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Bumper Christmas Issue



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

President's Report

A number of PHA members, along with many other people involved with history, had the opportunity to meet the new State Librarian, Regina Sutton, at a recent afternoon tea arranged by the Library. Ms Sutton said that historians were the most important clients of the Library, and that she intended to consult with the profession regularly to ensure that our needs are met. It is quite clear that a new consultative spirit is being created within the State Library that will benefit all of us.

A fruitful discussion has taken place between the PHA Management Committee and members of the three *Phanfare* editorial collectives that will result in

some changes in 2007. Many people have felt that the focus of the newsletter has become too diffuse, and that it has been trying to meet incompatible objectives by being both an internal news bulletin for the profession as well as a public showcase for the work of professional historians. The situation was aggravated when PHA ceased being the publisher of *Public History Review*, leaving the newsletter as our public face.

There also will be some superficial changes to *Phanfare* following the adoption of a new nationally-consistent emblem by the Australian Council of Professional Historians Associations (ACPHA). Our website will be altered to reflect the new image during the next twelve months. Because we are dependent upon the voluntary efforts of PHA members, inevitably there is sometimes a delay before changes can be implemented. This is one reason why the promised membership survey has not yet taken place. Questionnaires will be distributed early in the new year.

There have been changes in the composition of the Management Committee in the past few weeks. Ruth Banfield kindly offered to fill the vacancy in the position of Secretary. She has now been co-opted to the Committee in this role. Ron Ringer was unable to continue as Vice President, so Committee member Virginia Macleod was elevated to this position.

Our final event for 2006 will be the Christmas Party on Thursday, 7th December. Separate notices about this function will be circulated to you. Make certain that you are there!

To all PHA members, partners and families, I extend my greetings for the Christmas season. May you all have a safe and happy holiday season, and may you all have a stimulating, productive and rewarding New Year.

Peter J. Tyler
President

Places Lost and Found Symposium

20 October 2006, Old Canberra House, Australian National University

“Bring comfortable clothes and an appetite,” stated the convenor Carolyn Strange in her reminder email. I was intrigued.

This one-day event held by the Centre of Cross-Cultural Research allowed presenters and participants to explore how places, once made meaningful through human occupation and imagination, have been lost, through environmental forces, expropriation, migration, and relocation and then found again through memory, maps, movement, literature, art, smell and taste.

The first speaker was Anita Heiss, an Indigenous author who took participants on a journey across Aboriginal Australia in a literary way, reading Indigenous poetry and extracts of novels to show a sense of place and connections to country. Connections to place could be through familial lines, political, social and other cultural associations to places. These places included urban spaces where the majority of the Aboriginal Australian population lives. The stories of desecration were particularly moving.

Places that are stolen, invaded and seized from their owners provoke both nostalgia and questions about connections to place. Peter Read and Marivic Wyndham provided a moving account of one woman’s return to her uncle’s former home in Playa Abierta. It is now a beach side resort for the military, one hundred kilometres west of Havana, Cuba. In the 1950s it was developed as a private resort. Then it was seized by the Cuban government in 1959 after its owner fled to Miami. This woman’s most treasured memories of Cuba are the holidays spent at her uncle’s home. It is her sacred place.

In 1996 she made a return visit, walking through her uncle’s house unannounced and almost unchallenged by its military occupants. To her it was an act of revenge, an act of repossession and defiance. On subsequent visits she met members of her uncle’s domestic staff whose relationship to that same beach had been continuous over many decades. They offered to act as hosts, overturning the old class structures. She began to question her sense of belonging. Whose Playa Abierta was she revisiting? Who were the true claimants to that family sacred site? She began to realise that those who had stayed behind were Playa Abierta’s true claimants.

Another story of displacement was told by Katrina Teaiwa whose family was part of the removal of islanders from the island of Banaban in Kiribati to Fiji to allow for phosphate mining on the island. The people of Banaban have suffered a double displacement: the first being the movement of the population and the second being that the rocks, the entire landscape moved. The landscape is now different, all the known landmarks have gone. The Banaban islanders on Fiji, however have ensured the survival of their culture through dance. They re-enact various aspects of their history through dance on the rugby field at December 15

celebrations. Dance has become core of identity and a way of remembering place for the Banaban people.

Teaiwa demonstrated and taught us how place is embodied in dance; particularly in the Hawaiian hula. Various turns direct the dancer to the sea, the mountains or other parts of the island. We imagined the sound and smell of the sea as we faced it and walked along the reef to pick up pink, red, brown and green seaweed which once lined Waikiki beach before the high rise buildings and the tourists.

Keeping to the island theme was the next paper by Paul D’Arcy on oceanic peoples’ mapping of the sea in memory and tradition. In Micronesia, both men and women are navigators. Each navigator memorises 20-30 sea charts. The maps these charts produce are rich in detail about the depth of the water, direction of waves and currents and contains information about the various types of fish which can be found along each route. The charts also involved understanding how stars move across the sky through the night. The Islanders remember these charts in their heads and in their chants.

To the north of Micronesia lay the subject of the next talk by Greg Dvorak. Kawjalein in the Marshall Islands was his childhood home. It is the largest atoll in the world and a site of great importance to Islanders, Japanese and Americans. War, dislocation, and contemporary weapons testing by the US military have both destroyed and contributed to the atoll’s layers of coral and concrete which mirror the stories of disappearance and reappearance of memories and meaning.

Moving west to Singapore, Simon Choo tempted us with the taste of nostalgia. He proposed that food is a medium through which places are found and remembered. The Ya Kun coffee house in Singapore is a franchise set up to play on people’s nostalgia for the old Singapore by serving the traditional Malaysian/Singaporean breakfast. Just as in the Ya Kun coffee house, we were served *kopi* (coffee strained through a sock with condensed milk) and *kaya* toast (half boiled eggs and coconut spread on toast). My own mother who was born in Malaysia remembers these tastes but not at all fondly. It conjured up different images of a place where she had been economically poor. Memories of place are not necessarily positive.

Another example of remembering place through food was the flourishing of Singaporean cafes serving apple strudel just like those served at a certain Perth bakery. Some Singaporeans had visited this bakery, raved about it on their return and brought back some apple strudel in their suitcases. They started a trend which now includes variations such as durian strudel, which we were not served, thankfully.

Nostalgia for places can also be influenced by the politics of gender as Tina Loo found in her study of the Newfoundland resettlement program. Between 1954 and 1975 the Canadian government attempted to improve the lives of the Newfoundlanders by centralising settlements. The main industry of the islanders was fishing, which meant that there were small communities scattered all over the edges of the island. Approximately 28 156 people were

moved from the communities in which they had lived and placed in larger, better-serviced communities. Such a massive movement of people created resentment and a nostalgia for the “good life” and the “naturalness of life”. This nostalgia is represented in the art, film, music and poetry of the men who idealised the domestic world in which they had played no part, spending most of their time at sea. Women’s lives were made easier by modern conveniences and the women Tina interviewed were not nostalgic about their former homes.

Tina also spoke about the politics of place and the meanings of freedom. For a government, the fundamental basis of power is control over movement. However, in Canada the Charter of Rights states that people have freedom of movement. The Newfoundland Resettlement Program highlighted this contradiction and led Loo to the conclusion that the idea of freedom is found in place. The right to freedom equals the right to place.

If people have the right to place, what happens to those who have lost place? Throughout the day, participants were challenged with various ways of recreating lost places. Meaningful places which have been lost through migration, environmental forces and relocation were represented through literature, maps, dance, art, physical remains and taste. Nostalgia, memory, cultural practices and the need to survive all play their role in interpreting these lost places. But can these lost places ever be found?

Karen Schamberger

New opening hours for NAA reading rooms

From 9 October 2006, the National Archives reading rooms in Sydney will be open from 9.00am to 4.30pm Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

In the Melbourne and Canberra reading rooms, opening hours will not change. Saturday opening hours also remain as scheduled.

Why the change?

The change in opening hours followed wide consultation with researchers and other stakeholders. It was prompted by a shift in the way most researchers prefer to access the National Archives collection since fewer researchers now visit the reading rooms. The new opening hours allow NAA to focus resources to meet the greater demand for online access and services.

