

Number 216 – January – February 2006

The lazy summer edition



North Bondi Ladies march past team, unknown photographer, 1947,
Local Studies Collection, Waverley Council

From the exhibition ***Bondi: a biography***
17 December 2005 – 19 March 2006
Museum of Sydney on the site of first Government House
(image courtesy Historic Houses Trust)

***Phanfare* is the newsletter of the Professional Historians Association (NSW) Inc and a public forum for Professional History.**

Published six times a year
Annual subscription Email \$20 Hardcopy \$38.50

Articles, reviews, commentaries, letters and notices are welcome. Copy should be received by 6th of the first month of each issue (or telephone for late copy) Please email copy or supply on disk with hard copy attached.

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ISSN 0816-3774

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year has begun on a busy note for PHA NSW. With a number of significant issues that we need to address, the executive will appreciate members' support.

The changed opening hours at the Mitchell Library have caused concern to a number of members especially those with nine to five jobs. Our secretary is writing to the State Librarian to convey our concern. If need be representation may also be made to the Minister. (see separate article on this)

PHA (NSW) will be responding to the Productivity Commission's draft report, *Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places*, by the close of submissions date of 24 February. The executive invites members to submit comments for inclusion in our submission by 10 February at the latest. Christa Ludlow will be taking on the task of editing our submission. She is familiar with the Productivity Commission terms of reference and the draft report's main recommendations. Christa has already written her own response to the report that she has made available to the PHA.

The draft report *Conservation of Australia's Historic Heritage Places* is available for downloading from the Commission's inquiry website at <http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiry/heritage/index.html>

Another important heritage issue that has come to the executive's attention is the Register of Historic Places and Objects (ROHPO) that was established some years ago see <http://www.phansw.org.au/register.html> It was created with funding from the NSW Heritage Office's Heritage Incentives



Beattie Street, Balmain, near the corner of Mullens Street, late 1930s. Details unknown.

Image from *City of Shadows* currently showing at the Police & Justice Museum. See review p.13.

Program, and a consultancy managed by the PHA (NSW). A committee to undertake a 'gatekeeping' role in relation to this register is currently being set up. To date we have had nine members volunteering for this committee which will meet in February. Bruce Baskerville will act as interim convenor until the committee decides who is to take on this role at its first meeting.

Continuing professional development remains a priority for the association this year and Peter Tyler and I have organised a program of activities from February to August. This will be on the website soon.

A belated happy new year to all our members, especially the six new members who have joined during the last six months.

Pauline Curby

AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR SYDNEY!

The Oral History Association of Australia will host the biennial conference of the International Oral History Association, 12-16 July 2006 at UTS, Sydney

The theme of the conference is : *Dancing with Memory: oral history and its audiences.*

Sub-themes of the conference include archiving memory, fire and water, memory and community, places and buildings, pleasures of memory, remembering the land, sharing/passing on beliefs, talking to ourselves, teaching and learning. The conference languages are English and Spanish.

There will be social gatherings, cultural events and performances as well as papers, workshops, master classes and special interest groups. The Call for Papers elicited over 400 offers worldwide.

Please join us for this exciting event!

On-line registration and other conference details will be available towards the end of February 2006.

Website address is: www.une.edu.au/ioha2006

Any inquiries please contact us at ioha@uts.edu.au We look forward to seeing you there.

**Rosie Block,
President OHAA**

NEWS AND VIEWS

👉 History hit the headlines in January 2006 with the Prime Minister John Howard calling for the renewal of school history focusing on structured narrative, dates and events. In his address to the National Press Club on the eve of Australia Day, the PM jumped on his hobby horse and slammed thematic, post-modern approaches to history:

“Too often, it is taught without any sense of structured narrative, replaced by a fragmented stew of themes and issues. And too often, history, along with other subjects in the humanities, has succumbed to a postmodern culture of relativism where any objective record of achievement is questioned or repudiated.” (*The Australian*, 26 January 2006)

When will the PM learn that history is a craft and a discipline and that being critical about your sources is central to interpreting and writing about the past? He really needs to read Anne Curthoys and John Docker’s new book *Is History Fiction?* (UNSW Press, 2005)

👉 Gerrard Henderson grabbed the baton from the PM. His opinion piece in the *Herald* attacked historians’ professionalism: “a problem with history is that it is invariably taught by historians” (SMH, 31 Jan 2006). Give us a break! Would you say the same thing about engineers? Or doctors?

The PHA has done a lot to raise the profile and status of our profession. But as Henderson’s glib comment shows, many within the community still do not understand or respect the historians’ role in interpreting the past.

👉 Following the lead set by the *Bulletin* last year, and pandering to the PM’s love of dates and facts, the *Sydney Morning*

Herald plans a historical review for their 175th anniversary souvenir issue. The *Herald* is seeking readers’ opinions on the most important events since 1831 in four categories: news, arts and entertainment, sport, and people.

There is a tiered system for selection. First there is a two-week online forum where people can post their suggestions. It’s already been running for a week. You can access it through:

<http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2006/01/26/1138066894551.html>

Then an editorial panel of Herald journalists will draw up shortlists for readers to vote on. The result will be a top 10 of history events. PHA members should contribute to the online forum and poll so that the voices of the professionals are heard.

👉 The History Council’s highly regarded Executive Officer, Dr Carolyne Carter, has been poached by the History Department of the University of Sydney to head up their administrative office. The History Council is currently recruiting a new EO. Look for the position description circulated on the PHA email network. Applications close Wednesday 22 February.

👉 The City of Sydney has a new local history librarian. Liz Wilson joined the council late in January and is already reviewing the diverse and scattered resources held within the City’s 9 library branches.

👉 Nominations for the 2006 New South Wales History Awards close on 17 March 2006. More details on p.16.

❑ compiled by Lisa Murray.

STATE LIBRARY OF NSW OPENING HOURS

The following text is a reproduction of the email letters sent to Mitchell Library Reader's Ticket holders in late December 2005.

