

Number 220 – September – October 2006***Historians at Sea – but enjoying it!***

Judith Godden and husband David looked relaxed and comfortable on the deck of the Reliance which carried PHA members on a memorable river cruise led by historian John McClymont on 20 September. Photo R. Kerr

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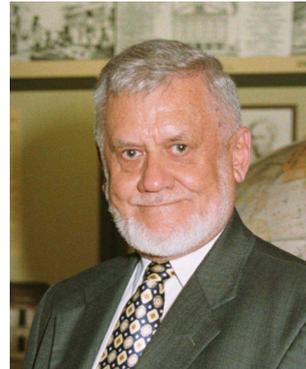
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Collective

Rosemary Broomham, Rosemary Kerr,
Christa Ludlow, Terri McCormack

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



First, let me express my appreciation to PHA members for electing me as President at the recent Annual General Meeting. Pauline Curby has set a high benchmark for me to match. Thank you, Pauline for nurturing PHA during the past three years. Pauline and her husband Kevin are now enjoying well-deserved rest and recuperation in Europe and the UK (and of course are visiting numerous historic sites).

One of my aims as President will be to raise the profile of PHA in the community. With this in mind, we will be seeking to build closer links with other organisations that have interests in history and heritage. I believe that networking with other professions is the best way for historians to become involved with significant and rewarding research projects. We took the first steps in this direction with our "Sexing up the PHA" meeting that Pauline mentioned in the last issue of *Phanfare*, and with our "History in July" gathering.

Another positive result has been our meeting with the new State Librarian, Regina Sutton, soon after her appointment as chief executive of the Library. Regina

and Elizabeth Ellis, the Mitchell Librarian, held a friendly and forthright discussion with three members of the PHA Management Committee about some of the issues concerning us, particularly the reduced opening hours in the Mitchell Library. The dynamic Ms Sutton shows a keen appreciation of the value of history, and said that it is important to her that the State Library meets the needs of its readers. I think we are likely to see some changes fairly soon. Regina Sutton regards the PHA as one of the major stakeholders in the Library and plans to engage in a regular process of consultation with us and other user groups.

Phanfare is now open to everybody on the PHA website – and is not restricted to members as previously. This accessibility will help to spread our messages more widely, and will become a showcase for the association and its members.

You will also see that the PHA website now lists all financial members. If your name does not appear, perhaps you have not renewed your subscription yet? By listing all members, not just those actively engaged in consultancy, we show that PHA is not merely a handful of practising historians, but is quite a large group of academics, salaried historians, heritage

consultants and so on. More importantly, however, it enables clients and employers to verify that a person claiming to be a professional historian is indeed currently accredited to use that title. Unfortunately, there have been cases where people have made false claims about their credentials.

Another of my objectives is to know our own members better. Some I see regularly; others I have never met. I know that a very broad range of attitudes and beliefs is represented – historians are a diverse group of individuals. To help us understand the aspirations and needs of nearly 100 PHA members, the Management Committee will be conducting a survey during the next few months. When you receive our questionnaire, please do not put it in the shredder, but take a little time to respond. Your response will help us to serve you better.

Peter J. Tyler
President

In the Swim!

PHA member, Christa Ludlow, is the joint author of the National Trust report 'Survey of Harbourside & Ocean Pools of the Sydney Metropolitan Region' which won the NSW Maritime Authority's 2006 Heritage Award. Details are in the latest issue of *Reflections*.

CRUISING - LAVENDER BAY TO HOMEBUSH BAY - A JOURNEY IN PICTURES



Our vessel, 'Reliance', leaving Lavender Bay

We left Lavender Bay, first known as Hulk Bay because of the hulks moored there, holding convicts awaiting transportation to Norfolk Island. George Lavender, for whom the bay is named, was the bosun of the hulk.

From the earliest days of European settlement there was great curiosity about what the harbour held. Within two days of landing at Sydney Cove, Captain John Hunter and Lieutenant William Bradley, both highly experienced in charting unknown waters, set about exploring the northern arm of the harbour.



It was a warm, sunny Spring day as 24 PHA members and friends embarked on the historic ferry, *Reliance* for a three-hour guided cruise from Lavender Bay to Homebush as part of History Week, 2006. Led by Historian, John McClymont and equipped with a map detailing points of interest, we explored parts of Sydney Harbour and the Parramatta River, discovering many fascinating sites and stories – some well-known, others hidden gems. I can't do justice to the experience in words - so I'll let these pictures tell some of the story of our journey.



Picturesque Lavender Bay

They sailed around the five islands and up the Parramatta River as far as Homebush Bay.

At a point between Birchgrove and Long Nose Point, John alerted us to a "bump", which signaled that we were passing over an underwater tunnel, which runs between these two points – the shortest distance from shore to shore in the harbour. The tunnel originally supplied electricity to the north shore. This point marks the geographical end of Sydney Harbour and the beginning of the Parramatta River.

These platforms or ‘dolphins’ near Iron Cove are individual floating wharves that were originally used for unloading logs from ships bringing timber from the Americas and Asia. After unloading, the logs were then towed to Blackwattle Bay.



‘Dolphins’ or floating wharves



Spectacle Island

Spectacle Island was discovered by Hunter and Bradley during their early exploration of the harbour and named for its original shape. Today, the Island houses a rich collection of maritime heritage – it is here that bells and other items from de-commissioned ships are taken for storage. Could be worth a visit on a future excursion!

Several boat building sites have lined the foreshores of the harbour and rivers since the earliest days of settlement. One of the major boat builders was Halvorsens, who owned many sites, and are perhaps best known as the builders of some of Australia’s early America’s Cup contenders, including *Dame Patty* and *Gretel*.



Boatshed at Abbotsford Point



Sydney Rowing Club, Abbotsford

Rowing or sculling has been a popular activity on the rivers since the 1880s and the sport produced Australia's first world sporting champions. On this trip we came across two memorials to scullers. The first, near Abbotsford was raised by public subscription for a sculler named Beach, a fisherman from the Illawarra, who won a local match against a world champion. The second, near Henley is for Henry Searle, an early world champion who died on his way back to Sydney after competing in England. Thousands of spectators lined the foreshores and streets for his funeral procession. The story is a timely parallel with the very public demonstration of grief following the recent deaths of Steve Irwin and Peter Brock.

Industrial sites have played a major role in the Parramatta River's history. Some of the companies that operated along or close to the River included: Bushells, Wunderlich, Brothers' Paints, Nestle, Meggitt's Linseed Oil, Shell Oil and its earlier incarnation, shale oil and kerosene distillers; and of course, the Australian Gas Works site near Mortlake. While some remnants of earlier industrial activities are still visible, most have been overwhelmed by residential development.



One of the few remaining buildings from AGL's site at Mortlake, or 'Breakfast Point' as it's now known.



Thomas Walker Hospital, Concord

Turning from sporting achievements and industry to philanthropy, the Thomas Walker Convalescent Hospital at Concord makes an impressive vista from the River, with its own wharf and gatehouse. The Sulman-designed complex was built in 1890 with a £100,000 bequest from Walker. His daughter, Dame Eadith Walker was also a renowned philanthropist, donating the family home to the State also to be used as a hospital.

As we neared our final destination, Homebush Bay, another revelation (to me, at least) was the existence of wrecks in the Bay, which are exposed at low tide. There's also a wildlife refuge here.



Shipwrecks near Homebush Bay



Progress?? New residential developments at Homebush Bay

From Hunter and Bradley's earliest explorations, to D'Arcy Wentworth's estate that he named "Home Bush", to brick pits, abattoir, Olympic site and now massive residential unit development, we reached the end of our outbound journey....Homebush Bay.