Contact the NAA reference service on 1300 886 881 or ref@naa.gov.au or explore their collection through the digital images available on [RecordSearch](#).

What's On in History

Prepared by [Christine de Matos](#)

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2006

Exhibitions

'Convicts: Sites of Punishment'. *Until 15 July 2007. Venue Hyde Park Barracks Museum.*

'City of Shadows'. *Until 11 February 2007. Venue: Justice and Police Museum.*

'Bound for Glory: Exquisite Books of French Pacific Voyages'. *Until 25 February 2007. Venue: Picture Gallery, Mitchell Wing, State Library NSW.*

'In Living Memory: an exhibition of surviving photographs from the records of the NSW Aborigines Welfare Board, from 1919 to 1966'. *Until 30 June 2007. Venue: State Records Gallery, The Rocks.*

Events November

6, 13 &

20 Lecture Series. 'Sydney's Industrial Heritage'. *WEA and RAHS. Venue: History House Time: 10am-12n Cost: \$60 Bookings essential: WEA ph: (02) 9264 2781.*

13 Talk. 'A night on the town! Prominent citizens talk about Sydney'. *With Peter FitzSimons. HHT. Venue: Museum of Sydney Time: 6-8pm Cost: \$25. mems/conc \$20 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211.*

15 Walking tour. 'Sydney Architecture Walks'. *HHT. Meeting venue: Museum of Sydney Time: 10.30am-12.30pm Cost: \$25, mem/conc \$20 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211. Full pgm at www.sydneyarchitecture.org*

16 Talk. 'Notable prime ministers: New perspectives'. *Ross McMullin and John Edwards. State Library. Venue: Dixon Room, Mitchell Wing, State Library Time: 5.30 for 6pm Cost: \$17, mems/conc \$12 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 9273 1770; fax: (02) 9273 1248; email: bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au*

18 Tour. 'Archaeology in The Rocks'. *HHT. Meeting venue: Susannah Place Time: 10am-12n Cost: \$15, mems/conc \$10 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211.*

18-19 Conference. 'RHSV Conference - 1856 Victoria on the Move'. *Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Melbourne Enquiries: ph: (03) 9326 9288; email: office@historyvictoria.org.au*

19 Tour & Talk. '20th century house: 1930s house with Roy Lumby'. *HHT. Venue: tba Time: 2-4.30pm Cost: \$30, mems/conc \$25 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211.*

21 Talk. 'Paradise, Purgatory and Hellhole - the Saunders Sandstone Quarries'. *With Bob Irving. RAHS. Venue: History House Time: 5.30 for 6pm Cost: \$7 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au*

22-24 Conference. 'Historicising Whiteness Conference'. *University of Melbourne. Enquiries: email: lboucher@unimelb.edu.au; web: <http://www.history.unimelb.edu.au/>*

- 27 Talk. 'Three cheers for liberty!'. *Warwick Hirst. State Library. Venue: Dixon Room, Mitchell Wing, State Library Time: 5.30 for 6pm Cost: \$17, mems/conc \$12 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 9273 1770; fax: (02) 9273 1248; email: bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au*
- 27-29 Conference. 'Media: policies, cultures and futures in the Asia Pacific region'. *Curtin University Perth. Enquiries: web: <http://www.MediaAsiaConference.humanities.curtin.edu.au>*
- 27-29 Conference. 'Postcolonial Politics: A Symposium'. *University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Enquiries: Dr Vijay Devadas email: vijay.devadas@stonebow.otago.ac.nz*

Events December

- 3-7 Conference. 'World Without Walls: International Conference of the Oriental Society of Australia'. *University of Sydney. Enquiries: web: <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/conference/OSA2006/>*
- 7-10 Conference. '17th Biennial Pacific History Association Conference', *University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Enquiries: email: frances.couch@stonebow.otago.ac.nz*
- 8-10 Conference. 'Landmarks in Legal History: The 25th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Law and History Society'. *University of Tasmania. Enquiries: email: stefan.petrow@utas.edu.au; web: http://www.utas.edu.au/history_classics/Conferences/ANZLHSConference.html*
- 12-15 Conference. 'Indian and Pacific Crossings: Perspectives on Globalisation and History'. *Fremantle, Western Australia. Enquiries: web: <http://www.ecu.edu.au/ses/iccs/conference2006/callforpapers.pdf>*

Call for Papers

'2nd Asian Australian Identities Conference', *28-30 June 2007, Melbourne. 200 word abstracts due 30 November 2006. Enquiries: email: tseen.khoo@arts.monash.edu.au or jacqueline.lo@anu.edu.au*

'9th Australasian Urban History/Planning History Conference: Sea Change? Historical responses to new and renewed urban landscapes', *February 2008, University of the Sunshine Coast. Formal call for abstracts to come. Enquiries: email: cmconvi@usc.edu.au*

To include an event in *What's On* email to Christine de Matos at cdm@uow.edu.au

Artists and communities benefit from adaptive re-use of buildings

Increasingly, local governments and other authorities are recycling old buildings to provide studio and exhibition space for artists. They are recognising the importance of maintaining dynamic, creative communities in their midst. Artists are among the lowest income earners in the workforce and the 2002 Myer Report highlighted their need for affordable workspace.

Parramatta City Council has lately taken a three year lease on a block of flats – built in the early 1930s and subsequently converted to offices – adjacent to St John's Cathedral, in the heart of the CBD. The building will be converted to 15 artists' studios, with the first five due for occupation from February 2007. In a 10 year strategy to position itself as a creative city, council made the decision that production would initially take precedence over exhibition space.



Parramatta Artists Studios were officially launched on Saturday, September 30, 2006

In pursuit of Blacktown City Council's well established cultural plan, Blacktown Arts Centre was opened in 2002 alongside the council's administrative centre. The arts centre is in the former Christ Church, Church of England building which was opened in 1956 and later bought by the council. After years of uncertainty about whether to demolish or adapt for re-use, it was recognised as the obvious home for a modest scale, welcoming arts facility in Flushcombe Rd, at the centre of the CBD.



Blacktown Arts Centre was adapted from a 1956 church building

Following four years of successful operation, the building is temporarily closed while it undergoes extensions for studio and performing arts spaces. In the meantime, the centre is operating a little further down the street in the former Blacktown Public School, opened in 1876. The old school now sits at the hub of community activity on one side of a pedestrian plaza bounded by Flushcombe Rd, the new Max Webber Library and the redeveloped Westpoint Shopping Centre. When the arts centre returns to its refurbished home, it is understood that the school may then become a visitor information centre.



The 1876 Blacktown Public School in its temporary role as Blacktown Arts Centre

On a more ambitious scale, Sydney Olympic Park Authority is developing the heritage listed 52 hectare Newington Armory site as an arts and cultural precinct on the southern banks of the

Parramatta River. More than 100 historic buildings are scattered over the site. The whole precinct is part of the former Royal Australian Navy Armaments Depot, where buildings and infrastructure date from 1897 to the early decades of the 20th century.

There are spaces for indoor and outdoor performance and exhibitions, artists' studios, workshop facilities and rehearsal venues. In 2005, 19 well equipped visual arts studios were developed on an open plan in Building 24. Building 50 was equipped for woodwork and Building 233 for metalwork – developed from their former use as shipwrights' and fitters' workshops. Like all store houses at the Armory, Building 24 was built on level ground with access for the site's light rail system.



For safety reasons the original Armory buildings were set deep into the earth.

Image courtesy Sydney Olympic Park Authority

Painting, sculpture, printmaking and ceramics are accommodated in the artists' studios, a writer's studio is available and Building 126 is an artists' common room. Production and creative exchanges have already been very fruitful. The terms of artist occupancies range from short term hirers to long term licence holders (up to 12 months) and invited artists in residence are able to use a three bedroom Federation cottage.

The focus of the new cultural precinct program is on the environment, history and the arts. It aims to enable the local community, emerging and established artists and international visitors to work alongside each other. At present, public access is only available on Sundays from 10am to 4pm, by foot or bike. Artists can arrange vehicle access throughout the week.