Dear Gold Card Holder

I am writing to provide you with details of forthcoming changes to the opening hours of the State Library of New South Wales. These changes are in response to operational requirements. From 3 January 2006 the Mitchell Library will close at 7 pm Monday to Thursday, and the State Reference and Mitchell Libraries will close at 6 pm on Fridays. Weekend hours remain the same.

Clients will continue to have access to printed materials from the Mitchell and Dixon Libraries through the State Reference Library. However, original materials (manuscripts, pictures and maps) will no longer be available after 7.00 pm during the week. Clients with limited time may ring the Telephone Inquiry Service on 9273-1414 and arrange for the materials to be set aside and ready for them to use when they arrive in the Library. Experienced Librarians will also be available in the State Reference Library after 7.00 pm to assist with inquiries relating to the Mitchell Library collections.

The new opening hours are as follows:

State Reference Library

Monday to Thursday:	9 am to 9 pm
Friday:	9 am to 6 pm
Weekends:	11 am to 5 pm

Mitchell Library Reading Room

Monday to Thursday:	9 am to 7 pm
Friday:	9 am to 6 pm
Saturday:	11 am to 5 pm
Sunday:	closed

If you have any questions please contact Reader Services managers:
 Elizabeth McKibbin emckibbin@sl.nsw.gov.au or Grazyna Tydda gtydda@sl.nsw.gov.au

Yours sincerely

Therese Lake
 Assistant State Librarian, Reader Services
 20 December 2005

Dig in at Australia's most exciting research library <http://www.atmitchell.com>

WELCOME TO THE GOLD CARD CLUB *

* with reduced hours for your research enjoyment

I received an email over the Christmas / New Year period from the State Library of NSW. It breezily notified me as a privileged Gold Card Holder that in just 5 days' time there would be changes to the opening hours of the library.

I did a double-take. "*Gold Card Holder*"? I don't have an American Express Card. What *are* they talking about?

Suddenly, it dawned on me. The Assistant State Librarian, Reader Services, was actually referring to my reader's ticket for the Mitchell Library. It seems the reader's ticket has been corporatised, along with the entire Mitchell research collection at atMitchell.com.

The "changes" are in fact a *reduction* in library opening hours (although nowhere was this acknowledged in the email). Planning to write that great Australian history or novel in your spare time? The task has just gotten harder. From January 3, 2006, the Mitchell Library is closing its doors at the earlier time of 7pm, Monday to Thursday. It's all very well to say that *printed material* from the Mitchell can be accessed through the reference library after 7pm. But what about the Mitchell's unique original materials collection of manuscripts and maps, photographs and paintings? What about the essential card catalogues and research guides? Bad luck. None of this is available in the evenings anymore. On Fridays we're all expected to be out partying, so both the Mitchell and State Reference Libraries are closing even earlier, at six o'clock.

But, I was reassured by the email, the library hours on the weekend remain the same, ie. 11am to 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays (but with the Mitchell demurely closed for the Sabbath). There have always been people beating down the library's doors at 11am on Saturdays, anxious to get on with their research; now there will be stampedes as big as the Boxing Day clearance sales thanks to the slashing of the Mitchell's evening hours.

I've never understood why the State Library doesn't open earlier on Saturdays, nor why the Mitchell is closed on Sundays. Shops are open; most local council libraries open; cultural institutions are open; why not the State Library?

The reduced library hours, I'm informed, are "in response to operational requirements", whatever that means. Probably managerial speak for cost-cutting, but as a historian I'm not *au fait* with this language of bean-counters. What do you suppose it means? Perhaps I should run a guessing competition for Gold Card Holders? It will be the only meaningful consultation that historians, researchers and writers will get.

All this from our State Library, which claims to be "one of the world's great research and reference libraries". The reduced hours significantly downgrades access to the Mitchell Library research collection, a saddening and maddening bureaucratic decision made in the lead-up to the centenary of David Scott Mitchell's generous bequest to the people of New South Wales. Welcome to the Gold Card Club at atMitchell.com.

Lisa Murray

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN URBAN HISTORIAN

Excerpts from a talk given by Shirley Fitzgerald to the Glebe Society in History Week 2005

I am employed by the City of Sydney as the City Historian. The idea of having a city historian - i.e. someone who is directly employed by a local authority to provide historical input into the organisation and out into the community - is not a very well embedded in local government practice in Australia, but city historians are widely employed in the US and in some European places and the idea is slowly catching on here, with several other councils also currently having a historian's position.

In fact, the idea of historian as a profession is not widely understood in Australia. Most people would know that the universities produce academics who write history and most people would know that history is something that a lot of people do as an interest or hobby through local historical societies, but there is a reluctance to think of historians as people who are actually employed and that 'historian' is a real job. I remember the first time I filled out a census form and put my occupation as 'historian'. It felt odd. Historians were people way up there - with names like Herodotus, or Macaulay, or even Manning Clarke - but not just ordinary people who just made a living from history work.

Years later I discovered that, in this country at least, it was not so odd to feel odd about this, because the Bureau of Statistics did not recognise the category of 'historian', choosing instead to put us under the category 'archivist'. In other countries you could be a historian, but not here. I haven't checked lately to see if this is still the case, but certainly in the last couple of decades more people have been prepared to own the title.

People often ask me, though, 'what do you do really?' 'Are you a librarian?' - a sensible question because local studies librarians are often de facto historians, and often the first line of communication with anyone wanting to know about their history is the local studies librarian.

Or they say, like the Census gatherers, 'oh you work in the Archives'. If only they knew the tensions that are generated between archivists, those gatekeepers and controllers of the records, and the historians, who just want to get their hands on the records and use them.

Or 'you must do the heritage things at Council'. To which the answer is 'no', there are heritage people, and they are usually architects. In fact, it is a common lament of historians that too much of the heritage industry is in the control of heritage architects and that a broader and more exciting understanding of heritage would flow from the heritage industry listening to historians a bit more.

