleay was permitted to rent the official residence until Elizabeth Bay House was habitable in late 1839. Now without a salary Macleay's precarious financial situation was exacerbated by the 1840s depression. Fanny had died in 1836 denying us her perceptive comments on the family during this period. However the papers of her brothers, William, George and James, who had joined the family in the colony, detailed the bald facts of their father's ongoing financial crises.

William, a retired judge and well-known natural scientist, who arrived in 1839, had loaned his father a total of £13,000 since 1824. He allowed his father to charge current bills on him, and probably took the pragmatic decision to halt construction of Elizabeth Bay House's intended portico and encircling colonnade - as depicted by Conrad Martens. By the end of 1844, frustrated by his father's failure to curb expenditure, William took action to recoup some funds and to retain the house in the family. He sold to the government - for the new Government House - the drawing room furniture and furnishings purchased in England for

¹⁶ A type specimen is that used to scientifically describe and name an insect and is usually the first of its type discovered.

¹⁷ ML A4301-A4303 and also published by Historic Houses Trust: Beverley Earnshaw and Joy Hughes (eds), *Fanny to William: the letters of Frances Leonora Macleay, 1812-1836*, Sydney, Historic Houses Trust of NSW in assn with Macleay Museum, University of Sydney, 1993.

which he had not been reimbursed. He then took over ownership of the house and its mortgages as full settlement of his loans to his father that then exceeded £18,000. William's insistence that his parents vacate the mansion as an outward display of economy to local creditors, led to his estrangement from the family.

The evidence provided by documents relating to William's transactions, together with further analysis of the paint schemes, and the ramifications of Alexander's serial indebtedness, produced a very different scenario for the house. The options considered by the Historic Houses Trust's advisory team of senior decorative arts curators, historians, architectural and landscape historians, education and public programs officers, were for the house to continue as an acclaimed showcase of period interiors, or to turn the house into an historic house museum reflecting its occupants at a specific period. (Research had also provided comprehensive information on the house when occupied by Alexander's nephew, William John Macleay and his wife Susan.)¹⁸ In 1988 it was determined that Elizabeth Bay House should be interpreted 'according to the evidence available of its occupancy by Alexander Macleay and his family between the years 1839 and 1845.'¹⁹

The use of new technology to analyse paint fragments²⁰ revealed that during the relevant period most of the ground floor rooms were not painted – reflecting Alexander's straitened circumstances. They had only an interim finish of polished plaster, consequently the dining room's bold red walls and those of gold in the drawing room (proven to be much later schemes), were replaced by light grey to resemble the plaster. The elaborate picking out of colour in the arcades and blue of the dome in the saloon were a second scheme and they were returned to an earlier bland colour. A 1920s photograph of the saloon found at the RAHS showed that the underneath of the cantilevered stone stair and all the consoles were unpainted. The existing coloured paint could not be stripped from the stone without risk, so it was painted over in grey to resemble unpainted stone. In the breakfast room, a very early wallpaper fragment was found on top of a window architrave, consequently the 1860s paper installed in the 1970s was replaced by an 1840s document paper that matched the red and buff floral patterned fragment. In the entrance hall layers of paint were stripped to reveal the stunning painted faux green marble in the blind arch to the saloon and the recessed arches surrounding the doors.

Among the key documents was the 1845 assignment of the property from Alexander to William that included an inventory of the house and its furniture of assorted styles and finishes and no evidence of rooms replete with Greek Revival William IV furniture.²¹ A full account of changes of furniture to match the inventory would make a tedious read but the replacement of the neo-classical William IV dining room sideboard with a florid Louis Revival mahogany one exemplifies the stylistic changes made to the rooms.

¹⁸ Lady (Susan) Macleay, Estate Papers, Makinson & D'Apice, Clients Papers, ML MSS 1440/35; James Macarthur Onslow, Correspondence regarding renovations to Elizabeth Bay House, 1892-93, Private collection. Elizabeth Bay House was inherited by Alexander's great grandson, James Onslow (later Macarthur Onslow) whose descendants carefully preserved and donated the Macleay family papers to the Mitchell Library, SLNSW.