The Armory's open plan studio facility is well equipped with work benches, studio lighting, easels and specialised fittings. Image courtesy Sydney Olympic Park Authority

Artists' precincts and collaborations are now on the drawing board for the future adaptive re-use of Goat Island and Cockatoo Island, in Sydney Harbour, alongside plans to maintain active programs linked to their former maritime use. A Sydney Harbour Federation Trust advertisement currently seeks a café operator for "Sydney's newest and most exciting harbourside park in Mosman". The former All Ranks Club is a heritage building adjacent to the new Taronga to Balmoral Walking Track. The Headland Park's existing facilities include artists' studios and the operator will be expected to "initiate or support a range of music, cultural and community events in conjunction with local users".¹

A very successful example of adaptive re-use of a derelict industrial precinct is Vancouver's Granville Island, Canada – now a major attraction for 10 million local and overseas visitors annually. Until the middle of the 19th century, the lands and waterways of the False Creek area were rich fishing and hunting grounds for the Squamish Indians. By 1858 Europeans had discovered the value of timber in the area. Logging and land clearing escalated, sawmills were established, followed by iron foundries and abattoirs. Sandbars were reconfigured as an island. By the 1920s major manufacturing flourished on Granville Island, later stimulated by the demands of World War II.

Then decline set in. Heavy industry moved to suburbs accessible by road. Fire destroyed two long established companies and businesses moved elsewhere. The future of the island became a major civic concern. During the 1970s a whole new concept of the island as a place for people began to emerge. Plans evolved to retain the island's industrial roots, while developing new activities that ensured the island became financially self-supporting.

¹ *Sydney Morning Herald, Good Living*, October 24, 2006, p.23



Pedestrians enjoy Granville Island streets in safety surrounded by evidence of its industrial past. Image courtesy Travel with a Challenge web magazine ¹

In 1979, a public market became an instant and continuing success. Fifty permanent specialty businesses carry a range of foods and supplies reflecting Vancouver's vast cultural mix and an equal number of stalls operate on a day basis. Restaurants, small pubs, art and craft studios and galleries, theatres, art schools, museums specialising in model trains and ships all operate on the island, interspersed with pockets of green parkland and quiet contemplative spaces. A hotel provides the only visitor accommodation and about 2500 people are employed on the island.



Oyama Sausage Company is one of Granville Island's permanent market stallholders. Image courtesy Travel with a Challenge web magazine ²

¹ www.travelwithachallenge.com showcases richly-illustrated feature articles and travel news about nature-based vacations, educational, cultural/historical and volunteer vacations, especially focusing on the mature traveller.

² As endnote 2

Throughout the year, Granville Island hosts a series of international festivals including a children's festival in May, a music festival in July, a fringe festival in September and a writers and readers festival in October. Classes and courses are regularly available in subjects ranging from sailing and underwater photography to comedy workshops, cooking demonstrations and beadwork classes.



Murray Barber of Dragonwork Studio has a passion for working with wood. Image courtesy Travel with a Challenge web magazine ¹

While topography and history influence the development of individual sites, civic imagination, sympathetic authorities and creative minds clearly play a big part in their success. The range of models for the adaptive re-use of heritage buildings, locally and internationally is almost unlimited and a vital demonstration of enriching contemporary communities with a deep sense of connection to a locality's past.

Story and non-accredited photos
Katherine Knight

¹ As endnote 2

Governor's Dairy is part of a national treasure trove

Parramatta Park Trust is now responsible for the management of one of the nation's most important heritage precincts. Day to day activities by visitors to the park, maintenance of buildings, monuments and the site itself, commissioning of further research and education of the public about the extraordinary cultural landscape, all come under the Trust's umbrella. It is a role that deserves much greater funding.

I booked a tour of the "Governor's Dairy" in the park on a late September Sunday. The ranger arrived late and very apologetic. Roaring hot winds and high temperatures had caused a total fire ban and he had been visiting picnicking families requesting them to douse their barbecue fires. The usual guide was unavailable so he could only do his best from the notes subsequently supplied as the basis for this story. He was still only a trainee, but already multiskilled.



The Governor's Dairy in the foreground, alongside the Ranger's Cottage dated 1875

Two cottages sit side by side. The northern cottage is the older and is known by various names, including Salter's Farm, the Dairymaid's Cottage or the Governor's Dairy. "This was an established oral tradition . . . being both widespread among local historians and of long standing, being first documented as early as 1920, in an article by prominent local historian Margaret Swann (in the Story of Parramatta Park, *Parramatta and District Historical Society Journal*, Vol.2, 1921, p.65)." ¹ These record that convict George Salter built the cottage somewhere between 1798 and 1805. Some argue that a brick house was unlikely to have been built by a convict in the late 18th century, when convict huts were mostly wattle and daub.

¹ Verena Mauldon, curator – cultural heritage, Parramatta Park Trust, *Historical Foundations Revisited: a discussion, exploring the complexities of writing the history of the built environment, with reference to the Dairy Precinct, Parramatta Park*, Heritage Festival talk, PPT, May 2004

George Salter was transported to Parramatta in 1788 following his conviction for smuggling. When his sentence expired in 1796 he was granted 30 acres by Governor Hunter for cultivation. The boundaries still exist within the park and the adjacent Wisteria Gardens.



A small patch of the front wall left exposed during conservation work in the early 1990s reveals extension of the original two room cottage. Horse hair and shell from Aboriginal middens are identified in the cement. Much of the Macquarie era pebble dash had to be stabilised and areas re-rendered during the 1990s conservation works.

Documentary and archeological evidence used in the development of the Conservation Management Plan between 1993 and 1998 gave priority to the historical layering of the site and the preservation of existing fabric to ensure the continued availability of the site for future research. In 2003, historian Sue Rosen suggested the cottage was actually a malt house and the early dairy was adjacent to Domain Creek. Records show that Salter sold his cottage to Governor Macquarie in 1813 and that Macquarie converted it to a dairy in 1815/16, with further additions, subsequently demolished. “The roof shape changed at this time and a sunken milk room was built to the south to keep the milk products cool.”¹

While it is “correct that some have argued that the Salter phase of the cottage is unlikely to be the first building on the site - this well built Cottage possibly replacing an earlier wattle and daub building in the area - archaeologist Robert Varman and Heritage Architect Alan Croker have identified the building techniques and materials in the Cottage as dating from the 18th century, and this view is widely endorsed and accepted by heritage professionals.”²

¹ Cath Snelgrove, *The Dairy Walk Tour for Guides on the Dairy Walk*, undated, but probably developed in January 1999, when the precinct was opened to the public, supplemented by information assembled by Verena Mauldon, curator – cultural heritage, Parramatta Park Trust, post 2003.

² Verena Mauldon, *ibid*, email to K Knight, November 3, 2006

Techniques and materials used in the oldest part of the cottage, now known as the Governor's Dairy, include brick nog walls – with brick infills between timber framing – wooden shingle roof, subsequently covered in corrugated iron, and lathe and plaster ceilings. The internal walls were rendered and painted. The plaster used was very coarse and included shell, horsehair and fibre for strength and binding. It is suggested that their pink colouring is animal blood.



In rooms added to the original cottage, handmade bricks reveal tally marks, where fingers were stuck into the clay to mark completion of a set number – probably 100.



Lathe and plaster ceiling, under the wooden shingled roof, show remnants of plaster “keys” pushed through the timber to hold the plaster in place.

Adaptive re-use of a rough and ready kind ensured the continuing life of the building. In addition to its use as a dairy, remnant wallpapers from 1830s to 1850s suggest use of rooms as bedrooms. After the Ranger's Cottage was built next door in the 1870s, the Dairy Cottage seems to have been used for storage. In the 20th century, it was a store for Parramatta Council and pencilled lists of tools can be found above a fireplace in one of the rooms.

An enduring mystery was the location of the sunken milk room, built in the Macquarie era south of the Governor's Dairy or Dairyman's Cottage. It was not until 1993 that archaeologists discovered the sunken dairy under the floorboards of the Ranger's Cottage. It had been filled in with coal and ash some time in the early 20th century. Excavations revealed beer or stout bottles, dating from around the 1880s, probably stored there after the room ceased to be a dairy.