As it happens, the heritage specialists at the City do talk to the historians, but there are many places where this is not the case.

So what do historians do? Historians study the past, something that is no longer with us. The actual past is gone. At best the historian will recreate a good approximation of the past. In doing this, many breeds of historians are not particularly interested in heritage, but it is difficult for an urban historian not to be.

Urban history, as distinct from political history, constitutional history, national history and so on, emerged in the United States in the 1920s, amongst the so called Chicago school of 'urban ecologists'. Reference to ecology is a nod in the direction of the idea that the more variables that go into a model –in this case, a model of an urban past - the closer the model gets to representing reality. Another way of putting this is that the urban historian is a 'jack of all trades', who knows a bit about everything as it relates to the urban place being studied, rather than someone with a well honed and in depth knowledge of a narrower subject.

So urban history is social history, political history, cultural history, any kind of history, but its focus is on a place: in our case, Sydney. An urban historian is at heart a bit of a geographer. A historian of place will inevitably have to spend time in the landscape of the place, as well as in the library and, that being the case, will inevitably make connections to the heritage of place. Rather than labour the point, let me read to you something I've already written about this:

The ability to read the layering of the landscape of a city is one of the things that make living in an urban place exciting. It is the thing that makes people passionate about heritage places. It is not that all old things are good, or that the new is not interesting. It is the layering that counts. It is the depth of representations that gives to the current city a complexity that stretches as far back as the oldest landforms and as far forward as the height of the most recent skyscraper.

In making an inventory of what of Sydney's past has survived it is not only the obvious buildings and precincts that make up the list. The eye which is attuned to the ways in which the city has developed will find endless traces – the faint outline of an ancient rock carving, or an old sign advertising a product or a political cause, some worn steps, a balustrade, a ring embedded in a wall where once a fisherman hung his nets to dry, remnants of a tram line shining through a break in the bitumen road surface. These things do not make up the past. The past is never with us. But in these traces we can begin to imagine past lives, hear voices, discover connections with the richness of the life of the city.

Neither do documents, old books, parliamentary records, birth certificates, marriage registers, diaries, personal papers, newspapers, paintings, old film footage or the myriad of other things stored in libraries and museums make up the past. They too are only fragments. From them we begin to understand where we have come from, why being a Sydneysider is different from being a citizen of Melbourne, or London, or Bangkok or anywhere else. (*Sydney Story of a City*, p154.)

My job is to make the history of the various disparate places in the City of Sydney accessible to anyone who wants to know.

I've got a job description. It says roughly that I will know everything there is to know about anything to do with the city's past and I will be constantly available to anyone who wants to know. And believe me, they want to know -all sorts of things. When I hear of people who always answer every phone call, every on-line query, every e-mail, I just know that they haven't got my job. It's the kind of job you can never get on top of, and it often seems that the longer I do it, the less I know.

Let's list some of the things:

There's the civic history and corporate history of the Council itself. What does the City's coat of arms mean? Who's been given the keys to the City? What did the Council do about 'such and such' back then? In the 1860s? The 1940s? last year? Sometimes the corporate memory of staff who turn over rapidly can be very short. There is also interest in civic questions from the public, a remarkable number of whom are convinced that their great grandfather was once the Mayor, or at least an alderman.

And there is the history of the functions undertaken by the Council. Who collected the garbage? The answer, in the nineteenth century, includes more than a few women. Who built the roads, and what did they build them of? Well some, of course, were built of timber. Municipal history, often expected to be dull, is capable of surprising you. The larger questions of the power struggles between Macquarie Street and George Street for control of the city are anything but dull. And if you think these struggles are recent, forget that too.



Boring, dry municipal history - except that it isn't. There have been some real rippers of aldermen, for a start. Like John Norton, 1862- 1916, politician, editor of the yellow press newspaper *Truth* and City Alderman. His fondness for exaggeration, sensationalism and downright untruth is legendary, as is his claim to have invented the term 'wowsers'. Describing it as 'a simple word that does at once describe, deride and denounce that numerous, noxious, pestilent, puritanical killjoy', Norton claimed to have found the inspiration for the term in the council chamber. 'I first gave it utterance,' he said, 'in the City Council when I applied it to Alderman Waterhouse whom I referred to as the "white, woolly, weary, watery, word-wasting wowsers from Waverley".'

*Left: Alderman John Norton, 1905-1906
(City of Sydney Archives, CRS 54/315)*

There have been hundreds of men and a few women who have no doubt endured much that was woolly and word wasting in the chamber while ostensibly governing, according to the first act of incorporation of the City 1842, 'for the better protection, care and management of the local interests of the inhabitants'.

Currently, we are updating lists of aldermen and councillors to include those from the new areas that have recently come into the city or come back into the city, and this information will soon be available on-line.

Then there is the ongoing work of the Council that requires some historical inputs. I'll just mention a few of the more interesting kinds of work.

There's the need to name things – parks, streets and so on. There is potential for pitfalls in naming a street, as a couple of stories will indicate. A little park in Pyrmont needed a name, and some of the locals had put forward a case for naming it Yuroma, which they said meant 'spirit of the fig tree'. I wasn't involved in the discussion until the last minute before a recommendation was to go up to Council, and there was no time to check the veracity of the name. At face value seemed fine, and it fitted the naming guidelines set out by the Geographic Names Board which give preference to several things, including Indigenous names. So it was agreed to by Council, pending confirmation by the historian of the meaning of the word. Then I did the research, and discovered that according to one source, the word is actually thought to be the name of a fierce spirit who inhabits the fig tree, and wards off any intruders by a menacing demeanour involving the threatening use of its genitals. Great name for a park! The residents who suggested it had not been intentionally mischievous or misleading. Just not very good at research.