On our return to Lavender Bay, some of us stayed on for a picnic lunch in Quibaree Park. Quibaree is the former Aboriginal name for Lavender Bay and is said to mean 'a spring of fresh water'. A well is still visible in the park with an interpretive marker. After lunch we enjoyed a short walk along the foreshore, where an array of sculptures nestle among the lavender and other plants. The area has been home to an artistic community for many years, and residents have included Norman Lindsay and more recently, Brett Whiteley.



Sculpture garden along foreshore walk at Lavender Bay

Thanks must go to our guide, John McClymont, our skipper, Bill Moseley and his wife, Genevieve, and to Peter Tyler for organizing another enjoyable HW event.

Rosemary Kerr

DR SUE ROSEN DELIVERS MARGARET BARRY MEMORIAL LECTURE

On Thursday August 17th, Dr Sue Rosen presented the 2006 Margaret Barry Memorial Lecture at the Redfern Town Hall, an event organised by the Inner Sydney Regional Council for Social Development. Marg Barry was an activist, campaigning for affordable housing and for a sustainable community of residents of all walks of life in South Sydney. Her campaign started in the 1970s when her own home in Raglan Street, Waterloo was to be demolished and replaced with Housing Commission high rise. She banded together with Jack Munday and the Builders' Labourers Federation, who created the Green Bans movement and saved her street. (*Good Weekend*, August 12, 1995)

Sue's lecture "We Never Had a Hotbed of Crime" explored the rich fabric of life in Inner Sydney communities in the 20th century, through the voices of local residents who participated in the South Sydney Oral History Project conducted by Sue in the early 1990s. The lecture was very well received and given the current agenda for redevelopment, community members talked of a need for a more human focus by the likes of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority, and expressed support for the further development of the South Sydney Oral History Project material, as it provides valuable insights into the strengths of the area and the nature of the community, both historically and in a contemporary sense - a vital element of the redevelopment process.

Sue Rosen and Rosemary Kerr are currently seeking development funding for six biographies of place, for:

Redfern-Waterloo;
Erskineville-Alexandria;
Newtown-Darlington;
Darlinghurst-Surry Hills;
Kings Cross-Potts Point;
Woolloomooloo.

The biographies will be developed from interviews of local residents undertaken for the South Sydney Oral History Program in the early 1990s. A mock-up of *Our Place... Stories of Erskineville-Alexandria* is available on request.

If you missed Sue's lecture and would like to read the transcript, visit the HAAH 'download site' at www.haah.com.au username: haahftp, password: access



From left: Sue delivering Marg Barry lecture; the audience; Sue and Jack Munday (who introduced Sue's talk). Photographs courtesy Jack Carnegie

BOOK REVIEWS

By Terri McCormack

THE THIN RED AND BLUE LINES: A HISTORY OF THE MILITARY AND POLICE PRESENCE IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS BETWEEN THE NEPEAN AND COX'S RIVERS 1914-2005,**Written by Peter Chinn and published by Springwood Historical Society Inc, 2006.**

This is a well-produced and meticulously researched publication on law and order in the Blue Mountains area west of Sydney. It is an ambitious work that seeks to incorporate the history of the early military presence in the region with the later development of police stations all the way from Emu Plains to Hartley. This is reflected in the unwieldy title. The author quotes from Rudyard Kipling's "Tommy" to explain his metaphorical use of "Thin Red Line" to describe the red-coated British regiments that served in the colony from 1791 to 1870. The adaptation of "Thin Blue Line" reflects the defensive role of the police in maintaining civil order.

The first and much shorter part of this book deals with the military presence. This begins with the guard attached to William Cox's road construction from 1814 and traces the development of the Western Road with its roadside inns through the mountains until the Bathurst plains were officially opened for settlement in the late 1820s. Chinn has researched the increasing number of military depots along the way and describes the construction, personnel and functions of each. It was recidivist convicts who physically built the roads and public works along the way. They were housed in Stockades with military guards and Chinn has provided a brief overview of each. The text is interspersed with quotes from the Historical Records of Australia and the Colonial Architects' Correspondence. He has also used Historical Archaeological Assessments of the Stockades including that by Sue Rosen in 1997 but may not have been aware of her later work in this area.

This is all a necessary but detailed prelude to the main focus of this work: the police presence in the mountains. This had already been indicated by former Commissioner of Police A R Lauer in his laudatory Foreword to this work. Part 2 begins with the despatch of Military Mounted Police to Bathurst in 1826 to deal with bushrangers and to settle conflicts between settlers and Aborigines. Gold discoveries in the 1850s led to the creation of Gold Police and Mounted Road Patrols. All these were amalgamated in 1862 to form the New South Wales Police Force. In his coverage of this period, the author provides brief descriptions of the nine police stations in the Blue Mountains region from 1829 to 1862.

Part 3 - *The New South Wales Police Presence since 1862* - examines the history of fourteen Blue Mountains police stations. Peter Chinn is on more familiar territory here especially as he had access to Police Records and the memoirs of serving colleagues. He is a Blue Mountains resident and his family includes both military and police officers. He himself was a long-serving officer of the Australian Customs Service before becoming History Officer of that agency. Chinn acknowledges that the construction of each police station reflects the settlement history of the area but keeps his focus on the bricks and mortar and those staffing the buildings with an occasional excursion into case histories.

The nine appendices contain useful data supplementing all the detail in the preceding sections. The bibliography and references demonstrate how much original and painstaking research has gone into this work. It is essentially a reference tool. Therefore an index would have been useful to identify all those people and places listed in the text - and enabled former police officers to check on whether or not they'd been included. This, however, was probably beyond the available resources of the Springwood History Society who really should be congratulated for such a professional publication.

In his acknowledgements, Peter Chinn concedes that as an amateur historian this is his first such venture. At times he has fallen into the amateur trap of bogging down the narrative with too many long extracts from original documents, too many lists and too much detail. The later plans, maps and illustrations, though black and white, are excellent and appropriate but the early drawings of military uniforms from *The Remote Garrison* are irritating and simplistic and of course work better in colour. These were around when we were trying to clothe the Guards at Old Sydney Town and one would hope better images of British regiments would now be accessible. And another irritation is the lengthy title but it's hard to see how such a complex piece of work could have been more succinctly described.

These quibbles apart, however, Peter Chinn deserves commendation and praise for bringing this significant aspect of Blue Mountains history to public attention. He has provided an excellent resource for anyone with an interest in the expansion of settlement beyond the western plains of Sydney. This publication will enhance the local studies section of any library and I'll be checking it for any future work I do on the Blue Mountains. And it will provide an invaluable tool for all those researching British Military Regiments in Australia and particularly the New South Wales Police. It is an important work because it demonstrates how essential law and order were to the nascent colony and how the systems of control and enforcement changed over time. To quote Commissioner Lauer, "*The safety of the people is the highest law* and that was the guiding principle that saw the development of the colony of New South Wales into the nation of Australia".

MUSICAL CHAIRS: THE QUEST FOR A CITY RECITAL HALL

Written by Dr Lisa Murray and published by the City of Sydney 2005

What a lovely book this is - beautifully designed, great illustrations, and well written. And its launch in May was just as delightful with chamber music playing and author Dr Lisa Murray delivering a moving speech.

Researching the book must have been less delightful, however, as it deals with bruised egos, temperamental architects, and frustrated developers. Still, Lisa Murray has coped with these problems before in her earlier publication on *The Capitol Theatre* and has no doubt devised ways of charming such people into talking to her. Whether or not they approve of her final product I wouldn't know but they could hardly deny the depth of research that has gone into this work.