Steps to the milk room found under floorboards in the Ranger's Cottage.



Beer or stout bottles were lying on brick shelves used in the sunken dairy.

The bottles lie on a stone shelf, constructed for the earlier dairy operations, when it was used for settling pans, cheeses and milk bucket storage. The temperature below ground was consistently cooler than above ground. Water from the well was used to clean the floor and the water drained to the river through a system of brick barrel and box drains. Significantly, once the drains were modified after the sunken dairy's discovery, the space began to flood. Until then, the drainage system to the river had been quite adequate.



The drainage pit at the back of the Ranger's Cottage, which carried the slops washed from the dairy. The slightly lower level of the drain before entering the pipe probably allowed sediment to settle for later extraction before liquids entered the river.

The historical layering of the site and the preservation of existing fabric adopted as policy for The Dairy Precinct Conservation Management Plan is clearly very important for future research. Many questions remain unanswered. More documents and maps have still to be found and further research is required about the physical evidence available in the building itself.

“The divergent views of the history of this site are at times based on different readings of the same evidence, and it is difficult to simplify the narratives without trivialising the detailed and extensive research which informs each perspective. Both the CMP and Rosen’s book are available in the Parramatta Park Trust Library for any who wish to explore this further.”¹

Story and photographs
Katherine Knight

¹ Verena Mauldon, *ibid*, as endnote 1

Denham Court

The position played by colonial private houses in relationship to the generation of culture in local history frequently has been overlooked. Conservation of historical houses is usually based on their aesthetic values or architectural styles. In this essay I hope to readdress this by reference to the historical context in which Denham Court (house) was constructed and the social, economic and political influences that caused it to have occupancy changes from that of a pioneer colonial family home to a Ladies' Boarding School, then a wedding reception venue and back to being a private home, all in approximately 170 years since its construction.

Denham Court, as depicted in F. C. Terry's pencil and watercolour painting, illuminates not only its colonial, visual and architectural heritage, but also its cultural and academic heritage.

The painting is signed, undated, but had to have been executed between 1852, when Terry '*came to New South Wales with his brother Alexander and joined the gold diggers in the Hunter Valley*'¹, and 1862, when the painting was presented to Miss Alice Grant Gordon, a pupil at Miss Sarah Eliza Lester's Seminary for Young Ladies.²

Miss Lester's Seminary moved from Denham Court between July 1865 and January 1866 to Lansdowne House, corner Burton Street and Parramatta Road, Concord and then to Kent House, on the corner of Rowley Street and Park Road, Burwood where, in 1886, the Wesleyan Church bought her premises for £6,000, reopening it as the Wesleyan Ladies College (later renamed the Methodist Ladies College).³

Denham Court has now been returned to its original context as a private family home by its owners for the past 19 years, Dr and Mrs Keith Okey, who have meticulously restored the

¹ Kerr, Joan (ed), *The Dictionary of Australian Artists, Painters, Sketchers, Photographers and Engravers to 1870*, Melbourne, 1992, p. 782

² Macdonald, Gowan Flora, *Historic Denham Court, Campbelltown Road, Ingleburn*, p.5. Printed pamphlet with F. C. Terry's painting on the front, published by Miss Macdonald at the time of her ownership 1957-1974.

³ Miss Lester advertised as far back as 1845, a year after she came to Australia from Ashford, Kent, where she was born in 1828. She then moved to Arlington House at Parramatta Road, Five Dock in 1857. She must have moved to Denham Court between January and July 1859 because her last advertisement for Arlington House was January 1859 and her first advertisement at Denham Court was July 20, 1859.

Dunlop, Shenna & Robert, *Walk in the Light*, Sydney, 1976, p. 8, mentions that Miss Lester was at Lansdowne House in 1855 and Eric Dunlop, *Harvest of the Years, the History of Burwood*, Sydney, 1974, p. 148, said she advertised on January 19, 1855 from Lansdowne House, Concord. I cannot find this reference, plus Land Title documents state that he did not buy Lansdowne House until September 6, 1874. She then moved from Denham Court on September 1, 1874 to Lansdowne House and then to Kent House in Rowley Street, where she conducted her last boarding school. She retired after the church bought her premises and moved across the road to Minster Villa, 47 Park Road, Burwood, where she died on June 6, 1912, aged 84.

home to its original condition. F. C. Terry's painting hangs from the dining room wall as a reminder of the Denham Court's academic and cultural heritage.

This watercolour's initial purpose was obviously that of a souvenir or keepsake to remind Alice Grand Gordon of her (hopefully) happy school days at Miss Lester's Seminary where she was a pupil for 12 years.¹ It was a strange quirk of fate that 100 years later her granddaughter owned, not only the painting, but the house.

Denham Court's original 500 acres were granted to Judge Advocate Richard Atkins. It was a rebel grant by William Paterson given on August 8, 1809. Atkins named Denham Court after his ancestral Bowyer home in Buckinghamshire, England. The grant was confirmed by Governor Macquarie on April 26, 1810.

Atkins, it seems, was both a womaniser and an alcoholic. He erected a large table-top gravestone for his mistress, Sarah Bucknel, who died in 1793, a monument which was eventually to cost him his land grant.

Atkins signed a Bill of Exchange on his brother in England for £26 to pay for the gravestone. There is much debate as to how and why Captain Richard Brooks took possession of the Bill of Exchange and eventually the Denham Court land grant. But John Macarthur said Captain Brooks presented the Bill twice to the Atkins' family at Denham Court, England.² Atkins left for England on HMS *Hindostan* and never returned to Australia.

Denham Court was transferred to Captain Brooks on the same day - it is thought in exchange for the Bill which, with interest, had increased to £82. Brooks bought four adjoining land grants and brought his wife, Christiana and six children over from England in 1814. They lived in a house on the corner of Pitt and Hunter Streets, Sydney for ten years. Their sixth daughter and last child, Maria, was born there on October 22, 1814.

Captain Brooks built a house on the property at Denham Court in the 1820s and his family moved there in either 1823 or 1825. Some surmise the earliest section was built as early as 1812, Macquarie in 1820 stated that Richard Brooks was '*only occasionally at Denham Court*'.³ Thomas Valentine Blomfield stated in 1821 that '*a very nice house was on the grounds*'.⁴

Of the major section added by John Verge in the 1830s, Christiana said, '*the new room was sufficiently finished to accommodate the dances, it is 32ft by 19 ft, with a circular front and*

¹ Macdonald, G., *Historic Denham Court*, p. 5.

² Goodin, Vernon, *Denham Court*, No 2, Part 2, 1964, p. 35. This is probably correct, because when Captain Brooks gave instructions on the building instructions at Denham Court, he wanted the same style as the Denham Court belonging to the Bowyer family in England, which he would therefore have had to have seen. (Richard Atkins changed his name from Bowyer in order to receive an inheritance).

³ Goodin, Vernon, *Denham Court*, p. 35.

⁴ Bushcombe, Eve, *Blomfield Letters*, Eureka Research, Sydney, 1982, p. 35.

French window opening to the lawn.¹ This is the room shown on the left-hand (south) side of F. C. Terry's painting, which was the ballroom.²

The extensions by Verge were not completed until just after Richard Brooks' death. He was knocked over by a horse in 1830, and three years afterwards was gored by a bull, dying October 1833, aged 68. Richard Brooks obviously wanted a typical English estate and to be the English squire '*master of all he surveyed*' for he built his house on top of a hill. Originally painted white, the house faces east, and the land slopes down to Bunbury Curran Creek. The view is extensive and beautiful with a panorama sweeping from Illawarra across rolling ridges to the Hills of North Sydney and now, about 170 years later, on a clear day, the Harbour Bridge can be seen.