When Cook & Phillip Park was built a few years back in 1998, a new service road into the park was created in front of the apartments facing the park on the William Street corner. I advised, just as any one who studied the map of East Sydney would have advised, that, using the same rule as had been used for all streets crossing William Street (Bourke, Forbes etc) the name should be Yurong, as it aligned with Yurong Street on the southern side of William Street. And it ticked the Indigenous box. What could be simpler? Except that the residents in the apartment block wanted to name it 'Park Lane'. This, unfortunately, didn't tick any boxes. As I said in a memo, which included the observation that this was Sydney, not upper class London, and that this was not a monopoly game, and that in the city we mostly used the term 'lane' to signify secondary or parallel streets or dunny lanes. I hadn't anticipated that this memo would go, unabridged, into the Council papers, but it did, and it must have been a slow night in Council because the press picked up on this fairly inconsequential item, with the *Sydney Morning Herald's* urban affairs writer penning an article which the wonderful Cathy Wilcox cartooned. She had two talking heads saying 'We think it should be called Park Lane', to which a third head replied 'Well I think Yurong'.



Left: Francis Lane, Darlinghurst, 1929. (City of Sydney Archives, CRS 538/264)

Another enjoyable part of the job has been working for various court cases that the City has mounted in order to establish the laneway ownership. Getting possession of a laneway gives the Council power to stop massing of development sites across large sites. Or increases the sale potential, depending on the

political colour of the Council. Fortunately in recent years the direction has been to stop closures of laneways and to recognise their heritage value to the urban fabric.

Either way, a few years ago there was a judgment that determined that whether a laneway was publicly owned or not depended on whether the lane had been open to the public between two certain acts of parliament, one in 1834 and one in 1879. Not what the title deeds said. Not what the Council had previously asserted. Just whether the lane had been open to the public between 1834 and 1879. Establishing this often involves broad historical understanding more than narrow factual evidence.

Then there is the task of writing the history of the city. This is the most rewarding part of the job, and doing it has moved my understanding of the purpose of history beyond just that of wanting to know. In writing about the history of the inner areas of the city, I started to understand that history is not just about getting it right or as right as we can about the past. It is about giving meaning to lives, about validating social ways that may currently be in retreat, about acknowledging communities that may feel marginalised.

This was never truer than in the experience of writing about Pymont and Ultimo, for a book I co-authored with Hilary Golder in the early 1990s. Suddenly the boundaries between the history of the past and the politics of the present dissolved. Here were people who were hurting

I was reminded of the observation of Ed Campion who told the story of an experience with a resident meeting in Woolloomooloo when he was serving as the parish priest at St Columkilles (St Comicals to its friends). It was just after the BLF and the resident action group had formed an alliance and suddenly, for the first time in their lives, the locals were being consulted. One of the developers had come to the meeting and attempted to speak. And something snapped in the collective mind of the meeting:

The people of Woolloomooloo howled and howled. I have never forgotten the howling rage of the people that afternoon. The sullen dull anger at life in Woolloomooloo, so rarely displayed, now boiled over...It was rage against all that the [developer] represented: money, power, political connections, planners, experts, advisers. It was a protest against bad housing and poor food and no jobs and bleak futures... (*Rockchopper, Growing Up Catholic in Australia*, p.209.)

That is how it was in Pymont, except that by the 1990s the developer was the government and the people were a small battered rump of a formerly large population. The few who had the courage to attempt to stand up to the developers were soon exhausted and battle weary. The results are there in the landscape to be seen. The last ditch role of history may be to act as a comfort in times of loss. At the very least to get the passing story recorded.

These experiences were very different from Glebe, where the community has been well organised since the first threats of expressways and demolitions in the 1960s. But maintaining your 'place' will require vigilance.

If there is one thing that history teaches it is that nothing is achieved forever -whether it is civil liberties or democratic rights or heritage listings – history is littered with the corpses of those who thought the battle only had to be fought well once.

EXHIBITION REVIEW: *CITY OF SHADOWS : INNER CITY CRIME & MAYHEM 1912-1948****Justice and Police Museum******19 November – 5 November 2006***

The exhibition currently on display at the Justice and Police Museum at Circular Quay will simultaneously fascinate and disturb viewers. *City of Shadows*, a collection of forensic photographs taken by the NSW Police between the years 1912 and 1948 (approximately), illuminate Sydney's murky past, and capture not only crime scenes and accidents, but also Sydneysiders, criminal and bystander, and the streets of inner city Sydney.

The city is the urban star of the show in this exhibition. The area immediately surrounding the inner city, nicknamed the Horseshoe by police and journalists of the pre-war years, is the setting for many of the images. Most of the photographs were taken within a few miles of the Central Investigation Branch in Sydney and show the streets of Glebe, Newtown, Pyrmont, Surry Hills, Redfern and the city.

With over 10,000 images to choose from, curator Peter Doyle has carefully chosen the photos to give a sense of the entire collection. The images are roughly collected under three headings, The Beat, Rogues Gallery and Our Dark Places. The titles are clues to what each grouping has to offer.

The Beat covers the streets and the police on duty at crime and accident scenes. Many of these photos are unidentified, some street or lane somewhere in the city at some time during the first half of the twentieth century. This creates a certain amount of interactivity with the audience, that may or may not have been deliberate. The familiar nature of the surroundings invites you to recognise the anonymous streets: is that near my house? work? favourite pub? Working in the heritage industry, I kept wondering if they were buildings and sites I had seen in previous photos in Mitchell or the archives or been into myself. I recognised a house a friend once lived in and more than one bar I have visited.



Central Police Station, c1921. Details unknown.

The Rogues Gallery is just that, a gallery of mug shots of the dealers, thieves, shop lifters, heavies, dope users, prostitutes, confidence tricksters and murderers. The catch is the seemingly casual nature of the poses, not the traditional mug shots with names and numbers, but almost studio photos of men and women, sitting, standing, smiling, scowling at the camera. Groups together,

individuals, one inscribed with "this man refused to open his eyes". Surely the title of an old crime novel.