The musical structure of the book - overture, prelude, four movements - could have been disastrously artificial but it actually works very well. It enables the author to provide a site history (prelude) before moving on to the main themes. I for one was unaware of the serendipity of the

Angel Place site - a precinct alive with the sounds of music from Palings, Nicholsons, and other purveyors of musical instruments from the 1840s.

I confess I was a bit *allegro* with the First Movement (aborted AMP development proposals for the Angel Place site in the 1980s) in my eagerness to get to the Second Movement. As one of those involved in the heritage assessment of its future usage, I was interested to see how Dr Murray handled this section on Customs House. In 1993, the Australian Customs Service moved to more modern premises in Pitt Street. Prime Minister Keating transferred the vacant building to Sydney City Council as part of the East Circular Quay deal. The Commonwealth Government provided \$24 million for refurbishment with the proviso that 70 per cent of the building had to be public space. The author has skillfully woven her way through the intricate decision-making processes and the arguments presented by the many protagonists in the fight for Customs House. In the often-heated race for occupation of this prime site, a Musica Viva consortium and a Cultural Tourism group became the front runners. As Dr Murray says, no one ever worked out just what "public space" meant but, at the time, a dedicated Musica Viva concert hall did not seem to be fit the brief. As well, it would have struggled to remain financial without concerts day and night. More importantly, it would have required permanent and significant destruction of much of the original heritage fabric of the building. In the end, the fight was won by the multi-use tourism body. This turned out to less than successful usage but at least it was reversible. In 2006, the City of Sydney Library occupies the "public space" of Customs House. Meanwhile, back in 1994, Sydney was still without a decent recital hall.

The Third Movement examines renewed AMP negotiations with City Council for the development of the Angel Place site. This time, the DA included Andrew Andersons' plan for a recital hall within the scheme. From 1995 to May 1997, proposals and amendments went back and forth as each party attempted to get the maximum concessions. Dr Murray had the unenviable task of sorting out the politicking and posturing, as well as the planning controls and site constraints relating to Floor Space Ratio (FSR), Heritage Floor Spaces (HFS), Furniture, Fittings and Equipment (FF+E) against a background of changing Local Environmental Plans (LEPs). She has produced a remarkably lucid account of all these complexities.

The Fourth - and final - Movement deals with the actual construction of the City Recital Hall. As a key stakeholder in the development, City Council was heavily involved in monitoring the project. Andrew Andersons and a team from Peddle Thorpe and Walker were the architects, wrestling with a brief that had to satisfy Lord Mayor Frank Sartor, their own architectural requirements, heritage limitations, the developers' investment hopes, and the acoustic perfection necessary for a world class chamber music recital hall. In the course of construction, the Tank Stream running beneath the site had to be encased. An archaeological dig produced artefacts illuminating the history of this inner city site. Again, Dr Murray has distilled all the intricate details and challenges of construction and design into an interesting narrative, culminating in the Gala Opening on 30 October 1999.

This is the second in a series of short histories published by City Council to examine major city projects. In this often difficult performance, many complex themes have been delicately orchestrated and sensitively conducted by the author. Three cheers for Maestro Murray!

DANCING WITH MEMORY: ORAL HISTORY AND ITS AUDIENCES

Bailando con la memoria: la historia oral y su público

International Oral History Conference – Sydney 12-16 July 2006

Sydney was recently host to the 14th biennial conference of the International Oral History Association (IOHA). Not only was this the first bilingual (Spanish and English) oral history conference in Australia, it was also the first time the international conference (in a joint initiative with the Oral History Association of Australia - OHAA) has been held in the southern hemisphere and half the twenty-eight countries represented among the 417 delegates were from this hemisphere. They included students, individual practitioners of oral history, people working in organizations, agencies and institutions involved with heritage, history, radio, welfare, local government and museums to name only some.

Before the Governor formally opened the Conference at UTS on 13 July four Master classes were held at the State Library on Tuesday, 11 July. Oral history interviews inform a variety of projects for government, business and private pursuit and in their individual Master classes Linda Shopes (USA) and Alistair Thomson (UK), respectively, looked at practical ways of preparing oral history interviews for publication and evaluating, analyzing and interpreting interviews. Michael Fegan and Dean Rehberger (USA) discussed the rapidly changing technology which confronts many oral history practitioners and Alessandro Portelli (Italy) discussed the creative aspects of memory.

Professor Peter Read presented the keynote address, *The truth which will set us all free: national reconciliation, oral history and the conspiracy of silence*, on the reconciliation process underway in Chile which had loud echoes for Australia's reconciliation process.

Ensuring the 198 papers were presented meant there is little alternative to parallel sessions – and it is testament to what must have been many hours of skillful juggling that the conference organizing committee achieved a smooth (if packed) program. As many as seven parallel sessions were a challenge over the four days as delegates hurtled to catch particular speakers in different rooms, or else resigned themselves to being trapped amid a sea of seats too far from the doorway!

This was my dilemma when I heard Javier Arce-Nazario (Columbia University) speak about *Ecological memories of the Amazon: incorporating oral history into the analysis of Amazonian environmental changes*. His exciting paper was the result of a four year interdisciplinary study in the Peruvian Amazon, analyzing the history of rural and river changes imposed by a set of islands where the ribereño people live. Their oral history is full of images of environmental change and they believe a mythic river creature, the Yacuruna, has now returned to the river. Javier found oral history interviews with the ribereño explained agricultural management practices and reinforced scientists' understanding – an integration of oral history and environmental science he described as “ecological memory”.

Technology is a wonder when it works –with text panels or photographs reinforcing presentations. But some were outstanding works of word and art. George Imashev's *From Bohemia and Lake Baikal to Bateman's Bay – a 20th century story* was one. Using text, oral

recordings and smart formatting in PowerPoint he took us along his journey of unearthing his parents' lives and interests in Europe and later as a family in Canberra.

So too Glynis Jones's paper, *Dressing from the inside: documenting subcultural and alternative style in a museum context*, which (using arresting images and filmed interviews) explored subcultural and alternative styles of dress, textiles and expression. Dress and decoration allowed some people to become increasingly resilient, such as the much tattooed and pierced man who presents a fierce face and "no-one took him on" now in contrast to a childhood being bullied, Glynis elicited people's stories and rationale for their particular – and gorgeous – attire, tattooing or body piercing extending the breadth of the Powerhouse Museum's fashion collections.

In her finely crafted presentation, *The Tasmanian Hmong: memory and community*, Margaret Eldridge (University of Tasmania) addressed some of the issues of identity, mobility, migration and remigration the Laotian community in Hobart explores in that island and through their travels to Queensland.

These four very different projects and presenters working to different audiences and practices demonstrated the nuances oral history elicits between the oft-quoted "layers". There was a great 'buzz' to the conference and it was stimulating for Australians (more than half the delegates) working in oral history to exchange ideas and explore issues about the practice of oral history with international delegates.

During the Conference the initial *Hazel de Berg Award for Excellence in Oral History* (to recognize member of the OHAA who have made a contribution to the cause of oral history in Australia over an extended period of time) was awarded to Beth Robertson and presented by Hazel's daughter, Judith Rich.

The next IOHA conference will be held in Mexico in 2008.