The fourth daughter of Richard Brooks, Honoria, married William Edward Riley of Raby.³ In a letter to his sister, Sophy, in England, he wrote lengthy descriptions of the new building at Denham Court which '*joins sweet Raby... there are numerous highly respectable families, excellent houses and beautiful estates near us. Pray do not think we are to be pitied for you must know that a New South Wales settler in this neighbourhood pities all the rest of the world and would not change his mode of life for any other*'.⁴

Such was Richard Brooks' grand vision of being the English squire that he apparently specified that he wished a church be built on the property and to be buried there.⁵ Verge again was called in to design the church of St Mary the Virgin reputedly on similar lines to the one at Denham in England, and William Riley wrote: '*Poor old man, he just lived long enough to see his long intended mansion finished*'.⁶

Christina Blomfield was left Denham Court in her father's Will because William Henry, the illegitimate son of Richard La----- M-----, was given land at Five Islands in the Illawarra district, near Lake George.

During the Brooks and Blomfield occupations Denham Court was very much a vibrant social centre, not just for the local district but for the colony. When the Brooks family lived on the

¹ Brooks, C., '*Diary*', entry for January 2, 1827.

² Herman, Morton, *The Early Australian Architects and their Work*, Sydney, 1973, p. 176. Verge only charged £57 for the extensions to Denham Court, which seems very low, but he was renting a warehouse in Bathurst Street, Sydney from Brooks and this was probably in Lieu of rent he owed.

³ Unfortunately they were married only three years before William Edward died. Honoria never recovered from his death and died three years later, leaving three orphans. One daughter married T. A Brown known as Rolfe Boldewood who wrote *Robbery under Arms*. Another married William Essington King, grandson of Governor King.

⁴ Bertie, C. H., *The Home, Pioneer Families of Australia*, February 1, 1934, p. 72.

⁵ Although he did not actually specify this in his Will.

⁶ Rachel Roxburgh, *Early Colonial Houses of New South Wales*, Sydney, 1974, p. 74.

corner of Pitt and Hunter Streets, Sydney, the six Brooks daughters¹ were known for their charm, and their reputation followed them to Denham Court. Mrs Brooks wrote in her diary of having 40 for dinner on January 2, 1826, 16 of whom slept overnight.² Numerous festivities took place, the most notable being some of the family weddings at St Mary the Virgin Church. Following the wedding of Mr J. Riley, the festivities lasted a whole week.

Aboriginal tribal life was still to be found around Denham Court and Camden Park areas in 1818, with corroborees being held when other tribes visited. The Dharawal tribe had become depleted because of catarrh, an influenza outbreak in the winter of 1820, and alcohol.³ T. V. Blomfield commented in 1821, when he was staying with his parents-in-law at Denham Court: “*Little, I believe is known respecting the age to which the natives arrive at, I have seen none very old scarcely above middle age...upwards of two thirds kill themselves by excess (from Bengal Rum)*’.⁴

There was also the abuse by white people. Charles Throsby of Glenfield Park, near Denham Court, wrote angrily in September 1824 of a 16-year old Aboriginal girl who had been abducted at Lake George by the servants of Richard Brooks⁵, assaulted and raped and brought back to Denham Court in a cart. As a Magistrate, Throsby intervened to have the servants punished. The girl’s sister had also been kidnapped by another of Brooks’ men but because he was a free settler he had to be tried in court and Throsby was unable to punish him.⁶

Around the time when Thomas and Christiana Blomfield moved permanently to Denham Court in 1835, there was only one Aboriginal resident noted in Campbelltown. As T. V. Blomfield said, ‘*Europeans have not been inhabitants of this climate long enough to form a correct judgment of them*’.⁷ One hundred and sixty years later the situation has hardly changed and we have barely progressed in our knowledge of the Aboriginal people.

Denham Court became the nucleus of a small hamlet, ‘*one of the most complete establishments in the colony*’.⁸ There was a mill, a church, a hotel and a toll-gate where, as legend had it (inaccurately) Jack Donahue, a bushranger of Bargo Brush, robbed the mail in 1840.⁹ In 1851

¹ Rachel Roxburgh and Nesta Griffiths say there were seven Brooks daughters, but the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* and the Australian Society of Genealogists’ article by Goodin state there were only six daughters.

² Brooks, Christiana and Richard, ‘*Diary*’, entry for January 7, 1826, The National Library of Australia.

³ Liston, Carol, *Campbelltown, The Bicentennial History*, pp. 24-5.

⁴ Buscombe, E (ed), *The Blomfield Letters 1799-1845*, p. 38.

⁵ Richard Brooks also owned 9,000 acres at Lake George.

⁶ Liston, Carol, *Campbelltown, The Bicentennial History*, p. 25.

⁷ Buscombe, Eve (ed), *The Blomfield Letters 1799 - 1845*, p. 38.

⁸ Freame, W. H. G., *The Romance of Denham Court*, p. 58.

⁹ Morris, J. F., *Historic Homes and Their Occupants*. This could not have been correct because the toll-gate was not established until 1849 and Liston, Carol, *Campbelltown, The Bicentennial History* states that Bold Jack Donahue was killed in a shoot-out with police in the Bringelly scrub in 1830. In Christiana Brooks’ diary entry for March 15, 1826, she said, “*Governor Darling had taken prompt and efficient measures to restore a state of security by the execution and capture of most all of the bushrangers.*” Jack Donahue was glorified in the cult folk songs ‘*Bold Jack Donahue*’ and ‘*Wild Colonial Boy*’.

the right to collect the toll was auctioned. It sold for £27 and, because of the discovery of gold in Australia, the owner became very wealthy.

Christiana Brooks would have been pleased to see her home used by Miss Lester as a boarding school for young ladies because she instigated the establishment of Denham Court's first school. The school room and toilet block (the school room no longer exists, however, the toilet block is now under a protection order by the Heritage Council) are not pictured in F. C. Terry's painting but are in the 1884 subdivision plans.

Christina writes on March 10, 1826, "*our public school at Denham Court established by the Archdeacon and under the immediate inspection of the Reverend B. will, I hope, be well attended The school master tells me today his muster is 16 scholars*".¹ But apparently it proved difficult to get their parents to send them.²

Christiana Brooks, together with Mrs Darling (the Governor's wife), was an activist for the education of women and the underprivileged. "*The school of industry patronised by Mrs Darling seems better adapted in its plans as a system for the orphan institution and could be carried into effect without any additional subscription - a plan of so much utility in a new colony like this as 'a school for the education of female servants' will however not want support...I entertain little hope that the present generation will be of much service while the population continued as about...males to one female, yet as the girls will be taught to do something useful they may transmit their knowledge to their offspring and, in time, become a superior race...*"³

Other local residents saw the importance of education for a new colony's future. On the next hill, slightly north of Denham Court, lies Macquarie Fields. The original grant was 2002 acres to James Meehan.⁴ He built a large brick mansion which was known as Meehan's Castle. On December 1, 1820 Macquarie met with Reverend Thomas Reddall and Reverend Robert Cartwright on his way to lay out Campbelltown, with a view to renting Meehan's house as a parsonage at the expense of the government. Reverend Reddall then conducted a school in Meehan's house for three years, one of the scholars being Lachlan Macquarie, (the son of the Governor). Reverend Reddall was then appointed in 1824 as Director of Schools (a nominal position).

Reverend George Fairfowl Macarthur moved his St Mark's Collegiate School from St Mark's, Darling Point to Macquarie Fields House in 1858. The Bishop of Sydney approached Macarthur to reopen the King's School at Parramatta, which had recently closed, and

¹ Brooks, C., *Diaries and Letters 1833-1835*, March 10, 1826, p. 73.

² Roxburgh, R., *Early Colonial House of New South Wales*, p. 76.

³ Brooks, C., '*Diary*' entry for March 15, 1826.

⁴ Meehan was Surveyor-General and explored with Hume, Evans, Oxley and Wilson. He died on April 21, 1826.

Macarthur accepted in 1868. St Mark's Collegiate became the new King's School and a year later Macarthur moved the school back to its traditional premises in Parramatta.¹

F. C. Terry has a dainty watercolour in the Mitchell Library of Macquarie Fields which is also undated, but I presume it would have been painted at the same time as he did the watercolour of Denham Court while he was in the area.

When the Brooks died, the Blomfields carried on the tradition of Denham Court as the social centre of the colony, but after the gold rush they found it difficult to procure staff for such a large property and the Blomfields moved to Sydney around 1857.