Lastly, *Our Dark Places*, takes us to the heart of the matter. Domestic scenes of extreme violence, blood spattered walls, victims as found, suggestion of foul play in a knocked over table, empty lots with no-one on the streets around. The deserted crime scene, the lonely end. It also serves to remind that the sometimes comic looking characters, the classic movie gangster that appear in the Rogues Gallery were the perpetrators of scenes like these. Bad places that the public wasn't meant to see into.



Inscribed 'Dr Tozer murder', Lindfield, 1920.

Therein though lies the fascination. These are places and scenes that we were not supposed to see. And not just in relation to the crime. As a historian whose focus is Sydney, the city of the early twentieth century as captured in all its forensic detail by the police is a fascinating place. For beyond the crime scenes, the everyday city is shown. What was stocked on the shelves of the burgled shop, what the men and women wore, the painted signs for long forgotten products, inner city streets and neighbourhoods now tattered up or gone to developers.

With so many images, Doyle has presented them in three formats, traditional individual prints on the wall, a collage of images under each of the headings above, accompanied by some brief explanatory text and lastly as a series of short slide shows showing images with Doyle's commentary guiding the audience through the scene. This is how the majority of the photographs are shown. I found this slightly frustrating, as many warrant closer inspection than the time allows. In an attempt to overcome this, Doyle's commentary guides the viewer to details they may not have noticed, but at the same time this distracts you from looking elsewhere. However the restricted size of the exhibition space limits the display available, which the slide show goes some way to addressing.

In a separate room the story of a single crime, the murder of Ernst Hofmann is told. Hofmann, a sports lover, was bludgeoned to death in an upstairs brothel in Lanley Street Darlinghurst in 1942. This room presents a fuller picture, telling the story of the crime, the investigation and the eventual trial in storyboard form, accompanied by the photographs, fingerprint evidence and blood type evidence to draw it all together. Cheerful 1940s tunes sing in the background as you are drawn deeper into the sordid, unfortunate story. As a stand alone display, I liked this area. It presented the details, the photos in a context and enabled the time to look at each frame with more care.

The lack of information with many of the images works for and against the exhibition. It allows the mind to wander, wondering, imagining a different Sydney. But it is also a frustrating trip, for many of the images are presented without the time to really look. You

can only imagine how frustrating it must have been for Peter Doyle when presented with so many photos to look at and so little information on what they were about.

A warning at the entrance to the exhibition forewarns that some of these images may disturb viewers. Some do. It's a reminder that the good old days weren't there for everybody.

Mark Dunn

EVENT REVIEW: *AUSTRAL BRICKS AND THE ST PETERS BRICK MILE*

Last November, PHA Member Ron Ringer gave a fascinating “fork & talk” at the RAHS. For those of you who don't know, the RAHS have a regular series of talks on a Saturday afternoon held in their delightful reception rooms. A light dinner is served after the talk, hence the name: “fork and talk”. Ron has been commissioned to write the history of Austral Bricks, a large brick-manufacturer, and its parent company Brickworks Ltd. This talk drew upon his research for the book. The intimate group, seated around tables and indulging in wine and cheese, was treated to a dynamic powerpoint presentation by Ron as well as a show-and-tell of brick types. Several PHA members were present, having made of day of it with Terry Kass' talk on land title records in the morning.

In the first half of the presentation, Ron gave an overview of brick manufacturing. Technological improvements have been central to the expansion of the industry. The cyclical nature of the industry – boom and bust, expansion and take-overs – reflects the health of the local economy and (sub)urban growth.

Little has been written upon the history of brickmaking and the firms involved in the industry. Those that do exist tend to be localized and focused upon heritage. Consequently, Ron has had to do a vast amount of background research, identifying firms and their histories. Using the *Sand's Directories*, Ron has compiled a database of brickmakers, suburb by suburb, 1858-1930s. Until the Ron's book is published, we'll have to make do with Warrick Gemmel's *Brickmakers of New South Wales* [out of print] and the recent Thames & Hudson publication *Bricks of the World*.

The second half of Ron's talk focused on the Brick Mile at St Peters. The chimneys at Sydney Park immortalise The Gentle Brick Yard and the Bedford – Rutherford Brick Yard. (see image left; Photo: Chery Kemp, City of Sydney) They were neighbours of Austral Bricks, and were later swallowed up by Austral. In fact, pretty much the whole of Sydney Park was once a series of brick bits.

Austral Bricks was incorporated in 1908 and was up and running the following year. After the slight hiccup of insolvency in 1912, Austral bricks went from strength to strength. Under the leadership of William Keye Dawes, Austral continued to prosper in the 1930s, acquiring other brickworks as they went bust, casualties the Depression. In 1950 Austral Bricks was absorbed by Brickworks Ltd, a group holding company established by a number of brick manufacturers. Brickworks Ltd is now located at Wallgrove Road in Horsley Park, on a site that still has about 150 years' worth of clay, ensuring (all other things being equal) that the company should be around for at least another century.

Lisa Murray

2006 NEW SOUTH WALES HISTORY AWARDS

The New South Wales History Awards are made to Australian historians in recognition of distinguished achievement in scholarly writing and in the presentation of history in non-print media. The awards are conducted in association with the History Council of New South Wales. The 2006 awards, each valued at \$15,000, are:

- The Australian History Prize for a book on Australian history
- The General History Prize for a book on international history
- The Community and Regional History Prize for a book which contributes to the understanding of Australian community, institutional or regional history
- The Young People's History Prize for a book or audio/visual presentation which increases the historical understanding of children and young adults
- The Audio/Visual History Prize for the presentation of history utilising non-print media (including film, television, radio, CD-ROM, DVD or website)
- State Records NSW – John and Patricia Ward History Prize for interpretative history works, based predominantly on research using unpublished original materials.

Works may be nominated by authors, agents, publishers or producers. All works must have been first published or produced between 12 March 2005 and 10 March 2006. The closing date for nominations is **17 March 2006**.