Roslyn Burge

Oral History Association of Australia - www.ohaa.net.au

International Oral History Association – www.ioha.fgv.br



(Left) Recipient of the inaugural Hazel de Burgh award Beth Robertson ® with Di Rich (Right) Alessandro Portelli (centre) with Elizabeth Wright of San Francisco (l)

PHA MEMBER WINS HORNSBY HERITAGE AWARD

PHA member Emma Dortins, of Sue Rosen and Associates Heritage Assessment and History (HAAH) recently compiled and edited a history of Beecroft Children's Library based on research carried out by the Library sub-Group of the Beecroft/Cheltenham History Society, and on their own recollections. Mentored by Sue Rosen, Emma worked collaboratively with the group of twelve volunteers on the narrative and design of the book. The result is a history which celebrates the achievements of the hundreds of volunteers who helped to fund and run the library over its fifty-seven years, and puts the contribution made by the library to the local community into historical context. The book was professionally edited by Susanne Morrow of Macquarie University, and has been published by the Beecroft/Cheltenham History Society under the title *Beecroft Children's Library - Giving the Gift of Reading, 1942 – 1998*.

In her speech at the launch of the book in December 2005, Suzanne Kelly, the co-ordinator of the Library sub-Group said: "...Emma spent time understanding our local viewpoint and she was able to provide a balanced and independent perspective, which has made the book far more readable for the general public. She helped us to express our stories and showcase the significance of the library..."

The book won an award in the Hornsby Shire Council Heritage Awards, 2006. When presenting the award, Mayor Berman said:

"Beecroft Children's Library - Giving the Gift of Reading, 1942 - 1998 has made an outstanding contribution to the education and promotion of heritage in the Shire, providing an invaluable history of an important community service and insight into the history of the local community."

Copies are available from Suzanne Kelly ph. 9875 1337 for a cost of \$15 each



HISTORY ON THE BRAIN

Kylie Tennant

“Stop!” Honoria cried.

I could not stop the car on the narrow bridge, but, thinking the luggage must have fallen out of the boot, I drew into the side of the road as soon as I could.

“Now I’ll have to walk back,” Honoria complained. “That bridge was built in 1852 by James Swalesthorpe, and the Main Roads Board decided to widen it last year. I wanted to see if they’ve left the old foundation stone.”

A fine rain was falling, it was half-past seven in the morning, and we had 300 miles to go.

“Yes, it’s still there,” she said, as she climbed in again. “About a quarter of a mile on is St. Thomas’ Church. Up that steep road on your left. Never mind, they’ve locked the door, so we’ll see it on our way back. It has the memorial tablets to the Hewletts on the chancel walls.”

I did not remind her that on the return trip we would be driving all night, probably passing St. Thomas’ about three in the morning.

“The house on the hill – go slower and you’ll see it as we come around the curve – once belonged to the Manning Frobishers. The Royal Historical Society brought us out in a bus and the owners very kindly let us inspect the old dairy, the only part of the original house still standing. How it rained! I remember we stood under a shop verandah for an hour and a half.”

I suggested to Honoria that she had a fortune at her finger tips.

“For the past 40 miles, Honoria, you have shown me every point of historical interest on the road,” I said. “All you have to do is write an historical guide for motorists – probably the NRMA would print it on the back of their strip maps. The number of history addicts in this State, if laid end to end, would reach from Sydney to Gundagai. You can write an historical guide to the Great North Road, one to the Great Western Highway, a guide to the Middle West. You could go on forever.”

“You must think I’m Gerald Swaynforth,” Honoria said coldly. She used to be engaged to Gerald when he was beginning his career as an historical journalist.

A cheerful, red-faced man, he approached his subject with the ease of a naturalist grasping a horned viper. Seizing some problem behind the head, he would milk it of its venom and cage it for further use.

When I was a young freelancer writing about female wrestlers he would explain that everything I did was wrong. Originality, he told me, was a trap for the young journalist.

“Take me”, he would say complacently. “I consult my diary and find that the Leichhardt season has come around again. Do I write a completely new article on Leichhardt? Certainly not. I have all the Leichhardt theories tabulated. I consult my files and select a story on

Leichhardt I sold six years ago. No editor is going to search his files six years back. Never use the same Leichhardt theory two years running.”

“I do coastal wrecks in May. Early whaling and sealing in June. Homes of the early settlers carry me through the winter, and spring brings on the bushrangers. There is always Macquarie and Bigge. I would advise you to make your start, as so many others have done before you, with Macquarie and Bigge.”

Occasionally he would take a run and jump on the neck of a rival historian, giving him the best of three falls in one of the weekly magazines. Nowadays, when Gerald Swaynforth walks into the Mitchell Library, junior librarians hide behind the filing cabinets and only emerge awestruck when the great man has vanished into the vaults where they store the microfilm.

Swanforth was the progenitor of that school of journalism without which some of my friends would have been hard pressed to rear their young. I have known a whole family toiling together to turn out the weekly article on “Our History” – little Emily marking references, James at the typewriter, Anne bringing the old prints for the illustrations, and Eric feeding his father quotations. Hard labour, I grant you, but lucrative.

So cynical had I become on the subject of history that, when the head of a syndicate, (a fascinating man who knew all about wolfram mining), commissioned me to write history at so much a thousand words, I used to send telegrams: “15,000 words posted. No more till cheque arrives.” And receive a telegram in reply: “Cheque in post. Get on with Burke and Wills.”

History lurks in the Australian bloodstream like malaria, but it takes different people in different ways.

I know one man who will drive miles to look at scratches on a rock reputed to be Aboriginal carvings. Another digs up flints. A third, no matter how great his hurry, cannot pass an abandoned graveyard. The sight of white stones on a hillside, just showing above the lantana, will bring him swerving to the roadside. There he will fill his pipe, sit on the slab with the best view and survey the terrain, clicking like a geiger counter. “There is one dated 1848, and, yes, by gosh – 1832.” He reads all the inscriptions, peers into graves that have subsided, and then slowly, reluctantly, tears himself away to drive off about his business, putting higher tariffs on imported socks and plumbers fittings.

When I refused to look at the old McWhistle homestead past which we had just flashed at 60 miles an hour, Honoria said I had no historical sense.

“Why hook yourself to a rusty chain?” I asked. “Here we have a nice clean country and we proceed to litter it with museums containing old drinking flasks and leg-irons. Every wayside pub fits up its lounge with leftover ploughs and coaching harness and a set of bullet holes.”

I had slowed down the car of my own accord at a patch of swamp. Honoria wanted to know why we were stopping.

“Julia probably camped here,” I said. “It’s the only surface water for 20 miles. I know because I once came through the Big Scrub in a horse and cart”.

“Julia?” Honoria asked.

“You know how it was always my habit to cry: ‘To hell with the Irish. They are the black curse of Australia’? Well, my father recently told me that I had an Irish grandmother. Her name was Julia Calhoun, and she was the daughter of an Irish bishop.”

I started the car again.

“His daughter?” Honoria asked doubtfully.

“Sometimes his sister. My father never tells the story the same way twice. Julia fell in love with the palace gardener and ran away to Australia with him. She walked all the way behind the bullock waggon through the Big Scrub. The bullock waggon was carrying a glass window she had brought from Ireland. Sometimes there is a grand piano too, but by cross-questioning I have narrowed it down to the glass window. It came through the Big Scrub all in one piece and they proceeded to build a house around it. Then, just as they were settling in, all the servants went off to the gold diggings.”

“Servants!” Honoria said, “When they only had a bullock waggon?”

“Servants were cheaper than bullocks. So Julia’s husband went too, leaving her to mind the farm. He came back from the gold diggings, flat broke with the seat out of his pants. So they had to give up the farm and go back to Sydney. But, anyway, the Irish are my favourite race. They show a fine pioneering spirit.”