Denham Court was vacant until Clements Lester leased it in 1859 and his sister, Miss Sarah Eliza Lester, moved her Ladies' Boarding School from Arlington House at Five Dock to Denham Court. I could find no information as to why she moved to Denham Court, but the construction of the railway line from Sydney to Liverpool in September 1856 meant the journey was not so arduous. In 1859 the trip took only 20 minutes, for there were very few stations. A vehicle was sent from Denham Court to Liverpool to pick up the pupils. Miss Lester's advertisements specified that '*the young ladies have the benefit of horse exercise*' and a healthy location. Even today the Methodist Ladies College's prospectus advertises the importance of health and sports.²

Accounts of Miss Lester portray her as an upright lady dressed in a rustling black silk dress, a white cap and a fischu (a scarf of lace). She was a spinster and had a reputation as a strict disciplinarian. She often rode in her pony carriage - which is pictured in F. C. Terry's watercolour - and on Sundays used special white reins. Perhaps it is Clements Lester with the top hat on and Miss Sarah Eliza Lester next to him in Terry's painting. There is a girl seated at the back of the cart and three girls and a dog pictured playing in the foreground with a hoop.

The school room and toilet block were not pictured in F. C. Terry's painting but were included in the 1884 subdivision brochure. There is little evidence of Miss Lester's Seminary at Denham Court now, except for a wooden 4-seater toilet block that was thought to have been built during her occupancy. It is now being preserved for posterity by a permanent conservation order from the Heritage Council.

After Miss Lester left, in 1865, Clements remained until 1870. Denham Court was then occupied by Richard Henry Blomfield for then years from 1872 until 1882. He had previously lived at Riversdale, Goulburn.³

In October 1884 Andrew Gibson Blomfield (son of Richard Blomfield) and David Dickson (Richard Blomfield's son-in-law) proposed a massive '*wild cat*' subdivision of Denham Court

¹ Carol Liston, *Campbelltown, The Bicentennial History*, p. 97.

² There are very few accounts and records regarding Miss Sarah Eliza Lester, other than Birth and Death Certificates and Land Titles.

³ Roxburgh, R., *Early Colonial Houses of New South Wales*, p. 75.

(by Mills & Pile in conjunction with Finlay and Co., Goulburn). The subdivision of 444 blocks left Denham Court itself standing on 26 acres. Barely any blocks were sold. John Thomas Colburn Mayne, who was made a Magistrate of the Territory in 1841 (New South Wales) and Commissioner of Crown Lands in 1846, *'gained a fine reputation for his humane and sensible ideas in connection with the Aboriginal people'*.

John Mayne's wife died at Denham Court in 1894. He then married Alice Maud Ione Macdonald in 1901. She lived at Denham Court until her husband died in 1924 and Miss Gowan Flora Macdonald (her niece) inherited the property in 1957.¹

Miss Macdonald was a spinster and, in order to run the large property and pay for the upkeep and restoration of the house, she held wedding receptions there in the 1960s and 1970s.²

F. C. Terry's painting was then used for an entirely different purpose. Miss Macdonald published a pamphlet on Denham Court, which contained a short history of the house with F. C. Terry's painting on the front cover. F. C. Terry's lovely watercolour had become an advertisement for the house to prospective marrying couples.

A Doctor bought Denham Court in 1974 and has been restoring it for the last 20 years. He has done little to change Denham Court except he has added a swimming pool and a poolroom.

The dignity of the Doric portico of Denham Court and the quiet elegance of its Georgian extensions at the front are still exactly the same today as they appear in F. C. Terry's watercolour of over 100 years ago; but the surrounding countryside has significantly changed.

Looking down towards Ingleburn, where once Aboriginal people (the Tharawal tribe) and bushrangers roamed and corroborees were held, there are now huge chimneys and industries (the tallest chimney belonging to Pilkington's tinted glass factory which dwarfs everything around it besides polluting the surrounding area). Instead of bushrangers, there are now corporate raiders residing nearby.

The impact of change upon the character of these scenic hills has been huge.

Ruth Banfield

¹ Goodin, V. W. E., pp. 42-3

² The author of this article, Ruth Banfield, was married at St Mary the Virgin Church and her wedding reception was held in Denham Court House, so it brought back fond memories for her, not only in researching this article, but also when Dr Okey allowed her to visit Denham Court House.

Dragons Abreast Regatta

Lake Burley-Griffin, Sunday 22nd October 2006



National Museum of Australia team
(in black) racing at the Regatta
Photo: Simon Weaving

“Come on! You should be good at this. It’s in your blood!” joked one of my team mates. I might be half Chinese but that did not make paddling any easier nor did it provide any historical background to dragon boat racing. We were in training for the Dragons Abreast Regatta, in our borrowed dragon boat and paddles with our borrowed coach/ sweep, Alf at 8am on a Friday in the rain. A total of three team practices with some individual lessons were supposed to prepare all 22 of us for the Regatta.

The Regatta consisted of social, corporate and more professional races with all proceeds going to support breast cancer research. We represented the National Museum of Australia in the corporate races. Most of us were total beginners and were there due to the enthusiasm of our leader, Margo Neale, Indigenous Advisor to the Director.

A number of traditions are attached to the dragon boat race. It is usually held on the fifth day of the fifth month of the Chinese Lunar calendar, around May or June and has associations with the summer solstice – the time of the sun and the dragon. It is also the time of year when rice

seedlings are planted, perhaps leading to the traditional food of *zongzi* – sticky rice wrapped in leaves said to have been dropped into the waters for the spirit of Qu Yuan.

Dragon boat races were held to commemorate the death of Qu Yuan, a poet and loyal minister of the Chu dynasty. China at that point in time was made up of seven warring states, of which the Chu was one. In the year 278 B.C., Qu Yuan heard of the imminent destruction of the Chu by a neighbouring state, the Qin, and was helpless to prevent it. He carried a large rock as he waded into the Miluo River in central China in order to commit suicide. People nearby desperately paddled their fishing boats to save him, beating drums and splashing to prevent the fish from eating his body.

That explained why we had to synchronise our paddle strokes with the beat of the drum at the front. The drummer took his timing off ‘the strokes’, the front pair of paddlers, one of whom ended up being me. The front and rear of the boat are narrow and require small people. Larger and stronger people provided power from the centre of the boat, leading the National Museum of Australia team to break the minute mark for the first time and record the 4th fastest time of the Regatta.

Being on the lake provided a different view of the city I now call home. I now understand why dragon boating is now such a popular sport around Australia and the world. The experience taught me a little more about teamwork, my heritage and contributed to breast cancer research.

Karen Schamberger

***Duyfken* Travels the South Coast**

(Extracts from the Captain Log)



It was a hard slog getting down to Ulladulla from Jervis Bay. *Duyfken* is designed to sail, which she does very well, but is not designed to motor which she doesn't do well at all. As they say "gentlemen don't go to windward", and I'd wished I could have complied with such theory.

But alas a large crowd of people was awaiting our arrival in Ulladulla and we couldn't disappoint them, so off to windward we tried to go. As we got close to the bay the Ulladulla Coastal Patrol came out to escort us in.

Their three ships bobbing along beside us, one an old RNL shipped over from the UK. It had been a hard slog down, with us only achieving 3 knots at times as we headed into a strong head sea. But we still managed to enter the bay at around 1700. And held station for a while as the crew prepared the yards and mooring lines, now that the vessel was out of the swell.

The flags were all sent up and already we could see crowds gathered on the headlands peering through the greyness of the day to see this unique replica arriving into the shelter of the harbour. There must have been the best part of a thousand people on the wharf awaiting our

arrival, with the formal part of the proceedings about to get underway.

The weather managed to clear enough for there to be a big enough break in the rain for it all to happen on the wharf. As soon as the lines were ashore I jumped onto the wharf and was introduced to the dignitaries ashore. The Dutch Ambassador to Australia, H.E. Mr Niek van Zutpen and his family had come over from Canberra. MP for Gilmore Joanna Gash.

We were all seated and the Dutch and Australian National anthems were sung by the Miltones. I think the Dutch Ambassador was a little surprised to hear his national anthem sung in English. The proceedings continued and several speeches were made welcoming the *Duyfken* to Ulladulla, and I presented Teegan Riley and Kimberley Salafia, two youthful members of the local indigenous community, a message stick from the Nyungar people of Western Australia. And I was gifted with two Boomerangs, one for the ship and the other to present back to the Nyungar people.