Nomination forms and guidelines are available from:
Awards Staff, NSW Ministry for the Arts
PO Box A226
SYDNEY SOUTH NSW 1235

To download forms or apply online go to: www.arts.nsw.gov.au
Email: ministry@arts.nsw.gov.au
Ph: 02 9228 5533 Fax: 02 9228 4722
Freecall 1800 358 594

COMMITTEE REPORTS

State Records Community Advisory Committee

State Records T 9673-1788, F 9833-4518
- www.records.nsw.gov.au

November 2005

The new website for State Records includes updated indexes:

- Court of Civil Jurisdiction 1799-1814 – minutes of proceedings prepared by Professor Kercher, Macquarie University, available
- Index to Deceased Estate Files 1880-1923 – new additions
- Immigration and shipping indexes 1842-1855 – unassisted arrivals have been indexed

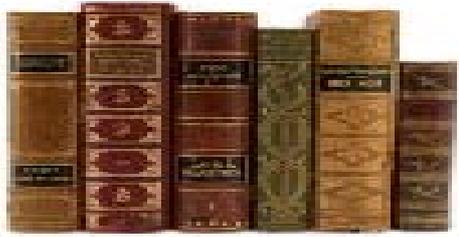
Supreme Court Probate Packets:

Series 1 & 2 – available on website
Series 4 – gradually being transferred – series should be available early 2006
Series 5 – records under 30 years old

Concise Guide Series - almost half of the 14,818 series in the CGS has been transferred to Archives Investigator.

Convict Guide – work continues on developing the Guide which will be available on CD and website.

Roslyn Burge



LIBRARY REPORT

Compiled by Terri McCormack.
Library enquiries: (02) 9810 4421 or
terrimc@ozemail.com.au

PHA PERIODICALS

EMPHATIC: Newsletter of the Professional Historians Association, Tasmania Inc. No 29, September 2005

Membership might be small in Tasmania but the overview of members' activities shows they are a very active group with interests in many projects. They are particularly concerned about the impending demolition of Hobart's Macquarie House. Built by Dr Thomas Birch, it was the first three storey building on the island and appears in the earliest images of Hobart Town dating from 1815. Lieutenant Governor William Sorell used it as a de facto Government House in 1817 and Macquarie himself was a guest during his 1821 visit. The building has undergone many additions and conversions during its chequered career and has lost its heritage listing due to contamination issues. The Macquarie House Interest Group is protesting the demolition of the remaining 1820s wing and outbuildings but by the time you read this they may already be gone.

PHAROS: Professional Historians Association (Vic) Inc. No 38, October, No 39, December 2005

The Victorians pursue their busy Continuing Professional Development program. Recent sessions have included visits to the Genealogical Society and to the Post Master Gallery, a presentation on *Historians and the Use of Maps and Plans* by the Map Librarian of the State Library of Victoria, and a *Current Works Forum* where members shared their experiences and discussed their current or recent projects.

The October issue contains an interesting article by La Trobe University archaeologist Geoff Hewitt on the 2003 Police Garage Dig. This site forms part of a major prison complex, including the Old Melbourne Gaol, and is now incorporated in the RMIT Campus. The excavations unearthed the remains of three executed prisoners. Forensic pathology and documentary research were used in the identification of the only intact body but the archaeological evidence and the written record did not match. This, according to Hewitt, "highlights the uncertainties...of received history and underlines the importance of the archaeological role". It also reflects bureaucratic bungling in the 1920s when the bodies of hanged prisoners were re-buried at Pentridge, or souvenired by the public as mementos. Disappointingly, the rediscovered body is not that of Ned Kelly - also buried in this vicinity - and the remains have been reburied as an unidentified male.

With the launch of *The Encyclopedia of Melbourne* in October, the Victorian capital becomes the first Australian metropolis to be the subject of a city-based encyclopedia. Edited by PHA member Andrew Brown-May and Shurlee Swain with contributions from notable writers, it has been ten years in the making and consists of 816 pages and 400 illustrations covering every conceivable aspect of the city.

The Encyclopedia is reviewed in the December newsletter as is Max Waugh's *Forgotten Hero: Richard Bourke, Irish-born Governor of New South Wales 1831-1837*. Two other recent publications showcase the valuable collections of the University of Melbourne Archives. *Between you and me* focuses on literary correspondence from the *Meanjin* archives. And *Voices from the Past: stories of industry, immigration and life from the University of Melbourne Archives*, illustrates the range of material housed in this very useful research repository.

Eminent historian Professor Graeme Davison has retired from Monash University. He introduced Australia's first post-graduate course in public history in 1989 and has supported PHA (Vic) since its formation in 1991.

**PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS
ASSOCIATION (SA) Inc Newsletter. No
84, November 2005**

Much of this newsletter is devoted to an article by Peter Donovan called 'The History Business - Donovan & Associates celebrating 25 years'. Peter Donovan's background in heritage consultancy prompted him to establish his history business in 1980, in association with his wife June. D&A soon added commissioned and corporate histories to their heritage portfolio and their projects have since expanded way beyond the borders of South Australia. Both June and Peter have held key positions on professional organisations and they are especially supportive of the Professional Historians Association which they helped found. This detailed account of their diverse commissioned and pro bono work is informative and impressive. D&A is to be congratulated for its ongoing success in such a difficult and challenging field.

**PROFESSIONAL HISTORIANS
ASSOCIATION (WA) Inc Newsletter. No
93, Sept 2005, No 94, Nov 2005**

How did I miss this one? WA member Lindsay Peet describes a *Magic Carpet Ride* visiting eight world heritage cultural sites in nine days. In a chartered Qantas Boeing 747, 230 passengers with 15 tour escorts swanned around Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

In his first article, Lindsay describes their visits to Humayun's Tomb and Qutb Minar Complex in Delhi, Taj Mahal and Agra Fort, and Fatehpur Sikri in Uttar Pradesh. His second article details visits to Petra in Jordan, Marrakesh in Morocco, and Leptis Magna in Libya. He gave an illustrated talk at the Batty Library in October, describing his additional visits to Mauritius and Kenya where they flew past a ninth world heritage natural site - Kilimanjaro National Park. Well, you can't visit everything in nine days!