We came to another church and Honoria was away up the avenue of yew trees before I had done examining the tyres. When I glanced inside she was going through the register in the vestry.

It was pleasant under the yew trees, with a smell of old earth and stones and lives of people who didn’t have to worry any more. Honoria came panting back. “There’s a vault,” she said. “I can’t get in because it’s padlocked, but I climbed over the gate and I think when they enlarged the sanctuary they left the family tomb of the Stagg Ashburys under the church. I suppose I haven’t time to go through the graveyard?”

“We haven’t much time,” I agreed.

Honoria gave me an appealing look. “Julia,” she said “must have driven in to this church. They probably swapped the bullock waggon for a horse and buggy. And it’s a very old graveyard.”

“Carry on,” I said. “What’s time when we have all eternity to fill in? This is where we’re heading anyway.”

But Honoria had gone off to look at the graves.

(Discovered by Peter Tyler and reprinted from *Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday, 20 March 1954, p.11)

HISTORY WRITERS' FESTIVAL SATURDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2006

Virginia Macleod

The good news is that according to Nick Bleszynski Australian history is bursting with untold stories and there is tremendous scope for writing historical fiction. He is persuasive. He brushed aside Random House' objections that there had already been a film 'Breaker Morant', and they published his book *Shoot straight you bastards! The truth behind the killing of Breaker Morant*. He is good at promotion too; unveiling a statue of Ben Hall, the subject of his subsequent book, in Forbes. Isolde Martyn writes Plantagenet historical novels (*Silver Bride*) with carefully researched language and background. Kathryn Heyman evokes the past too; her most recent novel is *Captain Starlight's Apprentice*. Apart from Mardi McConichie who says she does not write historical fiction (except possibly *Coldwater*) the authors all come from Britain. That's a challenge for Australian writers.

Why should history matter to us? Shirley Fitzgerald considers history essential as social glue. She deftly fielded an accusation of being an 'official historian' explaining that history is always coloured by its interpreter and can and should be open to reinterpretation. Jenny Hocking discussed her current work - a political biography of Gough Whitlam- involving extensive interviews with the man. Jonathon King interprets history through reenactments, notably the First Fleet in 1988. He feels this is an important and popular way of getting history into the public mind, and for example dispelling the idea that Gallipoli is surfing beach on the Queensland coast.

Most of the panel expressed disappointment about the attitude of the current government towards history. A member of the audience asked why discussion of history in Australia always involves politics. Christopher Kremmer pointed out that in Asia political disputes were often couched in events of the past. They all were adamant that history is about politics, though whether they meant political party posturing or power struggles was not really distinguished.

Callan Park is always a delightful and historically interesting setting for this annual event. There are regular guided tours, booked out for history week, but some spaces in the months ahead



The Nestlé Site on the Parramatta River. Photo Peter Tyler

GOAT ISLAND COMMUNITY INFORMATION EVENING – 22 AUGUST 2006

Roslyn Burge

Katherine Knight's article on Goat Island's proposed Masterplan in the May-June issue of *Phanfare* caught my eye so when I had the opportunity to attend the *Goat Island Community Information Evening* I was keen to see what was proposed.

The Goat Island website (www.goatilanddremaing.net.au) announces that plans are underway to preserve and revitalize the Island as a premier cultural tourism destination.

NPWS is required to undertake a Masterplan as part of the Plan of Management for Sydney Harbour. Its objectives will be to:

- * capture the natural and cultural heritage values of the Island
- * allow development of the character of the Island
- * interpret layers through innovative use proposals and design solutions
- * ensure economic viability of uses proposed
- * ensure Goat Island provides an exciting destination

The invitation to the *Community Information Evening* asked:

- How can the public be involved in the future of Goat Island?
- Tell us what you would like to see happening on Goat Island?
- How should Goat Island's heritage resources be used for the benefit of the community?
- What kind of activities do you feel would be appropriate to Goat Island?
- What facilities should be provided for the benefit of the public on Goat Island?

It is impressive that NPWS is consulting widely with stakeholders and the public at each Stage in the project and a number of NPWS staff and consultant masterplanners (Conybeare Morrison) was present at Balmain Town Hall on Tuesday 22 August.

Images of Sydney Harbour, Goat Island – its built structures and landscape - scrolled across the screen as Goat Island's history and background to the project were highlighted.

Issues raised by NPWS included:

- Enhanced public access is a priority, as is interpretation of the physical fabric. Goat Island was described as an underutilized site and visitor facilities need to be arranged. Access arrangements will be finalized and arrangements made through partnerships yet to be forged – renewing public access will “make Goat Island a special destination for Sydneysiders”. Institutional stakeholders have met already and NPWS believe it is important to produce a Masterplan which is capable of implementation from a heritage, community and financial perspective.
- Work will be undertaken to conserve aspects of the Island as part of revitalizing Sydney Harbour and making it available to the public. A four year program of capital works was phased in last year (supported by a budget of \$9.4 million) and we learnt that reports have already been compiled which will underpin the community's understanding of the cultural and natural values of the site.
- It is worth noting that In the last twenty-five years numerous reports on different aspects of the Island's history have been undertaken – indeed the Bibliography of the most recent, Graham Brooks and Associates' *Conservation Management Plan* (March 2006), runs to almost four and a half pages. The National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) has much documentation to support its plans.

- Goat Island is seen as a link between the “western heads” of the Harbour with Ballast Point and Balls Head.
- Some uses NPWS proposed might be considered were historical, educational, storytelling and public events. These included: walking tracks, picnics, canoeing, sailing, swimming, tennis, photography, sketching / painting, camping, heritage tours, heritage boat building, education program for schools and TAFE, art shows, heritage crafts / cooking schools, storytelling, sound and light shows, re-enactment and demonstrations, weddings and celebrations, corporate lifestyle, “Name” restaurants and possible private moorings.

Community concerns

There was an opportunity for community members to discuss their concerns and access was a significant issue for many. With a number of stakeholders on the harbour more than one person highlighted the need to co-ordinate access to the different harbour islands and integrate transport to Goat Island (it was important for a number of people that Goat Island needs to be considered as part of a wider harbour). There were concerns expressed that the theme of a working harbour must not be lost.

In response to another community member’s concerns about the focus on tourism (and his enquiry as to whether NPWS had learnt from the experience of leasing the Quarantine Station) the NPWS staff member responded that their approach was now “profoundly different”. They “are not going to tell people what the outcomes are but want to engage with the community in discussion”.

In summation NPWS staff stressed that Goat Island is part of a national park, with elements heritage listed, and it is an Island. It was encouraging to hear them reinforce the idea that *telling stories of the Island and how they are told* was important. People continued to live and work on Goat Island well after the convict era and their voices should not be overlooked. NPWS also reiterated the importance of discerning the number of visitors the Island was capable of carrying, the capacity of the Island to adapt and economic and operational viability.

NPWS believed discussions with the community would help them develop and test future directions for Goat Island and generating partnerships to address common objectives (operational, conservation or commercial enterprises) was also important.

The concluding comment by the NPWS that, “we have **got** to get this one **right**”, provides much to hope for!

Goat Island already is an exciting destination. It is imperative that the public participates in these Community Information Evenings (and tours) to explore ways in which Goat Island’s landscape and precincts are interpreted, and former residents and workers, are recognized. Highlighting these elements of Goat Island’s history has the potential to reawaken interest in the Island’s significance in the maritime history of NSW. On this 6+ hectare site it is crucial that balance is maintained between these values and the activities proposed.