It was wonderful to see such a large turn out for the ship's arrival, which had been organized by Cathy Dunn. While I was busy in the limelight of official duties the crew did a wonderful job under the watchful eye of constable Vic, and got the ship packed away and ready for exhibition.

The weather struggled to improve over the next couple of days, however, *Duyfken* still managed to generate quite a bit of interest. On one day we managed to get 329 school children over the ship in one morning. A difficult organization slog for the crew which they did very well. During our stay here we had just under three thousand people look over the ship. (in addition to school students).

Toby Greenlees
Master *Duyfken*

PHA member Cathy Dunn coordinated the visit of the *Duyfken* to her home port of Ulladulla, extending from Friday 3rd to Wednesday 8th November, a project she started working on back in May. At the same time, she did the South Coast Maritime and History Expo, both of which were a great success. Over 2000 people attended the welcoming event for the ship. A total of 3,714 people including school students toured the ship over four days of overcast weather. The week's activities highlighted that heritage and tourism do form a good partnership.

History Council of NSW – report from PHA representative

In the period 2006–7, the History Council of NSW (HCNSW) continues in its work as the peak body representing and promoting the profile of history in the state.

The major event, as organised by the History Council of NSW, is History Week. This year History Week ran from September 16-24. The overriding theme of the week for 2006 was 'Find Your Place in History' with two sub-themes: **Mapping Australia** – commemorating the 400th anniversary of the first European mapping of the Australian continent; and **Power to the people!** – marking 150 years since the people of NSW elected their first Parliament under a system of responsible government.

The week was a great success. Over 180 events, hosted by 147 different organisations including the PHA (NSW) were held right throughout NSW, an increase of over 30% on the year before. The annual History Lecture launched History Week with Dr Hilary Golder giving a very interesting and thought provoking lecture on the use of colonial government archives and their ability to shine some light on the workings of the administration in colonial NSW. Her lecture explored the frontier particularly and investigated the thorny issue of frontier violence and how it was or wasn't reported. In the context of the debate over the past few years on the subject, Dr Golder's lecture was a timely reminder on the power (and required skill) of thorough research.

This year was also the second year of the Off the Beaten Track lecture series run during History Week. This travelling lecture series is an initiative of the History Council of NSW and is part of the Council's commitment to provide a voice for history across NSW. This year Richard White presented a lecture based on his book *On Holidays: A History of Getting Away in Australia*. The lectures were presented in Armidale, Broken Hill, Dubbo and Merimbula and were followed by practical sessions in researching and writing history. The lectures and workshops were well attended and will be run again in 2007.

Positive feedback from those involved and those who attended History Week and its associated events has also been welcomed by the History Council of NSW and affirmed the efforts put into organising the History Week program. Work has already begun on the program for 2007 which promises to be as wide ranging and interesting as 2006. Updates on themes and events will be posted as they are finalised.

Finally a short note on another event held in the lead up to History Week, the first Max Kelly forum. To celebrate 10 years of the History Council of NSW a forum on Sydney since the Sixties was held where five historians spoke on topical issues in Sydney's urban history in the past forty years or so. Again, the success of the event has prompted the History Council of NSW to consider the series as an occasional event to present topical and relevant historical forums in the future.

2006 has been an eventful year for the History Council of NSW and we now look forward to a short break before we all start again in 2007.

Mark Dunn

Nick Vine Hall 17 August 1944 – 31 October 2006

The death of Nick Vine Hall, professional genealogist, leaves the historical world in Australia the poorer. From the mid 1980s, he was an impassioned advocate for the retention of the census, spearheading an ultimately successful campaign to save personal information collected in the 2001 Census. The option for nominating to retain personal information for historical use was given for the first time in the Centenary of Federation Census, and again this year in the 2006 census.

In the mid 1970s, Nick abandoned a corporate marketing career at CSR to pursue his passion for genealogical research and write his family history. In 1978 he was appointed Director of the Society of Australian Genealogists, a position he held through a decade of increasingly frenetic interest among Australians to explore their family and national histories.

The American TV mini-series *Roots* screened in Australia in 1977, a year after the celebrations of the American Bicentenary. Alex Haley's account of tracing the origins of an Afro-American individual back beyond slavery to his African homeland provided an extraordinary impetus for Australians – looking ahead to their bicentenary in 1988 – to acknowledge the family skeletons of convictism and trace their ancestors. Nick Vine Hall, together with Philip Geeves, until his death in 1983, used the popular media to develop this enthusiasm. In regular ABC radio spots and national syndicated newspaper columns, advice was given about where to find historical information and how to interpret it. Library and archives reading rooms were suddenly crowded with members of the general public clamouring for convict indents and shipping lists.

Ever a marketing man, Nick was an effective public face for genealogy, enthusing the general public to unravel their family roots and accept that they needed to pay to do so – through the purchase of birth, death and marriage certificates, membership of relevant bodies and if needed, payment for professional search services either in Australia or Britain.

Those who were unable to do their own research, because of distance, age or lack of familiarity with libraries, were directed to a growing band of professional genealogists who would conduct research on their behalf. In these years before the PHA, there was already a national group of registered professional genealogists. At the Society of Australian Genealogists, diploma courses in genealogical research provided a route for accreditation for those seeking to enter this field. It was through this route that I found life as a professional historian when Nick convinced me there was enough genealogical work to earn a living.

Historical records mostly untouched by academic historians were the key sources for genealogical research, prompting the large copying projects we all benefit from today. Nick's published works, such as *Tracing Your Family History in Australia*, directed researchers to these resources and repositories.

There were few who could equal Nick and his energy once he took up an issue and his leadership on public issues in genealogy will be greatly missed.

Carol Liston

Member Profile - Ruth Banfield

Terry asked me to write a short biography of myself because a lot of you do not know me. I was in the first year of the Wyndham Scheme. I left in year 11 because my parents could not afford to keep me at school. I completed my HSC at TAFE, at night, while working as a Librarian Assistant at CSR.

After completing my HSC I undertook a course to train as a Diversional Therapist with the Australian Red Cross. I worked with the Australian Red Cross for 4 years. I was stationed at No. 2 Military Hospital at Ingleburn Army Camp, working with the wounded young men coming back from Vietnam.

I left work in late 1973 to have my two children. When the children were young, I did a lot of volunteer community work. In 1983 I was one of the founding members of the Friends of Campbelltown Art Gallery. We were the first Friends who were formed before the gallery was built in order to lobby for a regional gallery for Campbelltown. We were successful in securing a million-dollar Bicentennial grant in 1987. Campbelltown Council has recently added a 10 million-dollar extension to make it a wonderful Arts Centre.

As a mature aged student I undertook a Graduate Diploma in Art - Gallery Management at Sydney College of Advanced Education (COFA) and then did a BA majoring in Fine Art & History at The University of Sydney. I later upgraded my Graduate Diploma in Art to a Master of Art Administration at The University of NSW. Since then, I have worked as the Manager /Curator at Nutcote, the house & garden museum of May Gibbs (children's author, conservationist). I later worked as Manager of Old Government House & Experiment Farm Cottage, Parramatta, for the National Trust.

I have written a local history of Denham Court and a history of Menangle Park House. At the moment, I am working part time curating an exhibition for the Campbelltown Arts Centre. I am a new grandmother (grandson in London) and looking forward to the birth of my second grandchild early next year (in Byron Bay). I also have an idea for a book on a woman artist, which I must progress.

Ruth Banfield

Book Launch - *Humble and Obedient Servants*

In July Dr Peter Tyler's, *Humble and Obedient Servants* - on the administration of New South Wales 1901-1960 - was launched by the Minister for the Arts, the Hon. Bob Debus, MP, who described the book as a 'rich, informative and extremely readable record of the achievements – and failures – of government administration during a period of massive social and economic change'. He later remarked on the author's 'tenderness and shrewdness' in recounting 'the triumphs, stuff-ups and near-misses'.