Meanwhile back home, PHA (WA) members have been busy promoting the association's profile on several committees. One of these is the Historical Records Rescue Consortium which has just received a \$3 million Lotterywest grant to preserve at-risk historic records in the Batty Library of West Australian History - a great coup for those who've worked towards this for more than two years. For more information, visit HRRC's website at www.fobl.org.au/hrrc.

**QUEENSLAND PROFESSIONAL
HISTORIAN. No 76, September, No 77
December 2005**

In the September issue, President Ruth Kerr, who is also profiled here, presents her Annual Report outlining issues addressed by the PHAQ. These include fees payable by government agencies for short contracts, selection panel processes, protection of cultural heritage sites, and the employment of professional historians in the Queensland government. She also refers to the inaugural John Douglas Kerr Medal, established by the

PHA and the Qld Royal Historical Society in memory of her late husband. It was awarded to Dr Ray Evans on 6 June 2005.

Anyone holidaying in North Queensland will be interested in the piece in the September issue about three historical attractions on the Atherton Tableland in the Cairns hinterland. The remnants of the privately owned Irvine Tramway, built to service tin mining in 1901, are accessible via Herberton. The colourful Hou Wang Miao Temple and meeting hall at Atherton were completed in 1903 when more than 1000 Chinese worked in the area. The complex has been restored by the Qld National Trust and is open to the public. And finally, don't miss Kuranda and its scenic railway. The lovely little railway station overlooking the Baron River was a tourist attraction from 1913 and after a period as a hippy mecca is once again on the tourist trail.

The December newsletter details the Queensland Energy Museum's project to preserve Queensland's energy heritage. This includes the creation of energy trails, the first of which was launched at the Kilkivan and District Historical Society Museum in the South Burnett region in June 2005.

NON-PHA PUBLICATIONS

CENTRE FOR WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HISTORY: Newsletter. No 27, Dec 2005

The Centre celebrates a successful year of work on the *Historical Encyclopedia of Western Australia*. Some 560 individuals have contributed 818 entries to HEWA, all reviewed by Editor-in-Chief Associate Professor Jenny Gregory. This mammoth project, due for publication in 2007, has been publicised by running edited extracts in *The West Australian Weekend Extra*.

All PHA members should be very pleased that an historian, rather than a sports person or celebrity, has been honoured as WA Australian of the Year. Congratulations to Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton, also a member of HEWA's Editorial Board.

HERITAGE NSW: Quarterly Newsletter of the NSW Heritage Office. Vol 12, No 2, Summer 2005/06

An intriguing article by Ian Evans examines the bizarre practice of burying ritual objects in Australian houses and buildings to protect the occupants from evil forces. Shoes are the most common of these secret articles but he has also identified other items of clothing, children's toys, and even dried cats. So little research has been done on this wide-spread phenomenon that he suggests Australian social history may have to be re-examined.

INSITES: Newsletter of the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. No 45, Summer 2005

Bondi: a biography is one of the current exhibitions at the Museum of Sydney. Curator Richard Taylor provides an overview of the history of this iconic Sydney beach in an article illustrated with Charles Meere's wonderfully idealised 1940 image, *Australian Beach Patter*.

Geraldine O'Brien, former *SMH* heritage writer, contributes an interesting piece on the evolution of curatorial work at the HHT. James Broadbent was the first professional curator of an Australian house museum with his interpretation of Elizabeth Bay House in 1980. Others, like Ann Toy, Maisy Stapleton, Peter Emmett, and Sue Hunt, have followed his example. Broadbent collaborated with Joy Hughes in many exhibitions and publications, including the definitive *The Australian Colonial House*.

ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA JOURNAL. No 27, 2005

Entitled *Talking Families, Talking Communities*, this year's journal, edited by Darwin-based Francis Good, deals with the related themes of family and community. Two articles document the history of particular families and are followed by

several pieces on oral history in municipal organisations and public agencies. Two moving contributions address different concepts of community and deal with the memories of a Holocaust survivor and a Hazara refugee from Afghanistan.

As always, ethical issues involved in oral history, particularly transcription, are addressed. And Tim Bowden has the final word in a piece questioning an overly interventionist method of transposing the spoken work into narrative text as cited in last year's OHAA journal. With his vast experience in radio and print, Tim is undoubtedly the expert on shaping good stories from anecdotes while retaining the informal tone of the oral history interviews.

THE SITE GAZETTE: Friends of the First Government House Site (Inc). Vol 11, No 4, Spring 2005

The Friends of the First Government House Site are delighted that the First Government House site is now officially on the National Heritage List. This, according to their Gazette, is the work of the Friends with little help from the Historic Houses Trust which administers the Museum of Sydney on the site. Indeed, the Friends would like to see the Trust do a lot more to promote the site. They want upgrading of the video slideshow, a proper permanent display, a statue of Governor Phillip and portraits of the early colonial governors, the erection of flagpoles with the national flag flown every day, and elimination of such contentious terms as "invasion" and "contested ground".

VOICEPRINT: Newsletter of the NSW Branch of the Oral History Association of Australia. No 33, October 2005

Dr Heather Goodall is the winner of the Inaugural Magarey Medal for 2005 for *Isabel Flick: The Many Lives of an Extraordinary Aboriginal Woman*, co-authored with the late Isabel Flick. Dr Magarey, an adjunct Professor of the University of Adelaide, established the prize, worth \$10, 000 to recognise women biographers for their scholarly achievements.

And more applause for oral history! Janet Wilton and Joe Isenberg's Golden Threads Project and book won them the Energy Australia National Trust Cultural Heritage Award for 2005. Combining oral history interviews from members of Chinese-Australian families with research in local museums and significant sites, they demonstrate the important contribution of the Chinese community to modern Australia, particularly in rural areas.