STAGE 2 – Goat Island – Possibilities paper will be released on 26 September for public exhibition and comment until 15 October 2006. Community workshops will be held in October (4, 7 and 8 October) and tours of the Island (7 October).

STAGE 3 – Draft Goat Island Masterplan will be released 10 January 2007 for public exhibition and comment until 11 March 2007.

More information: Anna.Bursic@environment.nsw.gov.au Tel: 9337.7012
www.goatilanddreaming.net.au

HISTORY ADVISORY PANEL TO NSW HERITAGE OFFICE, 17 AUGUST 2006

1. Regional Histories of NSW – models for revision. Matters dealt with included the possibility of devising a standard bibliography applicable to all regions, which could form the basis for work by volunteer writers. The problem of defining boundaries after changes in LGAs since the previous version of the histories was finalised was also discussed.
2. Draft Criterion D – Social Significance. Further discussion focusing on a position paper prepared by Bruce Baskerville.
3. State Arms Centenary. Arrangements are in hand for an exhibition at Parliament House, with launch likely to be on 11 October
4. Productivity Commission Report. The Panel provided input into a response, which will be sent from the NSW Heritage Office regarding the Report.
5. World Heritage Nomination. Serial Nomination for Convict Sites across Australia. The panel provided comment and input into material being prepared by the NSW Heritage Office for NSW sites.

Terry Kass, PHA representative

NATIONAL ARCHIVES ADVISORY COUNCIL, 15 AUGUST 2006

1. NAA is attempting to deal with problem of digitisation quality of some records and with printing from web for some users.
2. Work for the Dole scheme has completed migrant documents (Reached Y - Yugoslavs) and the NAA is seeking ideas for other suitable projects.
3. A new corporate plan has been issued for NAA setting priorities for the next 3 years.
4. An archival support programme aimed at community groups has commenced in Melbourne, initially seeking to aid Muslim groups.
5. Public response to keeping Census schedules was very successful, especially since it had the support of the Bureau of Statistics. The completed schedules will be housed at Chester Hill for 100 years.
6. Digitisation of Post Office files has been halted for the time being for funding reasons. There are hopes that it will restart under the "Access" budget rather than the "Preservation" budget. Files have been digitised as far as East Gresford.
7. Digitisation on demand may be available from state offices and not only from Canberra from late 2006.
8. All World War One personal dossiers will probably be on the Web by November 2006.
9. Record cards of Navy petty officers 1911-70 will also be digitised.
10. VROOM – the Virtual Reading Room for schools - won an Australian Award for Educational Publishing in July.
11. A new guide Tracking Family, about Aboriginal research in Northern Territory records has been released.

Terry Kass PHA Representative

REPORT: STATE RECORDS COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

State Records Tel: 9673-1788, fax 9833-4518 - www.records.nsw.gov.au

The Community Advisory Committee of State Records met on 14 September 2006 and the following issues were discussed.

◆ **Estrays** - a number of drawings by the Government Architects, Vernon and Blacket, have been returned by the State Library (from the Ted Mack Collection) and a gold register has been returned by the Australian Museum.

◆ **Primary Application Records –**

NRS 13012 Primary Applications 1862-1986 - the application documents removed from the Packets prior to their transfer to State Records

NRS 13011 Documents relating to Primary Applications c.1820-c.1950 Nos 2 to 14157 (with gaps) - comprising documents removed from the Primary Application packets around 20 years ago and now housed separately

NRS 137513 Primary Application Packets

Archives in Brief 108 provides an administrative overview and information on the key records.

◆ **Latest additions to *Archives Investigator* include:**

• **Probate Packet series 3** - The Probate Packets continue to be very successful. Lists are available in the Reading Room.

Probate Packets - Series 1- April 1817-May 1873

Series 2- 1873-1876

Series 3 - 1876-c.1890, and

Series 4 - c.1890-1985 (1928-32, 1941-42 pt. online)

• **School and Tertiary Education Building Files (SB and S files – 1937 onwards).** These files contain some references to building work in the 1800s and relate to extensions, build blocks, heating in classrooms and maintenance.

◆ **Latest additions to *Photo Investigator* include:**

• **Maritime Service Board glass negatives (NRS 9856)** – c.1870s to 1960s. Work continues on this major project of 2533 images – harbour wharves, a variety of shipping vessels and troops departing to the Boer war.

• **New online indexes** - The generous donation by researchers of their own indexes is gratefully acknowledged. Pastkeys has donated the following indexes compiled by Mary-Anne Warner: Unassisted Immigrants 1842 – 1855; Vessels arriving Sydney 1837 – 1925

◆ **Register of Firms 1903–1922** - prepared by State Records' Volunteer Team.

◆ The conversion project for the “Concise Guide” continues.

- ◆ ***Australian Biographical and Genealogical Record project*** – index to all passengers between 1826 and 1837 will be available shortly, with thanks to Keith Johnson, Malcolm Sainty and Carol Baxter.
- ◆ ***The Administration of New South Wales*** - a reminder that the two volume set (*Politics, Patronage and Public Works, 1842-1900*, by Hilary Golder and *Humble and Obedient Servants, 1901-1960*, by Peter Tyler) is available for \$99. See website.
- ◆ ***Bridging Sydney*** - the publication to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the Sydney Harbour Bridge will be available towards the end of the year. The work of members of staff at State Records is acknowledged in assisting in the production of the book.
- ◆ ***In Living Memory*** – an exhibition of surviving photographs from the Records of the Aborigines Welfare Board from 1919 to 1966 was launched on 7 September – and was one of the best launches State Records has enjoyed with more than 250 people present. Aboriginal people who came have made connections with the images and State Records views its role as making a contribution towards reconciliation. This is an ongoing project with people continuing to identifying themselves or others in the images.
- ◆ State Records hosted a number of events for History Week.

Roslyn Burge

PHA (NSW) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Twenty PHA members attended the Annual General Meeting at History House on 12 August 2006 where the main business was the election of officers for 2006-07. Peter Tyler is the new President, Ron Ringer is the Vice President and Rosemary Kerr continues as Treasurer but those willing to accept office were insufficient to fill all the vacancies until Deborah Edward volunteered. She joined the committee comprising Pauline Curby, Virginia Macleod and Michael Tyquin. The position of Secretary has not been filled but Ron Ringer is continuing as Minutes Secretary and Virginia Macleod is Public Officer. Peter Tyler expressed his appreciation of Pauline Curby's achievements during her three years as president.

The General Meeting that followed agreed to raise the annual fees for 2007-08 to \$150 (Professional), \$90 (Associate) and \$65 (Graduate). The executive agreed to investigate the possibility of a half-price fee for retired members. The meeting supported the formation of a working party to revitalise, promote and steer ROHPO and voted to continue the e-*Phanfare*. Matters reviewed included the new format Consultants' Register; the new logo imposed by ACPHA; and the non-payment of historians for contributions to the Dictionary of Sydney. A memo on this last matter from Shirley Fitzgerald will be circulated to interested members.



LIBRARY REPORT

Compiled by Terri McCormack.

Library enquiries: (02) 9810 4421 or
terrimc@ozemail.com.au

PHA PERIODICALS

PHANZINE: Newsletter of the Professional Historians' Association of New Zealand/Aotearoa. Volume 12, No 2, August 2006

In an editorial that relates to Australia as well as New Zealand, Michael Kelly examines the nascent but often shallow interest in the nation's past, "that sometimes manifests itself in the most peculiar of ways, like re-enactment societies and heritage theme parks". He affirms the importance of proper historical understanding in the national discourse. Otherwise, "it is too easy for politicians and others to fan small prejudices and ill-informed biases".