¹⁹ Susan Hunt, *Eleven Years On: the refurbishment of Elizabeth Bay House*, Sydney, Historic Houses Trust of NSW, 1989.

²⁰ Peter Lovell, Investigation of Decorative Finishes at Elizabeth Bay House. Report prepared for the Historic Houses Trust of NSW, February 1988.

²¹ LPMA, Book 8, No 277.

Another key document was the Colonial Architect's detailed account of the Elizabeth Bay House drawing room furniture, furnishings and fittings purchased for the new Government House.²² It revealed that in this one room the Macleays had been surrounded by fashionable and grand furnishings. The drawing room was reinstated with a rosewood suite upholstered in yellow striped tabouret according to the Colonial Architect's comprehensive description that also enabled the discovery of the rosewood loo and side tables still in use at Government House, as are the curtains' splendid gilt cornices. Surprisingly – and another indication of Macleay's lack of funds - the curtains and swags were of muslin with a valance of red and yellow bullion fringes; there were no traditional outer curtains of a heavier fabric, consequently the existing rich yellow moire curtains were removed and replaced with pairs of unbleached muslin. And obviously, possessing no Australian provenance whatsoever, the Maharajah of Mysore's superb chandelier, had to go.

Although it was not mentioned in either inventory, a piano was placed in the drawing room. Such item was *de rigueur* in drawing rooms and it was considered safe to assume it had been taken by the Macleays or daughter Kennethina when they removed to Brownlow Hill. A similar assumption could be made concerning the main and second bedrooms as neither was included in an inventory, consequently their interiors were furnished according to the period. However among George Macleay's papers, was an inventory of pictures and engraved portraits his father had taken when he left the house; copies of these engravings are purchased when funds allow.²³

The detached servants' quarters had been demolished by 1927, but an office on the upper floor, known to have been used by a lady's maid, and small rooms in the attic storey were modestly furnished as servants' bedrooms. The butler's pantry, which had been converted to a swanky ladies powder room in the 1970s, when stripped revealed the outlines of the original cupboards and shelving. They were replicated, and the 1845 inventory used to reinstate the contents. These alterations established the presence of servants, albeit a token recognition. Research identified convicts and immigrants who worked at Elizabeth Bay House. The property's education and public programs are based on the primary research material held in eight, or more, lever arch folders, and cover diverse aspects of the family, servants, scientific collections, the library, gardening, the house, its contents and its setting – even food and cooking based on menus found in William's papers in the Linnean Society of London.

What about the expense of the reinterpretation? With Sydney's climate and the wear and tear from over half a million visitors since 1977, the house was due for a new coat of paint in any case. The superior pieces of William IV furniture were more appropriately housed in decorative arts institutions. Some items were needed by other house museums. The Historic Houses Trust received official permission to de-accession the surplus furniture, curtains, and objects. These were put to auction and the proceeds, including a substantial return on the chandelier, helped fund Elizabeth Bay House's new acquisitions.

²² Colonial Architect, SRNSW, 2/8164, pp 31-2, 331-7.

²³ William inherited his father's collection; George, another son inherited his father's debts. Thomas Barker's papers included a plan of settlement for Alexander Macleay's estate. Despite wealth from pastoralism, it took George until 1859 to pay the last of his father's creditors. Barker Papers, NLA, MS 3603

The Historic Houses Trust's reinterpretation of Elizabeth Bay House was condemned in some quarters. Letters of protest from leading antique dealers, social commentators and prominent eastern suburbs matrons filled the letters to the editor pages. All involved with the 1970s restoration were cognizant of the 1845 documents but chose to follow the path of romance and good taste. And one columnist complained that purists at Historic Houses Trust had made the interiors very dreary indeed - and, "SHOCK, HORROR", had removed the superb chandelier. And twenty years down the track, another critic is obviously still hurting, so perhaps the gaucheness of denigrating an institution on its home turf should be overlooked.