Lesley Jenkins' reports on her Churchill Fellowship in Oral History and her travels in the UK, Europe and the United States. And there are reports on the OHAA Conference, the two OHAA Seminars *Families and War* and *Oral History and Roads and Traffic Authority*, book reviews, and other news on the activities of some very busy oral historians, both here and overseas.





What's On January / February 2006

by Christine de Matos

Exhibitions

'*Convicts: Sites of Punishment*'. Venue Hyde Park Barracks Museum.

'*Shared Experience: Art and War – Australia, Britain and Canada in the Second World War*'.

Until 26 February 2006. Venue: Australian War Memorial

'*The Vikings are Coming!*' Venue: National Maritime Museum.

'*Bondi: A Biography*'. Venue: Museum of Sydney.

'*City of Shadows*'. Until October 2006. Venue: Justice and Police Museum.

January Events

- 26 **Open Day.** '*Pot Luck with History*'. RAHS. Venue: History House Time: 10am-4pm Cost: free
- 28 **Walking tour.** '*Sydney Architecture Walks: Utzon*', HHT. Meeting venue: Museum of Sydney Time: 10.30am-12.30pm Cost: \$20, mem/conc \$15 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211.

February Events

- 4 **Fork and Talk.** '*May you live in interesting times – and ancient Chinese curse*'. RAHS. Venue: Reception Rooms, History House Time: 5pm Cost: \$26, mems \$22 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au
- 4-6 **Conference.** '*Mars and Minerva: Intellectuals and War in Australia and New Zealand*', University of New England. Enquiries: email: Frank Bongiorno fbongior@une.edu.au OR Iain Spence ispence@une.edu.au OR John Moses jmoses@une.edu.au
- 7, 14, or
- 21 **Tour.** '*Archaeology in The Rocks*', HHT. Meeting venue: Susannah Place Museum Time: 10am-12n Cost: \$20, mem/conc \$15, Family \$40 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 7, 14, 21 &
- 28 **Workshop.** '*Creating a Heritage Album: A Four Week Course*'. RAHS. Venue: History House Time: 10am-2pm Cost: \$90, mems \$75 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au
- 9-11 **Conference.** '*The Makers and Making of Indigenous Australian Museum Collections*'. Melbourne Museum. Enquiries: web: <http://melbourne.museum.vic.gov.au/pdf/makersandmaking.pdf>
- 12 **Tour.** '*The Mint Site Tour*', HHT. Meeting venue: Hyde Park Barracks Museum Time: 2.30pm-3.15pm Cost: \$7, mem/conc \$3 Bookings essential: ph: (02) 8239 2211.
- 15-16 **Conference.** '*Media-Asia Research Group 2006 Conference: Media and Identity in Asia*', Curtin University of Technology, Sarawak, Malaysia. Enquiries: web: <http://mediaandidentity.curtin.edu.my/index.htm>
- 16-18 **Conference.** '*Learning, Discovery, and Institutional Development: Asia-Pacific Economic and Business History Conference*', 16-18 February 2006, Brisbane. Enquiries: web: <http://www.bus.qut.edu.au/schools/international/EHSANZCover.jsp>
- 20 **Seminar.** '*Germs, Gender or Governance? Conflicts & Myth-Making at Sydney Infirmary*', Judith Godden, NSW Society of the History of Medicine. Venue: Royal Australian College of Physicians, 145 Macquarie Street, Sydney Time: 6.15 for 6.30 pm Cost: \$10 (\$5 conc), members free Bookings essential: ph 9256 5413

February Events (continued)

- 23 **Documentary/Discussion.** *'Rocking the Foundations'*, with Jack Munday and Pat Fiske. HHT. **Venue:** Museum of Sydney **Time:** 6-9pm **Cost:** \$35, mem/conc \$25 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2266.
- 24 **Workshop.** *"Grant us this day..."*, RAHS. **Venue:** History House Auditorium **Time:** 10am-3pm **Cost:** \$11, mems \$6.60 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 9247 8001; email: history@rahs.org.au
- 26 **Walking tour.** *'Bondi Bathers'*, HHT. **Meeting venue:** TBA **Time:** 2-4pm **Cost:** \$20, mem/conc \$15 **Bookings essential:** ph: (02) 8239 2211.

Upcoming Conferences

"Genres of History": The Australian Historical Association's 13th Biennial National Conference, 3-7 July 2006, Australian National University, Canberra. **Enquiries:** web: <http://histrsss.anu.edu.au/aha/index.html>

'Dancing with Memory: Oral History and its Audiences: XIVth International Oral History Conference'. 12-16 July 2006, Sydney. **Enquiries:** email: IOHA@uts.edu.au; web: <http://www.ioha.fgv.br/>

Call for Papers

'Performers, Practitioners and Audiences in American Studies: Biennial conference of the Australia New Zealand American Studies Association (ANZASA)', 6-12 July 2006, University of Tasmania. **Enquiries:** Tom Dunning, email: tdunning@utas.edu.au; web: <http://www.anzasa.arts.usyd.edu.au>

'16th Biennial Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA) Conference', 26-29 June 2006, University of Wollongong. Abstracts of 250 words to be submitted by **3 February 2006**. **Enquiries:** <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/conferences/asaa/>

'Rethinking the Past: Experimental Histories in the Arts', 28-29 July 2006, University of Technology, Sydney. 200-300 word abstracts due by **20 February 2006**. **Enquiries:** email: Tara.Forrest@uts.edu.au; web: <http://www.hss.uts.edu.au/rethinking/>

'2nd Biennial ANU Missionary History Conference. Asia-Pacific Missionaries: At Home and Abroad'. 25-27 August 2006, Australian National University, Canberra. Abstracts due **30 May 2006**. **Enquiries:** Dr Ian Welch, email: ian.welch@anu.edu.au

'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>

To contribute to What's On, send details of your event to cdm@uow.edu.au by 20th of the month.

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Virginia Macleod

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are professionally employed or commissioned to undertake historical work

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ISSN 0616 3774