Kelly's views are prompted by a new movement in Britain. Called *History Matters - Pass it on*, this campaign is led by the foremost heritage organisations and promoted by such celebrities as David Starkey, Stephen Fry, Bill Bryson, and Tony Benn. Launched in July, it aims to generate interest in history among the general public. Amazingly, a poll showed that 73% of those asked claimed an interest in history,

compared to 59% for sport and 48% for soccer in particular.

An edited version of Susan Butterworth's paper to the PHANZ Seminar in November 2004 re-examines the eternal problem of self-employed historians receiving proper pay for contract work. We'd all agree that "it is our business as professionals to say what is feasible within the budget and not get trapped into doing more than that". But we do get trapped. As she says, "we all take some bad jobs but the better we understand how to put a proper value on our labour the fewer of these there will be".

PHAROS: Professional Historians Association (Vic) Inc. No 43, Sept 2006

To celebrate the launch of the ACPA and PHA(Vic) logos, this newsletter features a central spread of coloured photos and State logos. The spindly molecular-like images depict the federal unity and communication lines of our organisation while also reflecting the seven-pointed star on the flag and Aboriginal dot painting motifs.

Mary Sheehan is one of the best-known and respected names in the Victorian PHA. She has been on the PHA Executive since its inception in 1990, serving as President from 1997 to 1999 and ACPHA delegate from 1996 to 2006. At her recent retirement, President Sarah Rood presented a heart-felt tribute of appreciation for all Mary's inspiring work for the history profession.

PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS ASSOCIATION (SA) INC Newsletter incorporating the Professional Historians Association (NT) Inc. No 86, July 2006

Dr Susan Marsden presents her third and final Annual Report as PHA(SA) President.

She and her committee raised the PHA public profile by meeting with several government departments to discuss the pivotal role of historians and by promotions at cultural institutions, conference and at Writers Week. Despite her best efforts, however, she was unable to increase membership which remains at 45. She finishes with a tribute to the PHA: "I have often criticised the parlous levels of support for history (and historians) in South Australia, but the PHA (SA) itself represents a remarkable breadth and depth of historical knowledge, experience and enthusiasm."

PHA Members review several of the 2006 State History Conference papers. One of the highlights was Bernard Whimpress' talk on 'Creeping Anzacism', in which he criticises the crass commercialisation of this solemn day and the popularisation of the Gallipoli site as a tourist destination. Last year there were 17, 000 "pilgrims". This will resonate with those of us in Sydney who recently heard Ann Curthoys speak of the militarisation of history in her talk on 'History in the Howard Era.'

PHA(SA) member Patricia Sumerling has won the Catherine Mary Gilbert *Tales of the City* essay prize, donated by Professor Susan Magarey to encourage research into Adelaide's history. The winning entry - 'Madam Harpur: the Trials and Tribulations of an Adelaide Doctress' - recalls the darker side of Adelaide's life. As the winner acknowledges, this prize is significant because it gives historians the opportunity to tap into the treasure trove of stories about the city's low life - stories that would otherwise remain unpublished.

QUEENSLAND PROFESSIONAL HISTORIAN. No 79, July 2000

For the first time, the National Trust of Queensland has a president who is not from Southeast Queensland. Diane Menghetti hails from Townsville and is disturbed by the lack of government assistance for heritage buildings

damaged by cyclone Larry in northern Queensland. As she writes in this PHA newsletter, this indicates the way heritage has dropped down the scale of Government priorities in Queensland. Protective legislation was introduced in 1992 but non-transparent processes and undisclosed changes currently being made to the Queensland Heritage Act have the National Trust, heritage professionals, and communities concerned about the future of heritage in the Sunshine State.

RETROSPECT: Professional Historians Association (Vic) Inc. Annual Review. July 2006

This 22-page monograph contains reports by the members of the Executive and is an overview of the state of the Victorian PHA for the past year. President Sarah Rood pinpoints significant events and applauds the Committee for their voluntary and committed role to raising the profile of history in Victoria.

NON-PHA PUBLICATIONS

INSITES: Newsletter of the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. No 48, Spring 2006

Even non-cricket fans have heard of "The Ashes" but how many people know what this means? You can see the famous urn on display at the Museum of Sydney later this year. And it does contain ashes but whether of a cricket bail, ball or stump no-one knows. The losing Australian captain presented the urn to the victorious touring English team in 1882-1883. Although not an official trophy, it signifies the rivalry between Britain and its colony and is one of the most valuable artefacts in the MCC museum.

If, like me, you missed many of the History Week events, you have time to plan ahead for

otherwise inaccessible CBD buildings. See www.htt.net.au/whats_on/sydneyopen

HISTORY: Magazine of the Royal Australian Historical Society. No 89, September 2006

Most members of the PHA (NSW) are also members of the RAHS and would be aware that this latest issue was edited by our President Peter J Tyler. As immediate past President of the NSW Society of the History of Medicine, he is well suited to select an interesting collection of articles focusing on varied aspects of medical history.

Dr Judith Godden is another PHA member who specialises in this area. She has just published *Lucy Osburn: A Lady displaced* (Syd UP, 2006). She provides an article on her research on Lucy Osburn, Lady Superintendent of Sydney Hospital, who introduced Florence Nightingale's nursing ideas to Australia. Dr Godden regretted that she had too few personal papers for her subject so, from all her scattered research material, she concocted her own diary entries for Lucy. These make fascinating reading, and raise interesting questions about the scope and limits of historical interpretation.

This issue also acknowledges the passing of two of the country's most prominent historians: Noel Bede Nairn (1917-2006) and John Douglas Ritchie (1941-2006).

JOAN KERR: a pictorial biography, 1938-2004. By James Semple Kerr, 2006.

Prepared to accompany Joan's papers to the National Library, this is Jim's tribute to his wife - "teacher, writer, spouse, mother, warrior and possum stirrer". It's appropriate that Australia's most prominent art historian should be honoured with such a lavishly illustrated publication. It includes some wonderful photographs of the young Joan.

Publication is by subscription only by contacting James Semple Kerr at Frank Clune & Son, GPO Box 5488, Sydney or at fclune@fculne.com.au

MONASH UNIVERSITY. School of Historical Studies. Newsletter. Volume 4, Semester 2, 2006-08-27

This newsletter contains details of events and achievements at Monash as well as some brief biographies of alumni and staff members. Marian Quartly, former Professor & Dean of Arts, had a colourful past as a 1960s flower-child and a serial bride and divorcee with Harry Aveling. Her academic career was not meticulously planned. All the big decisions in her life, she says, were generated by successful or failed love attachments. I suspect quite a few of us can relate to this but how many would admit it?

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA: JOURNAL No 28, 2006

This annual issue, the first to be peer reviewed, is provocatively entitled *Oral History and its challenger(s)*. It deals with the practicalities and challenges in using oral evidence in different contexts to understand the complex human understanding. As always, this journal makes for fascinating reading.

Alan Young enters the eternal debate about the fallibility of memory and the legitimacy of oral history, noting that oral historians need to assert the way their discipline differs from traditional historiography.

Michele Langfield's article, 'Capturing the Intangible', examines the value and significance of video testimonies of Holocaust survivors at the Melbourne Jewish Holocaust Museum.

In 2006, Bronwyn Fredericks interviewed Dr Pamela Croft, a participant in 2000 in the Bringing Them Home Oral History Project, for her reactions six years later. For Pamela, telling her story enabled her to articulate her work as an artist but she wonders how others without access to counselling coped.