Elizabeth Bay House with its magnificent internal architecture and its chastened decoration and furnishings allows visitors to more accurately reflect on the economic circumstances, activities and lifestyles of the family and servants who lived and worked there between 1839 and 1845. So dear reader, consider your verdict! Was it a 'dumbing down' or an exercise in scholarship?

Joy Hughes

PHA AGM

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 11 August 2010 6 pm

Venue: Royal Australian Historical Society, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney.

In order to vote, members must have paid their membership fees for 2010-2011.

Eligible members are encouraged to nominate for positions on the Executive or for the sub-committees.

Book Review

World Square, from Ceremonial Grounds to International Precinct by Terri McCormack, C L Creations, 2009

This book is a historical account of the development of the area around the World Square in Sydney, from aboriginal ceremonial grounds to the international precinct it is today by professional historian Terri McCormack. This is an attractive glossy publication. This book chronicles the albeit sometimes problematical history of the World Square site in Sydney.

Terri gives good documentation of the early aboriginal settlement before the arrival of Captain Cook. The aboriginals used the area as a ceremonial site where disputes between tribes were settled. It was a place of great significance for the earliest custodians of the land. The Gadigal tribe gave the name Eora to describe the area. When the British arrived the clay soil provided raw material for the bricks of the first permanent buildings in Sydney. This is why the area became known as Brickfield hill. It became a commercial centre when the markets nearby attracted Chinese workers and became known as Chinatown.

One of the largest department stores in Sydney was opened by the Hordern family in the late 19th century. The Hordern family had moved into the area in 1844. These clever retailers established an Emporium, which was burnt down in 1901. A new even bigger emporium was built on the same site. It took up a whole city block. Most of us will recall it was the site of the majestic Palace Emporium, Anthony Hordern & Sons that opened on 11th September 1905 and closed in October 1969. The store's Logo "While I live I Grow" with the signature Moreton Bay fig tree was well known by Baby Boomers as was, the Moreton Bay fig planted by Anthony Hordern on Razorback Mountain near Picton. It recently died but was replaced after public outcry because it was such a significant historical landmark. This amazing department store served 30,000 people in 1920 daily as well as providing a mail order service. The store employed 4000 people in 1930.

Phanfare readers will no doubt remember when this site was a huge hole in the ground for almost a decade. The old Anthony Hordern Building was demolished in 1986 after many attempts to save it by the National Trust and many others. The site was valued then at \$13 million dollars and the rest of the World Square site at \$50 million.

This book charts the massive plans of Malaysian investors and Japanese architects and how these were put on hold for a period of 10 years while development proposals and planning decisions constantly changed. Construction began again in 1995. It tells of power struggles between councils, government, unions and developers. As it stands today it houses the city's tallest residential tower providing office and retail space as well. It also houses a hotel. In the late 1800s, the block had seven hotels on the site. This comprehensive book is well researched and written. It is an interesting read, interspersed with glossy reproductions of historical prints and photographs. Terri has entwined interviews and oral histories with research from the City of Sydney archives to create a history of a unique part of Sydney.

Ruth Banfield

Myth and Memory – Making a Nation

In the midst of the NSW National Trust Heritage Festival and the approach of ANZAC Day, the April History @ The Hero discussion had a special relevance. Led by Associate Professor Paula Hamilton and Paul Ashton of UTS, Myth and Memory – Making a Nation considered some of the complexities of national heritage as expressed through memorials and commemorative events, literature, film, and other media. Shifting interpretation and emphasis occur with the passing of generations, changes in society and political leadership.

For specific illustration, Paul Ashton drew from his recent article for the Journal of Historical Studies. There are some who promote the notion of an authorised version of heritage, he said. When the NSW Heritage Act was established in 1977, it had a very prescriptive taxonomy and 26 themes. These were ultimately abandoned as complexity became increasingly apparent about nation, social orders and cultural practices. Retrospective commemoration of people who have contributed to the nation's development highlighted these difficulties.