In response, the author acknowledged Rodney Cavalier and his Sesqui-centenary of Responsible Government Committee, largely through whose benevolence, New South Wales, by the end of 2006 will have gained a wealth of long-overdue historical studies of politics and government. They include volumes on the Premiers, the Parliament and Beverley Kingston's history of the state, as well as Tyler's book and its companion volume *Politics, Patronage and Public Works* by Hilary Golder that covers the earlier period 1842-1900.

The State Records Authority of NSW is to be commended for commissioning the enlightening works by Tyler and Golder, both of whom, the Minister acknowledged, 'meticulously detail the structures, functions, processes and personnel of the NSW public service'.

Peter Tyler paid tribute to David Roberts and his staff at State Records for the valuable assistance they provided, due praise indeed that would have been echoed by the invited guests – not the A-list of some other institutions, but the *cognescenti* appreciative of the long hard slog involved in sifting through our state's rich, diverse official records to produce history between the covers.



The speakers acknowledged the Board of the State Records Authority whose chairperson, Dr Shirley Fitzgerald proposed – also with tenderness and shrewdness – to the Minister that it was time the NSW Government appointed a State Historian!

Joy Hughes

NSW Premier's History Awards 2006

This year's History Awards drew 245 entries, which, in the words of Premier Morris Iemma, 'attest to the eagerness with which Australians are ready to explore their past – whether it is Indigenous historians reclaiming history by re-enacting it on film, academic historians discussing the complexity and dilemmas of land rights, or authors for young people offering fresh interpretations of the way our history has evolved.' Amen to that.

Worth a total of \$90,000 in prize money the NSW History Awards are still the only comprehensive series of history awards offered by any government in Australia. These, I hasten to add, are supplemented by the annual NSW History Fellowship and the NSW Indigenous History Fellowship (biennial), each worth \$20,000.

Few would disagree that the practice of history in all its manifestations – from scholarly works, community history, audio-visual to young people's historical literature – is alive and continues to prosper. It is to Bob Carr, the former premier, and a devotee of history that we owe a debt of gratitude. Compared to other disciplines history has never had it so good.

Exactly 10 years ago Bob Carr inaugurated the awards for excellence in history and the tradition continues under his successor Morris Iemma. Whoever occupies the seat of government following the State elections in 2007 would surely feel compelled to maintain this worthy enterprise.

It's just a pity that Premier Iemma wasn't there in person to make the presentations. Not that his emissary, Bob Debus, himself a thoughtful contributor to community debate on contemporary issues, was anything less than welcome. But telling us that the Premier would only attend if and when the likes of local footy hero, Joey Johns, took out one of the awards raised a few eyebrows. It was an occasion for laughter (not enough in this writer's opinion) at what was meant to be a light-hearted joke. Yet the thought of Joey Johns penning a history book is far from absurd. History is for everyone as the increasing number of history-related TV programmes demonstrates.

Professor Stuart Macintyre, who delivered the address, spoke about the 'best and worst of times' in which history finds itself today. An optimistic speech, I thought, that endeavoured to look beyond the rancorous disagreements so characteristic of the so-called 'history debate'. More about heavy-handed assertion and preaching than about dialogue conducted in an atmosphere of respect and its preference for reasoned debate. This has given rise to a particular – and peculiar – nastiness where name-calling from all sides has tended to sideline all but the most assertive. Maybe it's like the 'F' word and expletives in general: people start using them when clear thinking gives way to bombast and the mistaken belief that to shout louder wins the argument.

Winners of each of the awards in designated categories deserve recognition for their achievement. Rolf de Heer for his *Ten Canoes* (Audio/Visual History Prize), Richard Broome

(Australian History Prize) for his monumental work, *Aboriginal Victorians: a History Since 1800*, and Marie Nugent (Community and Regional History Prize) for her *Botany Bay: Where Histories Meet*. R J B Bosworth claimed the general history prize with *Mussolini's Italy: Life Under the Dictatorship 1915–1945*, while freelance historian, Pamela Freeman, took out the Young People's History Prize for *The Black Dress: Mary MacKillop's Early Years*. Finally, Gwenda Tavan volume on *The Long, Slow Death of White Australia* won the John and Patricia Ward History Prize awarded by State Records NSW.

Hopeful, I think, was Professor Macintyre's speech which concluded with a reflection on the recent History Summit, 'a remarkable example of common sense prevailing in a common purpose. It marked a pause in hostilities and a redirection of energies into constructive endeavour. Peace has not yet broken out but history would not look kindly on those who allowed their animosities to prevail over this previous opportunity.'

Ron Ringer October 2006

Keeping in Touch Regionally and Electronically

Cathy Dunn has provided these thoughts on how to keep up with historical matters in the regions outside the main capital cities.

Publications & Newsletters

Heritage NSW is the newsletter of the Heritage Office and Heritage Council of NSW. Use it to stay in touch with all the latest heritage projects, get simple explanations of conservation techniques and find out what's happening in heritage. Available as PDF downloads - http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/03_subnav_03.htm. You can also subscribe for a free printed copy of *Heritage NSW* by emailing Lianne Hall at lianne.hall@heritage.nsw.gov.au.

Environment & Heritage (Australia) - most of their publications are only available online. To read a publication, click on the title of the publication at <http://www.deh.gov.au/about/publications/index.html>. The free publications - newsletter-posters - kits which are available in print have the link (order printed copy) beside the publication title. These cover a vast range of topics including Heritage, Indigenous, Marine, the Natural Heritage Trust and World Heritage. To order a printed copy of the publication click on this link and complete the online order form.

An example is *Great Southern Land: The maritime exploration of Terra Australis* by Michael Pearson, The Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage, 2005 is available as a download or one printed copy (postage free) per request.

Australian Historical Association: 2007 Regional Conference

Drummond and Smith College/Duval College
University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales, Australia
23-26 September 2007

Engaging Histories

Call for Papers
(Deadline for Abstracts: 1 March 2007)

Papers, panels and other forms of presentation are especially invited on the following areas (see below for more detail), but we are open to other suggestions relevant to the theme of Engaging Histories. Please note that papers on non-Australian, transnational and comparative topics are welcome.

- o History as Story-telling
- o History's Audiences
- o History as a Community Asset
- o Brains and the Bush
- o Frontiers of History
- o Forms of History
- o Teaching Histories
- o Australian Legends
- o Ancient History and Nineteenth-century Historiography (The seventh Armidale Seminar in Mediterranean Antiquity) [Convener: G.H.R. Horsley]

Please submit abstracts (preferably nominating one of the above themes) of approximately 200 words by 1 March 2007 Online at:

www.une.edu.au/campus/confco/aha2007/ OR

emailed to Dr. Erin Ihde and Dr. Frank Bongiorno (Conveners) at:
confco@une.edu.au

History as Story-telling

What are the implications of history's status as narrative for the practice of history in the twenty-first century?

History's Audiences

When we present histories, whom do we imagine as our audiences? How can historians address old audiences in innovative ways, as well as attract

new ones?

History as a Community Asset

What is the use of history? How can it work as an asset in communities, particularly in regional areas?

Brains and the Bush

How can regional and rural historical perspectives challenge dominant interpretations and understandings of the past?

Frontiers of History

What are the intellectual 'frontiers' in the production of history in Australia? What is at stake in the key debates and controversies in our discipline, and how is our discipline being transformed by globalised knowledge cultures?

Forms of History

In what ways are new cultures and contexts leading to new forms of 'history-making'? How should historians respond to the challenges of presenting history in popular forms via the mass media?

Teaching Histories

What are the key problems, issues, opportunities and challenges in the teaching of history in schools and universities?

Australian Legends

What was Russel Ward's contribution to the writing of Australia's history? We invite papers engaging with the legacy of Russel Ward and The Australian Legend in connection with the forthcoming 50th anniversary of its publication in 2008.

Ancient History and Nineteenth-century Historiography

(The seventh Armidale Seminar in Mediterranean Antiquity) (Contact Professor G.H.R. Horsley for further details: ghorsley@une.edu.au Phone: 6773 2390)

For further details about the 2007 AHA Regional Conference:

Web: www.une.edu.au/campus/confco/aha2007/

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