Siobhan McHugh muses on the transposition of her book *Mines and Miniskirts* to the stage. Both she and her interviewees found it strange to see their individual stories merged to form composite characters. McHugh felt that some of the original harrowing accounts of these women's experiences of the Vietnam War were more dramatic than the stage version. She concludes, however, that such dramatisation did not distort the truth but was in fact a vindication of the power of oral history.

Those PHA people who missed out on the Lord Howe Island oral history project will be interested in Frank Heimans' account of his commission. A Sydney-based oral history and film/video producer, Heimans was engaged by Cinetel Productions. In May 2005, he and his wife spent two and a half weeks on the island. He returned with 42 interviews and about 40 hours of material, recorded on an Apple laptop, using Pro Tools audio recording software. DAT tapes were recorded at the same time. Because of the time constraints, two transcription typists worked on the project simultaneously.

Heimans' interviewees seem to have been pre-selected for him, presumably by the Lord Howe Island Board. He claims this is the first time that residents have been interviewed or that a chronology of the island's history has been compiled. The project has brought the views of residents directly to the Board and may influence future decisions about governance of the Island. The tapes, CDs, logs and final report will be preserved in the State Library of NSW with copies held by the Lord Howe Island Board.

On 4 November, the State Library presents an oral history seminar entitled *The Coast Road and the Island*. Frank Heimans will speak about his Lord Howe oral history work as well as his other recent project: the people of Lawrence Hargrave Drive (the Coast Road), Illawara.

THE SITE GAZETTE: Friends of the First Government House Site Inc. Volume 12, Number 3, Winter 2006

Phillip Black, City of Sydney Councillor, is the guest writer in this issue. He provides an informative piece on the history of Governor Macquarie's sandstone obelisk, erected in 1816 to mark the geographical heart of the Colony of NSW. It is one of the few remaining convict-built structures in the City. Macquarie Park surrounding the Obelisk was reduced in size between 1836 and 1843 with the creation of Loftus Street and Semi-Circular Quay, leaving the monument stranded on the eastern edge rather in the centre of the park. Further modifications in 1917 and the 1960s have caused damage to the structure. The Council of the City of Sydney is in the process of conserving this most significant item of the city's history.

Sydney's First Government House Site has recently been added to the National Heritage List. Having been so instrumental in promoting this, the Friends are proudly celebrating this achievement. They are still concerned, however, by what they see as the post-modernist attitude of the Historic Houses Trust, the custodian of the site, and its associated Museum of Sydney. Because the HHT sees the site as a negative symbol of British colonisation, say the Friends, they have failed to provide a permanent exhibition on Government House and its occupants. Nor has the HHT kept to its promise to erect a statue of Governor Phillip on the site.

What's On in History

Prepared by [Christine de Matos](#)

OCTOBER 2006

Exhibitions

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

'*Thoroughly modern Sydney: 1920s and 30s glamour and style*'. Until 15 October 2006. **Venue:** Museum of Sydney.

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

Events October

- 3 **Tour.** '*Gallery walk: An unbroken view: early nineteenth century panoramas*'. With curator Richard Neville. Library Society. **Venue:** Macquarie St wing foyer **Time:** 12.30-1.30pm **Cost:** \$12 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9273 1770; fax: (02) 9273 1248; email: bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au
- 4 **Tour.** '*Archaeology in The Rocks*'. HHT. **Venue:** from Susannah Place Museum **Time:** 10am-12n **Cost:** \$20, mems/conc \$15, family \$40 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 4 **Talk.** '*A night on the town! Prominent citizens talk about Sydney*'. With Senator the Hon Helen Coonan. HHT. **Venue:** Museum of Sydney **Time:** 6-8pm **Cost:** \$25. mems/conc \$20 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 4 **Lecture.** '*Alexander Berry*'. With Greg Blaxell. RAHS. **Venue:** Auditorium, History House **Time:** 1pm **Cost:** \$7, mems \$5 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au
- 14-15 **Conference.** '*State History Conference - Roads, Rates and Records: Governing the Neighbourhood*'. RAHS. **Venue:** The Acacia Room at Hornsby RSL **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au
- 18 **Tour.** '*A city of shadows: stories and images*'. HHT. **Venue:** Police & Justice Museum **Time:** 6-8pm **Cost:** \$20, mems/conc \$15 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 18-21 **Conference.** '*Connections & Conversations: Archives at Work. Australian Society of Archivists*'. Port Macquarie. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.archivists.org.au/events/conf2006/2006Conf.html>
- 19 **Seminar.** '*Costume close up: Late 19th century costume*'. HHT. **Venue:** Rouse Hill estate **Time:** 10am-12n **Cost:** \$30, mems/conc \$25 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 19-20 **Conference.** '*Seize the Day: Exhibitions, Australia and the World*', Melbourne Museum. **Enquiries:** email: Elizabeth Willis, ewillis@museum.vic.gov.au
- 21 **Tour.** '*Domestic Archaeology*'. HHT. **Venue:** Susannah Place Museum **Time:** 10.30am-12n **Cost:** \$20, mems/conc \$15 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 24 **Talk.** '*Looking for Angelo Tornaghi*'. With Julian Holland. RAHS & ASHET. **Venue:** History House **Time:** 5.30 for 6pm **Cost:** \$7 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au

- 27 **Event.** *'Voyage Plan of the Duyfken Replica 2006: Arrival in Wollongong'*. For full voyage plan visit <http://www.australiaonthemap.org.au/duyfken.html>
- 29 **Walking tour.** *'Living inner city: Sports arenas: Sydney Cricket Ground'*. HHT. **Venue:** tba **Time:** 2-4pm **Cost:** \$25, mems/conc \$20 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.

Upcoming Conferences

'Aboriginal Studies: Making the Connections', 2-3 November 2006, Bankstown. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.asa.nsw.edu.au> or <http://self.uws.edu.au>

'Historicising Whiteness Conference'. 22-24 November 2006, University of Melbourne. **Enquiries:** email: lboucher@unimelb.edu.au; web: <http://www.history.unimelb.edu.au/>

'Media: policies, cultures and futures in the Asia Pacific region'. 27-29 November 2006, Curtin University Perth. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.MediaAsiaConference.humanities.curtin.edu.au>

'World Without Walls: International Conference of the Oriental Society of Australia'. 3-7 December 2006, University of Sydney. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.arts.usyd.edu.au/conference/OSA2006/>

'17th Biennial Pacific History Association Conference', 7-10 December 2006, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. **Enquiries:** email: frances.couch@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

'Landmarks in Legal History: The 25th Annual Conference of the Australian and New Zealand Law and History Society'. 8-10 December 2006, University of Tasmania. **Enquiries:** email: stefan.petrov@utas.edu.au; web: http://www.utas.edu.au/history_classics/Conferences/ANZLHSConference.html

'Indian and Pacific Crossings: Perspectives on Globalisation and History'. 12-15 December 2006, Fremantle, Western Australia. **Enquiries:** web: <http://www.ecu.edu.au/ses/iccs/conference2006/callforpapers.pdf>

Call for Papers

'Postcolonial Politics: A Symposium'. 27-29 November 2006, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Abstracts of 250-300 words due **8 September 2006**. **Enquiries:** Dr Vijay Devadas email: vijay.devadas@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

'Art and Authenticity'. 2-3 November 2006, Australian National University, Canberra. Abstracts of 250 words due **8 September 2006**. **Enquiries:** email: Jan.Lloyd-Jones@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

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