The socially sanctioned and institutionally supported versions of history overwhelm others. Until the 1967 federal indigenous referendum, recorded Australian history was primarily white and Christian. Australians are not used to thinking about their history as “contentious, morally compromised and volatile”, Paul said.

He cited a case study of memorials since the beginning of the Snowy Mountains Scheme in 1949. Ethnic aspects of the scheme's work force were subsumed by stories of hardship, rugged landscapes and national construction. Not until the 1970s was the role of ethnic labour acknowledged, the deaths of 121 workers and thousands of injuries. It was during this time that multiculturalism as a policy replaced assimilation. Difference was now tolerated and immigrants were no longer required to merely “fit in”.

By the 50th anniversary of the scheme in 1999, the Howard Government promoted the role of immigrants, Paul said. Official speeches described the 30 different nationalities employed on the Snowy Mountains Scheme as a major contributor to multicultural Australia. It was projected as a symbol of national unity, whereas the reality of the workforce included violent conflict, heavy drinking and prostitution.

On the Federal Heritage Database, war memorials comprise 25%. With many state databases the proportion is much higher. In a limited study of post 1960 memorials in communities across the country, records are often not available and the memorials become simply ephemeral.

Paula Hamilton explored the meaning of “nation” and the feeling of “being Australian”. She quoted concepts of a shared past as an essential element of nation, where “people must together remember a lot and forget a lot”, through “daily plebiscite”.

The feeling of being Australian may be difficult to define, she said, but it's there – a sense of belonging. Important to identity as “Australian” is collective memory and whether you are remembered or not. It is a constantly shifting notion affected by many different perceptions.

Some argue that “national” is no longer important. For others it is a matter of great importance, especially for those who seek inclusion, like indigenous and culturally diverse

populations. With the growth in the proportion of aged people comes the influence of passing on historical information, or not. They can be seen as “monuments” and there have been programs designating older citizens as “national treasures”.

Collective memory is important beyond the individual life and requires an agreed interpretation. It may be expressed through memorials, landscapes, literature etc. Who decides? Historians may shape national memory, but there are many others with a powerful influence. Writers like Les Carlyon and Thomas Keneally, politicians and the media play an important part. Commemorating events and marking anniversaries can be very significant. Since the TV series *Changi*, Japanese prisoners of war have become part of the national story.

Tourism is an important influence in shaping the national story and includes battlefields and convict heritage. Shame is still a very important issue in acknowledging events like the Myall Creek massacre, but for those affected to feel included in the national story, appropriate commemorations and expressions are needed.

Opinions can polarise with accusations of forgetting or remembering and competition to be included in the national story. Following the attention given to the “Stolen Generation” of indigenous children, others have claimed attention. The current focus on the “Forgotten Children” of British migration, draws attention from others.

Paula expressed the need for greater nuancing of notions of identity and belonging to avoid the divisive impact of competitive memory. Governments may encourage particular types of memorials and their influence on public history and commemoration can distort collective memory. Currently, there is a struggle in Canberra between government departments and institutions over who will control commemorations in 2014 of the beginning of World War I. A commemoration like ANZAC Day is often the only time when individual lives intersect with the national, Paula said. With the loss of all World War I veterans, there are no longer any living memories. Memory hardens and almost becomes myth. How many Australians are aware that there was anyone else at Gallipoli but Australians? Memorials can come to dominate the national consciousness.

ANZAC has been discovered by a new generation of young people and instead of fading from public memory as was once anticipated, its importance seems to be increasing. At the same time, there is an intergenerational unease about who should be marching, particularly because the experience of World War II is still in living memory.

Questions of what might a new generation be looking for were discussed. Are commemorations like ANZAC Day a substitute for religion, which has been losing its significance since 1960? Why has there been such a proliferation of roadside memorials in recent years? Myth frequently takes on its own life for a multitude of reasons, as in surf life saving history. The professional historian armed with factual evidence, may be able to negotiate interpretations.

A stimulating evening. Roll on next History @ The Hero!

Katherine Knight

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